Author name: B. Maytom

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
The council has established the "need" for a different revenue path however have not been forth coming with all the information/facts surrounding operational expenditure and waste.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
The council states they have however they have only focused on a small area of their operational expenditure and have not focused on their in office/admin support functions, productivity and operational waste. They have not properly outlined where additional funds that are received from developers and state governments have been allocated and these funds don't appear to have gone in full to the appropriate requirements ie upgrading of infrastructure and maintenance.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No - the numbers were not clear and the council did not write to each land owner outlining what their specific rate increase would be rather provided generic figures that had exemptions for some property owners and not others. It was not clear and confusing and left land owners unclear about what the new proposal would look like for them.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No - many people in the community did not know about the proposed increases. The council only provided information via their website and facebook/social media. Email's were circulated to those who had a registered email address - this limited a large portion of the community where mail was not sent to their homes or registered address. I am not aware of any formal information sessions being held by council to explain the changes.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
There was no action taken other than informing the community post the Council Meeting where the topic was voted on, what the outcome would be. Again nothing via a mail out etc. Given the size of the increase the council is looking for this should be the minimum they work toward - this has the ability to affect cost of living, house prices etc.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
This is not reasonable given the proposal is for a substantial increase and no improvement in services etc. There are a number of areas within council where productivity, timeliness for completion of work etc are very poor. Within this council area there are a number of land owners who receive minimal services from council ie no bin collection and council has no plans to introduce such services despite increasing rates (which are already high). These land owners live 15km from the centre of Queanbeyan.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
There was no consideration - the counillors all received a 30% pay increase themselves and then lifted the rates for land owners. They are out of step on their community and its challenges.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
I have not read this component of the application.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
As far as I am aware yes they have

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
While the council has provided some information surrounding this, it has not provided a detailed strategy of how it is managing operational costs and containment strategies. I have outlined above issues with productivity and operational waste. This increase is to maintain standards as they are today with no improvement.

Author name: C. Dingle

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. The council has been far from open in its financial position. If the situation was so serious why did they commit to a multi storey development for council offices on PRIME central real estate in the queanbeyan CBD when it has substantial land available in council owned land

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Of er than email the proposal was NOT put out to the public until commercial radio picked up the story

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Only when submissions where sent to the council did they send out a FULL disclousure of the rate increase

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
NO. Other than hearing about this first on commercial radio I was not aware of the proposed increase. When the issue became public then there where leaflets advising the proposal.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
A general answer back to an email sent in regards to the rate rise

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
At the current time when "Cost of living" is the catch phrase on every level of governments lips, this is a impost on the community. If the council was so short of funds why didn't the council 1) Send out a reviewed outline of budget cutbacks. 2) Proceed with a "FOGO" bin for every household in the area. 3) Not cut costs as any corporation would 4) review the current staff levels after the merger of the council areas.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
None has been shown whatsoever. The attitude is "Well we wanted a 100% rise in rates so just be happy with the rise you are getting"

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
None has been brought forward.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
It has been approved at a council meeting.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
No plan for cost savings where made in the statement. Rather a blunt, "Well if we don't get the rate rise we will cut library services, close regional pools, reduce road maintenance." If the proposal had contained a show of cost saving measures by the council first then maybe a small rise would be acceptable

Author name: C. Johnston

Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I do not support the special variation rate rises. The council should be held responsible for their mismanagement of revenue and by allowing this special variation rate rise will only add to the detriment of this community. The council should suspend all unnecessary works until the monies are available. Only the essential works should be carried out such as roads, rubbish and community health. The ratepayers in this council area are finding it hard to survive with the increasing costs of living and to subject them to a special variation increase in rates in any of the three scenarios will put even more strain on the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
QPRC Council has not clearly established the need for or purpose of a different revenue path as they have clearly mismanaged the general fund money by tying up the funds in bonds that will not mature for a couple of years. Therefore, the council should stop all unnecessary works until such monies are available. The 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial statements show profits of some $86M, and now the council is crying poor and need a special variation to increase rates. Council should be held accountable for their mismanagement of funds or appoint an administrator to allow the community to operate successfully. Over-spending on Arts, Culture and Grants should be stopped. Only essential maintenance works should be carried out until the appropriate funding is available.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. Only the three options were available for discussion, upon which all necessitated an increase to rates. No other options given.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The information delivered by council regarding rate increases would not be understood by the average ratepayer. The rating categories are not clear and it is not show how much the increases to rates would affect particular groups.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
The information from council was not readily available to all community members. Not all communities within the council area were consulted, either by letterbox drops or media advertisements. Council used the Christmas holiday break to announce the special variation rate rise for the community to comment on when people were more concerned about catching up with family members that they were unable to visit for Christmas the previous year due to covid. Council states ( on page 37 Part B )that they met with 350 members of the community at 17 meetings, obviously, the meetings were poorly advertised or tailored to specific groups and/or at times when people could not attend.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
As stated by council, (on page 36 Part B) there were 9557 unique visits to the Your Voice consultation page with only 1116 submissions received by council to the special variation rate rise. This figure shows that the webpage was too hard to complete by the average ratepayer, or that people were disappointed by the format that was used. That is, the pre-determined outcomes that are formulated by tailored responses rather than free speech submissions. As also stated, from the group of respondents, 322 did not opt for any of the 3 scenarios; 99 made other comments; 223 voted for no change; 184 voted for scenario #3; 172 voted for scenario #1 and only 68 voted for scenario #2. Subsequently, council chose scenario #2 the least voted for scenario of their desired outcomes, disregarding all other comments from the community. This proves that the council is willing to listen to only a small group of the community that meets their outcomes.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation is not reasonable. The community is already in a "cost of living crisis". How can the council expect the average person to be able to afford these increases, with interest rates rising and the increasing costs on everyday items the elderly and the less fortunate will be left even further behind.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The council has not considered the community's capacity and/or willingness to pay. It is not just the unwillingness to pay, it is also the inability to pay for a lot of community members.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Council's plan to offer financial support to ratepayers is not acceptable. The plan is only designed to support those whom fit

their eligibility conditions and therefore will not help many in the community. Councillors should reverse their self-appointed pay rises to show good faith in their positions as a voice for the community in need.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Unknown, not general knowledge.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The council has not considered any cost containment strategies and continues to spend money that they claim they don't have. Due to council's failure to understand the economy by tying up funds for any amount of time, the council management should be dismissed and an administrator appointed due to their incompetence.

Author name: C. Johnston

Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I do not support the special variation to the QPRC rates. The council should be held responsible for their mismanagement of revenue and by allowing this special variation rate rise, this will only add to the detriment of the community. The council should suspend all unnecessary expenditure until their financial issues are resolved. Only the essential works should be allowed to be undertaken, being roads, rubbish and community health. The ratepayers in this council area are already finding it difficult to survive with the increasing costs of living and to subject them to a special variation rate increase for any of the three scenarios the council requests, will only put more strain on our community.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
The QPRC council has not clearly outlined the need for, nor the purpose of this different revenue pathway. The 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 financial statements for the QPRC council have shown a profit of over $80 million, yet due to mismanagement of these funds by placing all of it into bonds which will not mature until halfway through this special variation, they are now crying poor.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. Only three options were ever considered, all included some form of rate rise. This is merely a corrupt government holding the community to ransom which it is meant to serve. The council should be held responsible for this mismanagement and be dissolved and administrators take over the council so to see where all their funds went.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The information given to the community by the council is not in simple terms that the average ratepayer could understand. There is merely an average increase for the average ratepayer, but nothing about how much each specific rate group would have to pay.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
The information from the council was not readily available to all community members. Not all townships within the council's borders were consulted, either by letterbox drops or media advertisement. The council used the first Christmas holidays after Covid-19 to announce this special variation to comment, which probably meant several groups of the community that were outside the council's borders whilst visiting family or on holiday, would have missed the announcement. Council also states, (on page 36 of Part B) that they met with 350 members of the community at 17 different meetings. Obviously, these were poorly advertised, or were under invitation only, otherwise these numbers would have been much higher.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
As stated by council, (on page 36 of Part B), there were 9557 unique visits to the Your Voice consultation page about this special variation. However, only 1116 submissions were received by council. This clearly shows that the webpage was too difficult to navigate, or that their tailored questionnaire and the requirement for the council to have all personal data of the respondents, scared off too many of the community. The entire "free speech" feedback idea was nothing more than a tailored set of responses to warrant their pre-determined outcomes. Also stated on the same page, is that from the group of respondents, 322 did not opt for any of their three scenarios; 99 made other comments that did not fall into their scenarios; 223 voted for no change to rate (which was never considered by council); 184 voted for scenario #3; 172 voted for scenario #1; and only 68 voted for scenario #2. Subsequently, the council chose to pursue scenario #2, which had the least votes. This only proves that the council is only willing to listen to a tiny proportion of the community which meets their desired outcomes whilst disregarding all other comments from the community they were elected to serve.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The impact on the affected ratepayers of this proposed special variation is not reasonable. The community is already in a "cost of living crisis". How can the council responsibly expect the average person to able to afford these increases to their rates. With such increases, costs on everyday items will put the elderly and the less fortunate even further behind.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The council has not considered the community's capacity and/or willingness to pay. It is not just the unwillingness to pay, it is also the inability to pay for a lot of the community members.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed

special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The council's plan to offer financial support to ratepayers is unacceptable. The plan is only designed to support those whom fit their eligibility criteria and therefore, will not help many in the community. The councilors should reverse their self-appointed pay rises so to redirect those funds into assisting the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I do not know. This information was not made public knowledge.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The council has not considered any cost containment methods and continues to spend money that they claim they do not have. Due to the council's inability to manage their finances, the council should be dissolved, including the financial controller and anyone else giving such poor financial advice. An administrator should be appointed to oversee the council until the extent of their inability to manage money is uncovered and the council's finances are stablised.

Author name: D. Brown

Date of submission: Friday, 14 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Council went ahead with a project to develop their own offices. There have been significant cost blowout and it is ridiculous for the council to assume the community would foot the bill for the council's mismanagement. The council should rein in their spending like the community and only raise rates in line with the rate peg which is already high in itself.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Council haven't considered alternative revenue paths. All of our land values in this area has increased significantly and gives council a pro rate increase in rates. Combined with the SV this would have a larger effect than if it was only the SV.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
They offered three alternatives during consultation, however they were too similar to one another and did not make a difference.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The council has tried to but it was too complicated to work out for the average ratepayer and hard for the community to understand.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
The consultation I got only through newspapers and email. It was written up as if the decision was already made and it appears as if the council's consultation was lazy.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I can only speak for my experience. I've written to the council but heard nothing in response. The council appears to be moving forward with the decision.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It is ridiculous. The cumulative increase would be 64% on the community. With the addition of changes on land values, this could result in increases exceeding 100% for some ratepayers. I've spoken with neighbors who may not be able to afford the SV. I'm getting to the point that I may be in the same situation as I'm currently receiving a disability pension.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
They council has not considered the community's capacity or willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
It's simply not enough and doesn't address it at all. Giving people time to pay doesn't give people the ability to pay and the SV is unaffordable. It is lazy and pathetic of the council.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
The council has put the documents online.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
They may have tried but in asking for this rate increase they showed they have failed and that they need to do better. How can the council justify this?

Author name: D. Michael

Date of submission: Sunday, 16 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Staff numbers have remain unchanged after 4 years of amalgamation experience, suggesting the benefits of amalgamation are not evident, nor likely over the next 3 years based on the council application. The council is weak in governance standards at all levels and in converting strategy into material and relevant high performance actions. A preferred solution would be to reject the special variation request and encourage the council to make proper adjustment to their own operations to improve performance and efficiency instead of shifting the burden to ratepayers. This may mean being placed in the hands of independent administration.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. Rates (and wages and salaries) have been rising at more than double the inflation rate for 4 years since amalgamation. When revenue is not sufficient to cover costs it's clear a new business model is required that deals with structure, costs and performance.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. There is limited evidence of productivity improvements and efforts taken to improve productivity, especially effective sharing of corporate services with other regions and councils. Governance standards are not best practice. QPRC is classified as an 'outsourcing council' but that doesnt mean the existing outsourcing is best practice or that outsourcing should not be further increased.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No. In particular QPRC has failed to assess and communicate the impact of the 18%/year rise in rates for 3 years on the viability of the council at the end of 3 years. the impact in dollar terms has not been received. In particular, at the end of 3 years what is the outcome in terms of viability?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No. The council has on occasions communicated after a community engagement event has been held.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Three options were presented for action and there has been no feedback about the percentages favoring each option.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
As indicated above, ' Rates (and wages and salaries) have been rising at more than double the inflation rate since amalgamation'. The proposed rate increase of 18% will mean this will be maintained with actual inflation at less than 8%/year and declining. Many ratepayers are faced with declining prices received and higher overall costs. The proposed rate increase is simply passing the burden of adjustment on to ratepayers.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Capacity and willingness to pay has had very limited assessment and attention to detail. Agricultural producers, in particular, are facing: declining livestock prices received (down over 30% compared to previous year, 2022); rising interest payments on borrowings ( up from 5% to over 7%); growing prospect of very dry if not drought conditions from now through to end of year (BOM projections); rising farm input costs (due to COVID and oil prices).

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The hardship plan may benefit those in dire need but council does not have capacity to deal with measures of social and health support. These are State and Federal Government responsibilities.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
The documents appear to have been exhibited, approved and adopted by council. But the documents give very little attention to performance improvement options that would enable viability without a special rate variation. Relevant and reliable performance information is essential to improve efficiency, effectiveness and viability of council. Refer to comments above about importance of productivity improvement.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
No, the council response is extremely weak in explaining and quantifying the productivity performance and cost containment strategies implemented. This applies to both labour and capital productivity including that of council executives who receive payments above $350,00/year. Council seems to think it can simply pass the burden of adjustment to difficult circumstances on to ratepayers and leave the adjustment process to ratepayers. QPRC is not at best practices levels in local government productivity index measurements. Council measurement and understanding of productivity is limited.

Author name: D. Williamson

Date of submission: Friday, 28 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. Refer to the answer to Question 3 (Criterion 2) below.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not fully. Refer to the answer to Question 3 (Criterion 2) below.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No comment.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No comment.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The community consultation process was flawed and the results of community feedback were largely ignored. When the Council consulted the community through a Have Your Say process commencing in late 2022, the Councils consultation started from the premise of Why do we need a rate rise and presented just three scenarios, each involving large cumulative increases over three years of 41%, 64% and 97% respectively. There were no zero or low increase options presented to the community or discussion of the consequences of such options other than the Council stating in very vague terms that Without a rate rise Council will continue to go backwards financially or be forced to significantly cut services to make annual savings of more than $20 million each year. The reasons for the advent of current and future deficits of more than $20 million and large rate increases were not explained or justified sufficiently. There was no detail on areas where the Council had already made savings or improved efficiencies, nor was there evidence that a realistic attempt had been made to identify and quantify potential areas for savings or efficiencies in future. Consequently, the community consultation process lacked balance. It was skewed from the outset towards a large rate rise of between 41% and 97%, and focused unduly on increasing Councils revenue while largely ignoring potential reductions in expenditure. The report on public feedback, presented to the Councils meeting of 8 February 2023, indicated that Councils proposed Scenario 2 (involving cumulative increases of 64% over three years as subsequently referred to IPART for approval) was preferred by only 9% of respondents the least preferred of any options listed in the feedback report. Scenarios 1 (41% cumulative increase) and 3 (97% cumulative increase) were each preferred by roughly 24% of respondents. However, as noted above, the consultation process and consequent discussion were inherently skewed towards Scenarios 1, 2 and 3 because they were the only alternatives put forward by the Council for community consideration. Despite the inherently skewed consultation process, a total of only 57% of respondents preferred any of the three Scenarios proposed by the Council. The highest proportion of respondents about 30%, or almost one-third preferred the option of no increase in rates, and despite such an option not being put forward by the Council for public consideration. A further 13% of respondents preferred other unspecified options (also not put forward by the Council). Consequently, about 43% of respondents preferred options other than the three Scenarios proposed by the Council. Importantly, an overwhelming majority of 91% of respondents preferred options other than the Scenario 2 (64%) increase in rates the Council has since proposed to IPART. Following the public consultation process, the Mayor of the Council, Cr Kendrick Winchester, was cited in some media reports as saying that Scenario 2 (cumulative increase of 64%) was the only acceptable option. Such comments, and an apparent lack of regard concerning the results of public feedback, suggest that the outcome had been pre-determined before the public consultation commenced. It would appear that the Council expended significant resources, thereby adding to its budget deficit, and wasted valuable community time and effort solely so that the Council could tick the relevant public consultation boxes in its IPART application.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Wage and salary-earners, most businesses, pensioners, retirees and the unemployed cannot unilaterally increase their incomes in the manner or the scale proposed by the Council. They continue to be forced to live with rises in the cost of living and have to manage their budget accordingly. Long-term real wage growth has been stagnant and real wages actually fell by 3.5% during 2021-22 (Commonwealth of Australia Budget Statement, October 2022). Annual inflation is 7.4% (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], March 2023). Monthly mortgage interest repayments have increased by about $1,000 since April 2022 (Forbes.com, April 2023). The Reserve Bank of Australia (cited by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, April 2023) predicts that 15% of variable rate mortgage-holders already are in negative cashflow, or will be by the end of 2023. In real

terms, most people are going backwards financially. The Council is proposing to cause greater financial stress to ratepayers by lifting All Rates by $963 per year (18% per year for 3 years, or about 2.4 times the current annual inflation rate which is at a historically high level). The increase of $963 is equivalent to about 1.6% of median annual personal income of $60,400 in the region, and 2.3% of median annual personal income of $42,400 in NSW (ABS, 2021 Census Quickstats). Furthermore, the 50% of people on incomes lower than the median are affected proportionately harder by rate increases. For example, 10.7% of households in the region have a total annual income of less than $33,800 (ABS, 2021 Census Quickstats). For them, a rates increase of $963 represents at least an extra 2.8% coming out of an annual household income which typically is already fully committed on essential, non-discretionary, expenses such as food, housing and electricity. By the Councils own comparative analysis of rates with other local government areas (Official Newsletter, December 2022), a rates increase of 64% ($963 per year) would mean it goes from being around the middle of the pack to being the highest of the NSW local jurisdictions cited. Annual rates would be higher by a margin of $404 (23%) than the then highest cited NSW jurisdiction of Wingecarribee. The Council has an effective monopoly in the provision of services to the region. That monopoly position needs to be exercised with care and restraint. The Council is no longer constrained by post-merger restrictions that existed after 2016. However, large increases in rates should not be the default response and they are not the only possible solutions to the budgetary problem. Instead of merely shifting the financial burden to ratepayers and imposing additional financial stress upon the community, the Council needs to make real cost savings and efficiencies so that it can operate within its means (which was a primary objective of the council mergers of 2016). After all, by increasing rates, that is what Council is asking ratepayers to do.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The communitys capacity and willingness to pay have been largely ignored. As noted in the answer to Question 3 (Criterion 2), an overwhelming majority of 91% of respondents to the Councils public consultation preferred options other than the proposed rates increase of 64%. 43% of respondents preferred no increase or options other than the three proposed by the Council. In its response to concerns expressed during public consultations on the affordability of the rates increase for the community, the Council stated that it understood the cost of living pressures the community is facing, but cost increases are also faced by Council (Minutes of the Councils meeting of 8 February 2023, Attachment 3). In effect, the Council has taken the view that it will pass on its increases in its costs in full to the community and with minimal evidence of measures to control or reduce those costs. Not only is the Council proposing that the community pays an extra 64% in rates in perpetuity from year 3, but the community also is expected to forgo or potentially pay increased user fees for $5.5 million (per annum?) in as-yet unspecified non-core services a double-whammy for ratepayers and a significantly higher overall increase than the nominal rates increase of 64% suggests.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The Council stated that ratepayers experiencing financial hardship could access interest-free payment arrangements for up to two years. Fundamentally, this is a very small concession on the Councils part, particularly taking into account that large rates increases of 64% are likely to trigger higher incidences of payment default across the community. Charging no interest on outstanding rates, of itself, is unlikely to materially assist most genuine hardship cases. It does not address the underlying issues that may have led to the rate payment default in the first place and, in many instances, two years is insufficient time to allow ratepayers in arrears to take corrective action (and assuming such action is a viable option for affected ratepayers). In practical terms, it merely means that debts owed by the hardship cases would not increase as rapidly compared to the situation where interest was charged, but the debts would still increase. At best, it merely defers decisions on recovery action by the Council by up to 2 years. A better solution might be for the Council to offer a moratorium on rates, or reductions in rates, for people experiencing genuine hardship.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
No comment.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
One of the main objectives of the council amalgamations in 2016 was to improve the efficiency and cost structures of the amalgamated councils through scales of economy (such as better utilisation of infrastructure, staff, and plant and equipment) and the delivery of a more unified or common set of services within each council region. The SRV provides little detail on progress made since 2016. Except for a few 'low hanging fruit' examples such as replacing Queanbeyan street lighting with LED lamps, the claimed past and future efficiencies are only vaguely described in scope and their financial effect. Unlike the clear increase in rates of 64% and consequential certainty of income that the Council is seeking, the savings and efficiency amounts the Council cites often represent target figures with little other detail provided. It will be difficult to measure, and to hold the Council to account, for the success or otherwise against its vaguely defined efficiency initiatives.

Author name: F. Carmichael

Date of submission: Thursday, 4 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Council has spent millions on a Civic hub and councillors have voted themselves a 22% pay rise I already pay double the average rates & I have a townhouse I am looking to move out of the area

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes but in this current economic climate I believe they should be looking at alternative ways to continue services or identifying ways to cut costs An increase of 64% over 3 years is excessive

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes in a newsletter in December 2022

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No The first I knew of it was reading their newsletter in December 2022

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I don't believe they listened to what the community had to say

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It may be reasonable for people who are earning a wage but for self funded retirees & elderly it is unreasonable

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The Queanbeyan community is not comprised of high earning Canberra public servants

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
They plan to remove the additional pensioner rebate That is caring for the community

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
They plan to increase a fees plus add more eg introducing paid parking

Author name: g. Akhurst

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
My property is associated with a number of other properties which provide for their own power, water and sewerage requirements while paying taxation to the local council for no services. My property pays $352 per annum for "waste management" which is not provided in my area. I am required to physically remove all waste from my property to a transfer site 45 kms from my home and pay for the privilege, as well as the fuel and time. QPRC continue to fund councillors, social activities and limited social amenities without proposing how they will improve the residents environment. QPRC as a regional council should be audited to understand how they could propose such an increase at a time of significant cost of living increases, this is a poorly disguised attempt at camouflaging previous council poor investments.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. The council has only focussed on concentrated locations which have little relevence to the wider community which create greater economic contribution to the regional area.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. Where have the council reduced costs associated with the administration of council activities. Certainly councillors need to undertake a significant reduction in any remuneration they receive for not providing the needs of the entire community.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No. Currawang area has not been included in any council plans. In this area QPRC provide very limited services which are only occassional road repair. Residents in this location are responsible for their own water provision, on site sewerage management and waste removal. QPRC are remote tax imposition providing zero effective impact to the region.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
NO. My region has had no positive communication from the QPRC. Many residents in this region do not have internet access and have not had any approach from the council in relation to this proposal. QPRC expect residents to personally access their website to access information, this is not a comprehensive communication strategy.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
QPRC councillors have not sought out any residents for feedback on this proposal as they understand it will not be supported. The councillors have resorted to a "only if I have to" mentality which restricts residents access to the councils proposals.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
QPRC are proposing a significant increase in household cost in an immediate time of significant pressures on household cost and increases in cost of living. this indicates an unwillingness to understand the impact of the proposed rates rises on all residents across the council area. The council proposes to increase the overall rates rises across several sections of the 511 Local Government Act which is not viable or supported by the local community.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
QPRC have not considered the increase in cost of living associated with post COVID interest cost. local families under pressure from interest rate rises and cost of living increases would not be able to support the level of cost increase an insensitive council is demanding.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
In remote regions of the QPRC which have no support from the council there are no indications on how to address hardship caused by this rates increase. In fact QPRC have reduced support for remote regions in the council area over the last two years including waste management support and reduced road repair activities.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
The documents have been distributed on the QPRC website without being advertised on their email advisors nor have residents been advised by mail. Many elderly residents, most affected by the rises have not been advised of the council intent.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and

cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
There is no evidence in the available documents that proposed productivity improvements could not be achieved within councils Current budget. In the Currawang area there are no plans for improvement of the minimal services provided while paying additional costs.

Author name: G. Hayward

Date of submission: Saturday, 15 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Councils should live within their budget. The populace is unable to demand a 64% pay increase to cover overspending and councils also should not.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
The council has decided it wants more money and is intending to go ahead. Anybody else has to live within their budget and going to the boss and demanding a 64% pay rise is out of the question. This council must live within the budget.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Considering the wastes of money, for example spending on new vehicles, waste on making every event bigger and better than last year's, and construction of an entirely unnecessary and very expensive building, the council has not attempted to economise.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The council has informed the rate payers of the planned increases.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
The council's approach is: This is going to happen, just get used to it.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The communitiy's feedback has not been widely publicised for this to be understood.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Many of the residents of Queanbeyan and the rest of the council's jurisdiction are retirees or working class. Hitting them with a rate increase of 64% is absolutely unreasonable. Particularly as the increase is to claw back wasted money. Did they lose money on stock market speculations pre GFC?

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Capacity to pay is covered above. And the question is: Why should they be slugged with a 64% increase? Will their pension increase 64%. Of course not. Why should councils be able to demand whatever cash they feel like?

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Very vague indications were given. Application of these "maybes" will be interesting to observe.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
The documents have been available to ratepayers, but it has always been obvious the council was bulldozing ahead anyway.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I have not seen the council's detailed productivity enhancements and nor have I seen which contractors and individuals are going to benefit.

Author name: G. HILL

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
No documents provided just commonsense.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes BUT words can hide the truth.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
I do think so BUT they may have been focused.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I am not sure.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
This is a joke. I am fully aware Government big business etc do consult the public BUT just do what they had decided before the consolation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Current rate payers will pay for what future rate payers will benefit in the future.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Those on the pensionor low income ratepayers do not at the moment have funds to pay such an increase.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
I understand Councils hardship policy as I was the Debt Recovery officer BUt that does not go far enough.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I believe council has done its best.

**From:** H[redacted] Percy [redacted]
**Sent:** Tuesday, 18 April 2023 7:56 PM
**To:** Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>
**Subject:** Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council - Rate Variation Application

Please find attached my submission in response to the Rate Variation submitted by QPRC.
I have supported my covering letter with a number of attachments that support my assertions.
Without repeating the elements of my submission I must emphasise that the senior management have convinced the council that a rate increase is the only option.
There has been no attempt to review costs, efficiencies or productivity gains.
There are 9 first term councillors, with the returning 2 councillors having very limited experience and the general manager has been in place for a short time moving from the small rural town of Blayney.
There is no doubt that this style of management will result in a further application for a rate increase when the term of this application expires.
The communities only hope for responsible financial management is to force the council to undertake a stringent review of its financial position or enter into administration whereby they are forced to
undertake such a review.
The community looks forward to a favourable response.
Attachment 18 will be sent under separate cover.
H[redacted] Percy

**From:** H[redacted] Percy [redacted]
**Sent:** Tuesday, 18 April 2023 8:04 PM
**To:** Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>
**Subject:** Rate Variation Application - QPRC

Over many years the Queanbeyan Council future proofed the city by purchasing many parcels of land with a view to undertake a joint venture that would deliver new offices for no outlay.
This Council has sold most of that land for $8.5m and it is apparent from Attachment 18 that the new owners will be making millions even with a scaled down development.
In the meantime the council has borrowed in excess of $70m to build a complex that has no final cost and which is built in the style of years ago, with no respect for the emerging modern work practices.
Thank you for considering my application.
I am happy to appear before any body established to review this application.
[redacted] Percy

CEO
PO Box K35
Haymarket Post Shop
NSW 1240
IPART Submission

**QPRC Application for Extraordinary Rate Increase**

**Dear sir/Madam**

**Introduction**
As a former employee of Queanbeyan City Council in senior positions - 15 years Deputy Town Clerk; 16 years Town Clerk/City Manager/General Manager – and 2 years as Administrator of the Walgett Shire Council I am qualified to comment on the QPRC Special Variation Application.

In my Queanbeyan role I was twice confronted with serious financial problems:

1. In 1988 (the year I was appointed Town Clerk) a financial analysis was undertaken by a specialist in the Commonwealth Department of Finance who reported the Council was heading for financial ruin. With the support of Council, I introduced a strategy of a 2% reduction in the budget, ceased all borrowings in general fund, utilisied reserve funds and relied on steady growth with the outcome being Council was debt free in 2003.
2. In 2014, after the General Manager walked out on the Council, having sent out back-dated rates (5 years), I was asked to return as Acting General Manager. Ratepayers were receiving accounts for as much as $90,000 and the City was in uproar. I solved the problem within 2 weeks.

In the past few years, the Council has racked up enormous debt – repayments total $16m annually.

The key component of this is the Civic Centre which has cost in the order of $70m but not yet completed nor costs finalised – (Attachments 7 and 8).

The current Councillors, with exception of two individuals, have been elected for the first time and therefore lack experience and knowledge of local government. Compounding this problem is the fact that the General Manager who oversaw the unprecedented borrowing, resigned prior to Christmas just prior to the election, but did not inform anyone until the polls were declared.

With a total lack of experience across elected and administrative personnel there has been no attempt to achieve efficiency and productivity gains – simply a policy to glean more revenue.

**Morrison Low**
Unbeknown to the community a company, MorrisonLow, was appointed under delegated authority to undertake an Organisational Service Review. Nowhere in the brief to Morrison Low is there any reference to a financial assessment and it is this Review which seems to be the basis (whilst clearly dismissing the objectives outlined in the Report) of the decision to apply for an extraordinary increase in the general rate.

Stated clearly in the introduction to the MorrisonLow Report is the statement –

"the *objective of undertaking an improvement journey is threefold:*

1. *To improve value for council's customers*
2. ***Minimise or avoid any future special rate variation (SRV)***
3. *Maximise any efficiency opportunities".*

**Community Engagement - Council Scenarios**

Despite the brief to Morrison Low and the fact that they undertook an Organisational Service Review, not a financial analysis, QPRC distributed a flyer inviting input into three scenarios to address Council's financial sustainability (Attachment 1). Each scenario proffered by Council involved significant rate increases with a cumulative increase of between 41% and 97% over the 3 options with varying threats of reduced or disbanded services and facilities.

No other options were canvassed by the Council during its "consultation process"- only the rating scenarios and threats to reduce/halt services. There was no advice on why the situation had arisen and no advice on any cost saving or efficiency measures. Incongruously, QPRC approved an increase in Mayoral/Councillor allowances to the maximum available.

There was considerable rhetoric in the Staff Report to Council recommending endorsement of one of the three scenarios, but nothing about steps taken to reduce expenditure and certainly no substantive evidence of any attempt or success.

Community engagement really involved Councillors and staff telling the community how much their rates would increase or what services would be reduced withdrawn.

**Impact on Ratepayers - Major Issue**

The bizarre design and cost of the new Civic Centre building is the major cause for the revenue problem – a building in Queanbeyan that was mooted at $25m and currently stands at a cost of about $70m and not completed. It appears that the main cause of the increased estimated cost is the commercial incompetence of the Administration in proceeding to increase the number of floors and carparking provisions to accommodate a tenant before concluding a tenancy agreement.

Apparently, an expected tenancy did not eventuate, but the cost of the provision remains.

To compound this the Council proceeded to sell land (purchased over many years to establish a Joint Venture with private enterprise which would deliver a new administration centre at no cost to Council) to a private developer for $8.5m apparently without due process. The developer now proposes a multi-million $ development that will generate exceptional profits to the developer – (Attachment 18).

It is submitted that the ratepayers should not be burdened with the results of this incompetence and that the Council should offset those costs and lost returns the only way possible with productivity and efficiency improvements as outlined elsewhere in this Submission.

**Productivity - Options/Opportunities**

There are considerable options/opportunities available to Council to cut costs, become more efficient and productive and to realise considerable revenues from divesting of assets through due and proper process. In particular significant Efficiency Opportunities are addressed in Appendix A - Spreadsheet of all Opportunities - of the Morrison Low Report - but these were not addressed by Council in its communication to the community.

Nowhere in Council's communication with the community is there any evidence that Council has considered any option other than the rate increase scenarios.

**Albury Comparison**
Albury was used to compare with Queanbeyan in making the case for the Scenarios chosen by Council.

It is interesting to note that while Albury's General Rate is slightly less than Queanbeyan the overall cost of rates is significantly higher (Attachment 4).

Another interesting fact comparing Albury is that the cost of the General Manager and Senior Staff is $468,771 more in Queanbeyan and for Council $66,475 more in Queanbeyan (Attachment 5).

**Need** - Before any increase in the general rate above the statutory limit is agreed the Council should be required to undertake at least:

- A full independent review of the Staffing Structure (especially the number of senior staff) including reviewing every program (Attachment 14, 15 and 16).
- Renewing the policy on leaseback vehicles to ensure that the program is at least break-even (Attachment 17).
- Cancellation of programs such as Performance Excellence Program and Promap and cease subscriptions to Leap and Lighthouse.
- Review all computer systems with the objective of having a suitable system that provides for the whole of Council.
- Review the number of mobile phone plans.
- Revamp the LEP for the CBD to ensure that interested developers will be encouraged to invest in the land still owned by Council and that such land will achieve its optimum value – (not the fire-sale return obtained for the most recent sale).
- Formulate an open competitive and commercial process for the disposal or development surplus Council properties in the CBD.
- Cease engaging consultants.
- Consider the sale of the Water Operation to ACTEW.
- Consider entering into a joint arrangement with the ACT Government to establish a joint Sewerage Treatment facility.
- Investigate ways to sell/lease the new building the cost of which has not yet been finalised.
- Form a Revenue Committee comprising Councillors and Staff to review and facilitate the opportunities and options that are available.

**Conclusion**
Without a complete and independent appraisal by Council of its operations there is highly likely to be further requests for Rate Increases in the future as there does not seem to be any concept of efficiency, or productivity gains, within the organisation.

Such appraisal must be independent as the Council is too inexperienced and senior staff seem to lack the ability to undertake the process required to deliver a satisfactory outcome.

I look forward to a sensible outcome from the IPART review of the QPRC Application for a Special Rate Variation.

Yours faithfully

[redacted] Percy

[redacted]

[redacted]

Attachments

| | |
|---|---|
| Attachment 1 | Extract – Council Consultation |
| Attachment 2 | Rate Dilemma - Letter |
| Attachment 3 | Submission – Council Meeting |
| Attachment 4 | Rate Comparison - Albury |
| Attachment 5 | Cost Comparison - Albury |
| Attachment 6 | Letter – Sandra Young – OLG NSW Minister |
| Attachment 7 | Funding – Civic Centre |
| Attachment 8 | Demolition Costs – Civic Centre |
| Attachment 9 | Consultancies |
| Attachment 10 | Sale – Council Land |
| Attachment 11 | Loans Reserves |
| Attachment 12 | Unencumbered Reserves |
| Attachment 13 | Balance – Water/Sewerage funds |
| Attachment 14 | Comparison – Salaries/Wages |
| Attachment 15 | Staffing Numbers |
| Attachment 16 | Available Jobs |
| Attachment 17 | Fleet Costs |
| Attachment 18 | Development Proposal – former Council Land |

Council is inviting community input into three scenarios to address Council's financial sustainability.

Two weeks ago, Mayor Kenrick Winchester issued a statement about Council's financial sustainability and how QPRC had reached this point.

Mayor Winchester noted that both the former Palerang Council and Queanbeyan City Council were considering options to raise their revenue before the merger.

He said, 'While we were able to make infrastructure improvements and build new infrastructure with the funding we received after the merger and other grants, the merged Council was not permitted to raise rates for four years.'

'The rate increases set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal through the rate peg don't come close to meeting the costs of doing everything the community expects from us.'

The Mayor added 'It's now really important that we have this conversation with the community about Council services and how they will be funded into the future.'

'We are asking you to be involved in the conversation about the services we provide and the potential rate rise scenarios.'

QPRC General Manager Rebecca Ryan said 'We have explored three rate rise scenarios which affect the general rate. This proposal does not include waste, sewerage, stormwater, or water access charges.'

'Each scenario shows what type of services Council would be able to provide under a specific rate rise. All three rate rise scenarios include enough funds that ensures Council's assets like roads, stormwater and buildings are maintained appropriately, however two scenarios involve significant service cuts.'

The three scenarios are:

- **Significantly Reduce Services:** Rates increase by 12% a year for 3 years. This is a cumulative increase of 41%. This scenario does not fully fund current Council operations and will require a strategy to find immediate savings of $12 million each year. This kind of saving may include privatising or selling The Q, stopping funding to all community halls, facilities and activities, cutting heritage grants, closing pools and stopping development of new sports and aquatic facilities, increasing fees, closing libraries, customer service centres and depots at Bungendore and Braidwood, significantly reducing urban amenities (street sweeping, mowing, maintenance and cleaning), reducing the number of Councillors, removing the additional pensioner rebate, and introducing paid parking.
- **Reduce Services:** Rates increase by 18% a year for 3 years. This is a cumulative increase of 64%. This scenario involves a reduction of non-core services and.5.5 million worth of savings must be found each year. Savings could include significantly increasing fees at The Q, reducing community

funding by 50%, cutting heritage grants, only keeping one pool and stopping development of new sports and aquatics facilities, increasing fees, reducing urban amenities (street sweeping, mowing, maintenance, and cleaning), reducing number of Councillors, removing additional pensioner rebate, and introducing paid parking.

- **Maintain Services:** Rates increase by 28% in year one, 25% in year two and 23% in year 3. This is a cumulative increase of 97%. This scenario fully funds the current levels of service. It provides $400,000 per year towards expanded infrastructure and taking advantage of grants that require 1:1 funding, along with $1.9m per year to renew infrastructure like community facilities, footpaths and pools. This scenario provides for an additional pensioner rebate of $100 for eligible pensioners across the local government area. It also allows for $1.3 million towards new environmental programs.

Rebecca concluded ‘We are one of the largest employers in the region and it’s our job to provide excellent services and high-quality facilities.’

‘Council makes a real difference in the lives of people in Queanbeyan-Palerang and it is important that you give us feedback about what matters to you.’

Have your say on the proposed options at www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/srv until 31 January 2023.

His Worship the Mayor
Cr Kenrick Winchester
QPRC
PO Box 90
Queanbeyan 2620

**Community input into three scenarios to address Council's financial sustainability**

Based on an Organisational Service Review by MorrisonLow QPRC is inviting input into three scenarios to address Council's financial sustainability.

Stated clearly in the introduction to the MorrisonLow Report is the statement –

"the *objective of undertaking an improvement journey is threefold:*

1. *To improve value for council's customers*
2. *Minimise or avoid any future special rate variation (SRV)*
3. *Maximise any efficiency opportunities".*

Despite the stated objective each scenario proffered by Council involves significant rate increases with a cumulative increase of between 41% and 97% over the 3 options with varying threats of reduced or disbanded services and facilities. I am unsure how the Report relates to the proposed rate increases as the MorrisonLow Report does not purport to be a financial analysis but a Service Review.

So many other options are available.

No cognisance has been given to a range of other steps that can be taken to ease the rate increases but there are a number. There are significant opportunities listed in Appendix A of the MorrisonLow Report that were suggested by council staff as part of the Service Review process, but these seem to have been dismissed by Council as confirmed by the scenarios offered.

Blaming rate increases "set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal through rate pegging as not coming close to meeting the costs of doing everything the community expects from Council" is an excuse for financial dilemmas which has been used by local authorities for decades.

Rate pegging was introduced by the State Government to stop exactly what QPRC is proposing.

Going straight to an increase in the rates is a lazy and unprofessional attempt to have an easy fix.

Based on the scenarios promoted by Council for community input it appears that as a whole the Council has abdicated its financial responsibility (LGA 1993 Chapter 3 8B).

Admittedly, this Council is suffering the aftermath of the excessive spending of the previous Council which left an enormous debt legacy. That era had no regard for the frugal and forward planning of earlier Councils. That is no excuse though to not manage a way forward that is reasonable, responsible, and acceptable to the community.

Functions of elected members and staff have not changed over the years, despite changes to the legislature for local government, which in simple terms equates to:

- **Councillors** are responsible for Policy and Budget decisions (elected),
- **Staff** are responsible for management and administration of Policy and Budget (paid).

In other words, Councillors are elected on a platform of addressing the communities wants and needs which they translate into Policy and Budget decisions and the paid staff ensure that the Council's direction is implemented in the most efficient manner possible.

This works well as underperforming Councillors are not re-elected and underperforming staff are moved on – accountability.

This MorrisonLow Review is not a financial analysis but should be the catalyst for a major management restructure to address the many issues raised by staff, despite the fact they have a vested interest in the outcome. Senior staff of Council are paid extraordinary amounts and should be expected to produce extraordinary results. Councillors should be demanding that senior staff provide them with sound advice on how to dramatically improve the management and efficiency of the Council's operations that will obviate the draconian rate increases before the community.

Well structured and assessed Performance Agreements will ensure staff are accountable.

Let there be no dispute – a rate increase is necessary (pain borne by the community) but this needs to be matched by increased performance by the Council, by Councillors and by the staff.

It is time to "cut the cloth to fit" and a range of initiatives, many listed in the MorrisonLow Report, must be seriously considered before the Council launches into an unacceptable rating scenario that will force financial hardship on the Queanbeyan/Palerang population at large.

It seems that nothing has been learnt from the debacle of 2013/2014 when senior staff involved Council in sending out backdated rates that nearly brought the Council down. That was a case of staff "running" the council.

The comment that 'Council makes a real difference in the lives of people in Queanbeyan-Palerang' will certainly ring true if these ill-advised and draconian measures are introduced.

This issue needs strong, unwavering and committed leadership from the Mayor, and Councillors need to support the Mayor and take control. This includes demanding from senior staff a better plan to solve the revenue problem rather than the proposed rate increase and service reduction scenarios currently circulating in the community.

I would be pleased to meet with the you and Councillors to discuss options that may assist.

Yours sincerely

H[redacted] Percy
[redacted]
Jerrabomberra NSW 2619

Mobile [redacted]

Mayor
[redacted]@qprc.nsw.gov.au

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General Manager

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His Worship the Mayor
Cr Kenrick Winchester
QPRC
PO Box 90
Queanbeyan 2620

**Item 9.1 – Financial Sustainability Options and Special Rate Variation**

In the Report on this matter to Council the authors of the Report state – "Council developed three financial scenarios with the assistance of an independent financial consultant".

Further in the Report Morison Low are identified as the consultant.

From the information is available the Morrison Low Report appears to be the basis of the three scenarios put to the community, all involving significant rate increases. Whilst the Morrison Low Report is titled "Organisational Service Review" the Report does clearly state in the introduction that:

"the *objective of undertaking an improvement journey is threefold:*

1. *To improve value for council's customers*
2. *Minimise or avoid any future special rate variation (SRV)*
3. *Maximise any efficiency opportunities".*

None of the Morrison Low objectives are met by the scenarios before the community.

*Efficiency Opportunities* are addressed in Appendix A - Spreadsheet of all Opportunities – of the Morrison Low Report through staff involvement and provide many options available for cost savings and efficiencies.

There is considerable rhetoric in the Report about steps taken to reduce expenditure but there is no substantive evidence of any success. Surely the exponential growth in salary/wages (2005 - $13m; 2014 - $23m; 2022 - $38m) is one area of expenditure that has/must be addressed.

No reference has been made to the real issue of the extraordinary loans (another $45m) taken up by Council and the $16m loan repayment bill.

Blaming rate increases "set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal through rate pegging", costs associated with the amalgamation and the growth in core costs are all contributing factors to Council's dilemma. Those issues are out of Council's control – finding a solution is Council's challenge.

Any sensible decision of Council will involve an increase in rates.

But any increase in rates should be supported by a concerted effort to address existing costs by streamlining/reducing budgets across the board. This should involve a total restructure of the organisation which is confirmed by the many issues raised by staff as identified in Appendix A.

Council's decision will impact on Bungendore, Braidwood and all of the rural land and communities in between. It is not fair on those ratepayers that the impost imposed by unrelenting spending in Queanbeyan should be thrust on them. Those communities have their own issues, namely roads, but they need strong, committed and fair representation.

I will be monitoring Council's submission to IPART and will make a detailed submission to that body at the appropriate time.

I look forward to Councillors making a fair, reasonable and equitable decision on this matter.

Yours sincerely

H Percy
[redacted]
Jerrabomberra NSW 2619

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General Manager
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| | Street | UCV | General Rate in $ | General - Urban Adv |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Resident | Thurgoona | $ 226,000 | | $ 2,536 |
| Resident | Kiewa | $ 298,000 | $ 0.008683 | $ 2,587 |
| Resident | Hovell | $ 157,000 | $ 0.008683 | $ 1,364 |
| **Hugh** | **Copperfield** | **$ 433,000** | **$ 0.345710** | **$ 1,497** |

Rate Comparison

| General - Urban Base | Water | Water Access | Water Usage | Sewerage | Garbage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $ 852 | | | $ 237 | $ 270 |
| $ 304 | | $ 46 | $ 45 | $ 237 | $ 270 |
| $ 304 | | $ 46 | $ 82 | $ 238 | $ 270 |
| **$ 428** | | **$ 290** | **$ 600** | **$ 769** | **$ 328** |

| General Waste | S/W Levy | Total | General |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | $ 3,895 | $ 2,536 |
| | | $ 3,489 | $ 2,891 |
| | | $ 2,304 | $ 1,668 |
| **$ 166** | **$ 25** | **$ 4,103** | $ 1,925 |

**Cost Comparison – Albury/QPRC**

| Description | ALBURY | QPRC |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| a) Mayor/Councillors | **$221,170** | **$271,598** |
| b) Council | **$49,841** | **$65,941** |
| c) General Manager | **$357,044** | **$351,655 + Car Allowance** |
| d) Senior Staff | **$615,000** | **$1,089,160** |
| e) Employee Costs (QPRC actual) | | |
| • 2005 | | **$13.899m** |
| • 2014 | | **$23.064m** |
| • 2022 | | **$38.2m** |
| | | |

**Source – Annual Report**

QPRC Financial Summary

Dear OLG NSW Minister,

It has been suggested that your administration may not have easy access to my previous correspondence with the OLG, NSW.

I will therefore try to produce an extended summary of my opinions/concerns/complaints, with some additional queries about the Queanbeyan/Palerang Regional Council, and also try to include documentation, via numerous numbered articles, that seem to validate many of my opinions/concerns/complaints.

Thanks for your time, as this will be a lengthy document.

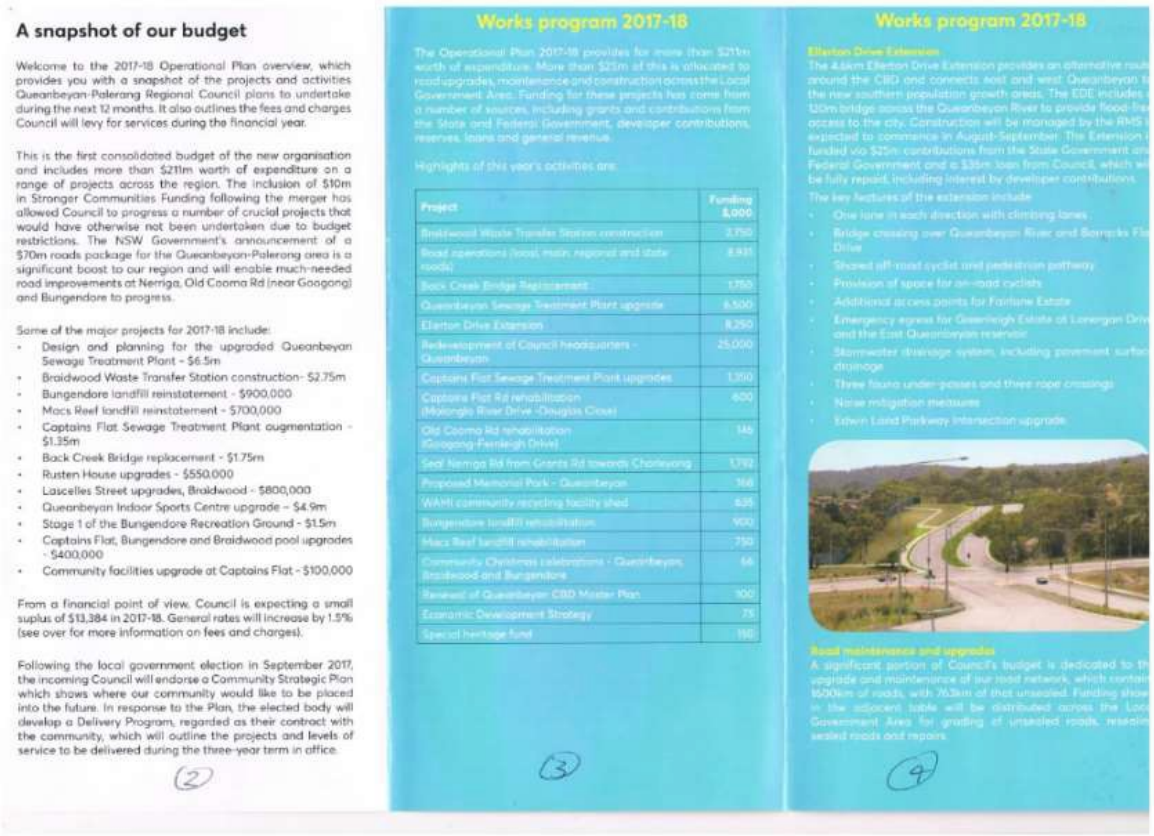
(Note: The points and articles referred to, are not necessarily in a chronological order of events, nor in order of importance.)

Regards, S[redacted] Young, Queanbeyan.

1. QPRC ratepayers were originally notified that the new Queanbeyan council administrative building would be funded by a $25 million loan. (**articles 4** and **5**)
2. At a later council meeting, which was videoed and archived on the QPRC website, the CEO started his estimate of this new council administrative building cost at $35 million, then proceeded explaining new additional costings, escalating the proposed costing to over $50 million. (**articles 6, 7** and **12**)
3. An unsolicited proposal from a consortium was accepted whilst council was in administration. (**articles 6** and **12**)
4. This consortium of a real estate company, McNamee, a builder, Milin builders and developer, Turnkey Projects, who were rarely, if ever, mentioned by council and most council meetings about this Queanbeyan new administrative building were over a few years in closed council sessions. A local journalist, Elliot Williams, mentioned the members of this consortium in one article that appeared in the Queanbeyan Age, which is not a widely read local paper, and a company search indicated this consortium was formed whilst the council was in administration. (**articles 6** and **7**)
5. As designs for the new Queanbeyan council administrative building, its initial architectural firm was approved, in April 2017, whilst council was in administration, and designs seemed available at the first council meeting in September 2017. The original design plans cost $700,000. The design costs for this building have now reached $1.1 million, as some alterations were needed to the original design plan. (**articles 6, 21** and **35**)
6. Some large loans and acceptance of an unsolicited consortium bid were also approved whilst council were in administration, although the administrator seemed to have not declared a conflict of interest in CBD land interests, but these decisions, that had large council expenditures and real estate deals, were seemingly, not affected. (**articles 9, 25** and **34**).
7. Large loans were approved whilst the council was in administration mode and most of these loans tended to benefit the Queanbeyan district, and not be spread more evenly throughout the region. (**article 11**)
8. In less than 20 years the retirement population of ratepayers will probably increase to about 50% (**article 32**) and the large council debts, much of which will be due in 20 years for ratepayers, will need repayment. This will then, in my opinion, become an inter-generational ratepayer debt, as many older ratepayers, like myself, will be either dead, or not capable of paying excessive rates, so the debt will be then carried by the next generation of ratepayers.

9. A prudent investor, that the council seems to consider itself, and is listed as one of its investing standards, should not accumulate such large debts that future generations of ratepayers would struggle to pay back, without large rate increases. **(articles 22, 28** and **29**)
10. QPRC seem to rely on frequent government grants and low interest government loans. With a massive Ellerton Drive extension drive extension road, that opens up some development areas and that ratepayers are enabling with a $36 million ratepayer loan, and with extra $25 million from both commonwealth and NSW, a complete ring road around Queanbeyan now seems highly unlikely for Queanbeyan in the future. (**article 25**). I am NSW taxpayer, and consider that amalgamated councils, should not receive a disproportional % of taxpayer grants and low interest government loans, both from NSW and Federal governments, compared to non-amalgamated councils, or other NSW projects.
11. QPRC has spent over $12 million in consultant fees since its amalgamation, in what I consider excessive fees, and excessive consultant usage. (**article 19**)
12. As of February, 2019, QPRC ratepayers numbered 26,905, (**article 26**). QPRC expects expenditure of around $260 million in the 2019/2020 (**article 28**). This seems to me to be an exceedingly high debt level for the QPRC to enter into. (Each million dollars of debt, divided by about 27,000 ratepayers means each ratepayer would be accountable for around $37, assuming no interest were charged, and with numerous long-term loans, amounting to around $260 million, would amount to over $9,600 per ratepayer, assuming no interest is charged, and this does not include separate council rate payments that would also need to be paid.) Large QPRC borrowings could only be repaid by large council rate increases in the future. (articles
13. There are 11 councillors on the QPRC regional council, 4 elected from the Overall team, (Tim Overall is the present mayor), councillors Taylor, Bray, Overall, Biscotti and, two councillors that seem to act with the Overall team, forming a voting bloc, councillors Hicks and Schweikert, and five other councillors, Marshall, Harrison, Winchester, Brown and Noveska. Councillor Hicks was a previous deputy mayor and now councillor Schweikert is the deputy mayor. With 6 majority votes held by this voting bloc, most Overall motions on council are easily passed, as they have the majority vote, although ratepayers did not elect 6 Overall team-based councillors.
14. Public Forum questions prior to 2019, are no longer present for public viewing on the council website and ratepayer questions must be lodged via the council website and CEO with at least one week's notice prior to council meetings and by 12 midday on that day, not close of business. Ratepayers must have joined the One Voice section to post questions and the council then knows and can tract ratepayer questions/complaints. If you do not have internet access, how would you even know, let alone access this section for queries/complaints? (**article 17**)
15. Some replies from the QPRC CEO are included, that were made about my queries/complaints to the OLG, although the references to the pre-2019 Public Forum questions are now no longer available for ratepayers to view on the QPRC website. (**articles 14** and **40**)
16. As a former real estate agent as mayor, should councillors now be declaring, with some new code of conduct rules, whether they have any close associations with any real estate firms? If the sole independent valuer for the valuable Queanbeyan CBD assets has not been named for ratepayers, how can ratepayers be certain that this independent valuer has no links to any real estate firms and/or councillors in estimating its Queanbeyan CBD valuations? (**articles 13, 23, and 24**)
17. A comparison of the first amalgamated expenditures, compared to more recent expenditure trends, seems to indicate that the QPRC, is quickly becoming inundated with large debt issues. (**articles 21,22, 31** and **38**)

18. Some adjusted expenditure totals, called operational adjustments, seem to require further explanations, as to how these newer totals are calculated. (**articles 36** and **41)**
19. The QPRC has several papers within its region, The Canberra Times, which does not cover much Queanbeyan news, The Queanbeyan Age which has for several years been incorporated with the Chronicle, is not delivered to houses, contains little Queanbeyan in depth news and is read by only a small number of ratepayers, the Braidwood Times, the Braidwood Bugle (an online paper), The Bungendore Weekly (which has mainly social Bungendore news) and the District Bulletin, which now tries to cover district news.
    The QPRC seems to mainly advertise in the little read Queanbeyan Age, Bungendore Weekly and Braidwood Times. With internet access limited and not easily available to some district areas, access to council news is limited, although a council-based news publication provides some council news, but tends to not always discuss many large budget items, or their costings in depth.
    I try to attend most Queanbeyan-based council meetings and watch the Bungendore-based meetings via webcast videos, but many people still seem unaware that this webcast choice is available. When council states it publishes news in local papers, this news would not then reach the majority of ratepayers, so many ratepayers still seem to remain uninformed, especially of council debt and loan issues.



## A snapshot of our budget

Welcome to the 2017-18 Operational Plan overview, which provides you with a snapshot of the projects and activities Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council plans to undertake during the next 12 months. It also outlines the fees and charges Council will levy for services during the financial year.

This is the first consolidated budget of the new organisation and includes more than $211m worth of expenditure on a range of projects across the region. The inclusion of $10m in Stronger Communities Funding following the merger has allowed Council to progress a number of crucial projects that would have otherwise not been undertaken due to budget restrictions. The NSW Government's announcement of a $70m roads package for the Queanbeyan-Palerang area is a significant boost to our region and will enable much-needed road improvements at Nerriga, Old Cooma Rd (near Googong) and Bungendore to progress.

Some of the major projects for 2017-18 include:

- Design and planning for the upgraded Queanbeyan Sewage Treatment Plant - $6.5m
- Braidwood Waste Transfer Station construction- $2.75m
- Bungendore landfill reinstatement - $900,000
- Macs Reef landfill reinstatement - $700,000
- Captains Flat Sewage Treatment Plant augmentation - $1.35m
- Back Creek Bridge replacement - $1.75m
- Rusten House upgrades - $550,000
- Lascelles Street upgrades, Braidwood - $800,000
- Queanbeyan Indoor Sports Centre upgrade – $4.9m
- Stage 1 of the Bungendore Recreation Ground - $1.5m
- Captains Flat, Bungendore and Braidwood pool upgrades - $400,000
- Community facilities upgrade at Captains Flat - $100,000

From a financial point of view, Council is expecting a small suplus of $13,384 in 2017-18. General rates will increase by 1.5% (see over for more information on fees and charges).

Following the local government election in September 2017, the incoming Council will endorse a Community Strategic Plan which shows where our community would like to be placed into the future. In response to the Plan, the elected body will develop a Delivery Program, regarded as their contract with the community, which will outline the projects and levels of service to be delivered during the three-year term in office.

(2)

## Works program 2017-18

The Operational Plan 2017-18 provides for more than $211m worth of expenditure. More than $25m of this is allocated to road upgrades, maintenance and construction across the Local Government Area. Funding for these projects has come from a number of sources, including grants and contributions from the State and Federal Government, developer contributions, reserves, loans and general revenue.

Highlights of this year's activities are:

| Project | Funding $,000 |
|---|---|
| Braidwood Waste Transfer Station construction | 2,750 |
| Road operations (local, main, regional and state roads) | 8,931 |
| Back Creek Bridge Replacement | 1,750 |
| Queanbeyan Sewage Treatment Plant upgrade | 6,500 |
| Ellerton Drive Extension | 8,250 |
| Redevelopment of Council headquarters - Queanbeyan | 25,000 |
| Captains Flat Sewage Treatment Plant upgrades | 1,350 |
| Captains Flat Rd rehabilitation (Molonglo River Drive -Douglas Close) | 600 |
| Old Cooma Rd rehabilitation (Googong-Fernleigh Drive) | 146 |
| Seal Nerriga Rd from Grants Rd towards Charleyong | 1,792 |
| Proposed Memorial Park - Queanbeyan | 166 |
| WAHI community recycling facility shed | 635 |
| Bungendore landfill rehabilitation | 900 |
| Macs Reef landfill rehabilitation | 750 |
| Community Christmas celebrations - Queanbeyan, Braidwood and Bungendore | 66 |
| Renewal of Queanbeyan CBD Master Plan | 100 |
| Economic Development Strategy | 75 |
| Special heritage fund | 150 |

(3)

## Works program 2017-18

**Ellerton Drive Extension**

The 4.6km Ellerton Drive Extension provides an alternative route around the CBD and connects east and west Queanbeyan to the new southern population growth areas. The EDE includes a 120m bridge across the Queanbeyan River to provide flood-free access to the city. Construction will be managed by the RMS and is expected to commence in August-September. The Extension is funded via $25m contributions from the State Government and Federal Government and a $35m loan from Council, which will be fully repaid, including interest by developer contributions.

The key features of the extension include:

- One lane in each direction with climbing lanes
- Bridge crossing over Queanbeyan River and Barracks Flat Drive
- Shared off-road cyclist and pedestrian pathway
- Provision of space for on-road cyclists
- Additional access points for Fairlane Estate
- Emergency egress for Greenleigh Estate at Lonergan Drive and the East Queanbeyan reservoir
- Stormwater drainage system, including pavement surface drainage
- Three fauna under-passes and three rope crossings
- Noise mitigation measures
- Edwin Land Parkway intersection upgrade

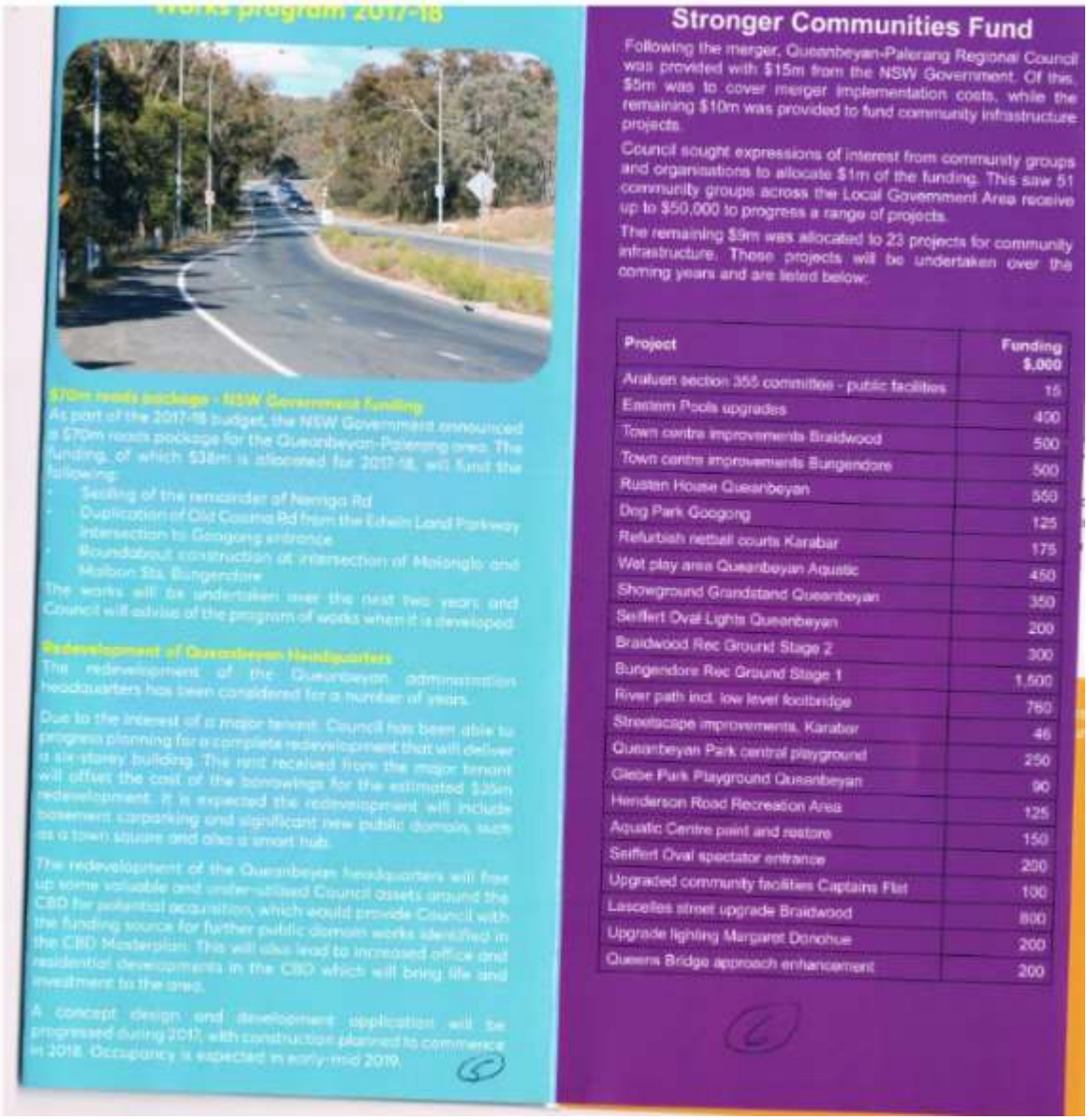


**Road maintenance and upgrades**

A significant portion of Council's budget is dedicated to the upgrade and maintenance of our road network, which contains 1600km of roads, with 763km of that unsealed. Funding shown in the adjacent table will be distributed across the Local Government Area for grading of unsealed roads, resealing sealed roads and repairs.

(4)

**Article 1**



works program 2017-18



**$70m roads package - NSW Government funding**

As part of the 2017-18 budget, the NSW Government announced a $70m roads package for the Queanbeyan-Palerang area. The funding, of which $38m is allocated for 2017-18, will fund the following:

- Sealing of the remainder of Nerriga Rd
- Duplication of Old Cooma Rd from the Edwin Land Parkway intersection to Googong entrance
- Roundabout construction at intersection of Molonglo and Malbon Sts, Bungendore

The works will be undertaken over the next two years and Council will advise of the program of works when it is developed.

**Redevelopment of Queanbeyan Headquarters**

The redevelopment of the Queanbeyan administration headquarters has been considered for a number of years.

Due to the interest of a major tenant, Council has been able to progress planning for a complete redevelopment that will deliver a six-storey building. The rent received from the major tenant will offset the cost of the borrowings for the estimated $26m redevelopment. It is expected the redevelopment will include basement carparking and significant new public domain, such as a town square and also a smart hub.

The redevelopment of the Queanbeyan headquarters will free up some valuable and under-utilised Council assets around the CBD for potential acquisition, which would provide Council with the funding source for further public domain works identified in the CBD Masterplan. This will also lead to increased office and residential developments in the CBD which will bring life and investment to the area.

A concept design and development application will be progressed during 2017, with construction planned to commence in 2018. Occupancy is expected in early-mid 2019.

## Stronger Communities Fund

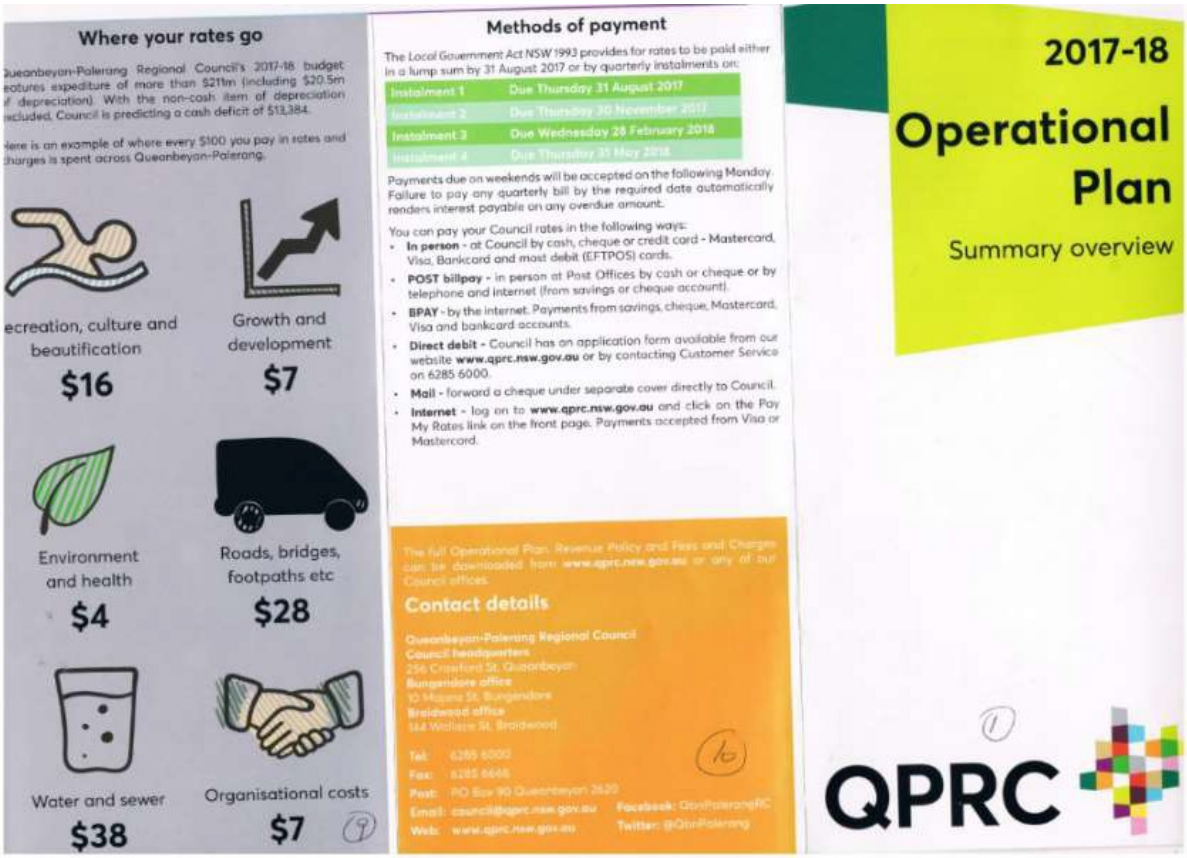
Following the merger, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council was provided with $15m from the NSW Government. Of this, $5m was to cover merger implementation costs, while the remaining $10m was provided to fund community infrastructure projects.

Council sought expressions of interest from community groups and organisations to allocate $1m of the funding. This saw 51 community groups across the Local Government Area receive up to $50,000 to progress a range of projects.

The remaining $9m was allocated to 23 projects for community infrastructure. These projects will be undertaken over the coming years and are listed below:

| Project | Funding $,000 |
|---|---|
| Araluen section 355 committee - public facilities | 15 |
| Eastern Pools upgrades | 400 |
| Town centre improvements Braidwood | 500 |
| Town centre improvements Bungendore | 500 |
| Rusten House Queanbeyan | 550 |
| Dog Park Googong | 125 |
| Refurbish netball courts Karabar | 175 |
| Wet play area Queanbeyan Aquatic | 450 |
| Showground Grandstand Queanbeyan | 350 |
| Seiffert Oval Lights Queanbeyan | 200 |
| Braidwood Rec Ground Stage 2 | 300 |
| Bungendore Rec Ground Stage 1 | 1,500 |
| River path incl. low level footbridge | 760 |
| Streetscape improvements, Karabar | 46 |
| Queanbeyan Park central playground | 250 |
| Glebe Park Playground Queanbeyan | 90 |
| Henderson Road Recreation Area | 125 |
| Aquatic Centre paint and restore | 150 |
| Seiffert Oval spectator entrance | 200 |
| Upgraded community facilities Captains Flat | 100 |
| Lascelles street upgrade Braidwood | 800 |
| Upgrade lighting Margaret Donohue | 200 |
| Queens Bridge approach enhancement | 200 |

**Article 2**



## Where your rates go

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council's 2017-18 budget features expediture of more than $211m (including $20.5m of depreciation). With the non-cash item of depreciation included, Council is predicting a cash deficit of $13,384.

Here is an example of where every $100 you pay in rates and charges is spent across Queanbeyan-Palerang.

ecreation, culture and beautification
**$16**

Growth and development
**$7**

Environment and health
**$4**

Roads, bridges, footpaths etc
**$28**

Water and sewer
**$38**

Organisational costs
**$7**

## Methods of payment

The *Local Government Act NSW 1993* provides for rates to be paid either in a lump sum by 31 August 2017 or by quarterly instalments on:

| | |
|---|---|
| Instalment 1 | Due Thursday 31 August 2017 |
| Instalment 2 | Due Thursday 30 November 2017 |
| Instalment 3 | Due Wednesday 28 February 2018 |
| Instalment 4 | Due Thursday 31 May 2018 |

Payments due on weekends will be accepted on the following Monday. Failure to pay any quarterly bill by the required date automatically renders interest payable on any overdue amount.

You can pay your Council rates in the following ways:

- **In person** - at Council by cash, cheque or credit card - Mastercard, Visa, Bankcard and most debit (EFTPOS) cards.
- **POST billpay** - in person at Post Offices by cash or cheque or by telephone and internet (from savings or cheque account).
- **BPAY** - by the internet. Payments from savings, cheque, Mastercard, Visa and bankcard accounts.
- **Direct debit** - Council has an application form available from our website **www.qprc.nsw.gov.au** or by contacting Customer Service on 6285 6000.
- **Mail** - forward a cheque under separate cover directly to Council.
- **Internet** - log on to **www.qprc.nsw.gov.au** and click on the Pay My Rates link on the front page. Payments accepted from Visa or Mastercard.

The full Operational Plan, Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges can be downloaded from www.qprc.nsw.gov.au or any of our Council offices.

## Contact details

**Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council**
**Council headquarters**
256 Crawford St, Queanbeyan
**Bungendore office**
10 Majara St, Bungendore
**Braidwood office**
144 Wallace St, Braidwood

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Post: PO Box 90 Queanbeyan 2620
Email: council@qprc.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.qprc.nsw.gov.au
Facebook: GovPalerangRC
Twitter: @GovPalerang

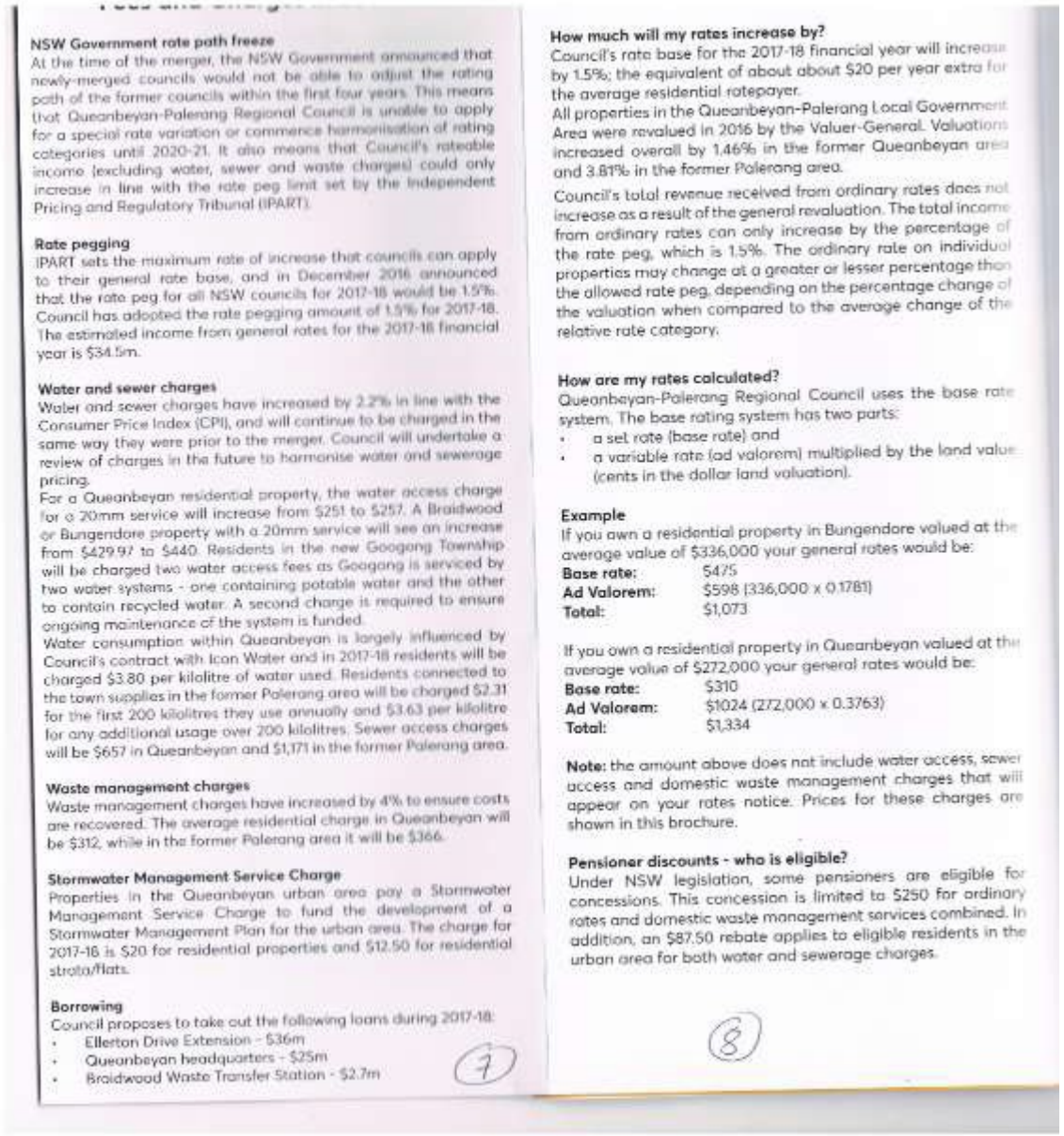
2017-18

# Operational Plan

Summary overview

QPRC

**Article 3**



**NSW Government rate path freeze**
At the time of the merger, the NSW Government announced that newly-merged councils would not be able to adjust the rating path of the former councils within the first four years. This means that Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council is unable to apply for a special rate variation or commence harmonisation of rating categories until 2020-21. It also means that Council's rateable income (excluding water, sewer and waste charges) could only increase in line with the rate peg limit set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

**Rate pegging**
IPART sets the maximum rate of increase that councils can apply to their general rate base, and in December 2016 announced that the rate peg for all NSW councils for 2017-18 would be 1.5%. Council has adopted the rate pegging amount of 1.5% for 2017-18. The estimated income from general rates for the 2017-18 financial year is $34.5m.

**Water and sewer charges**
Water and sewer charges have increased by 2.2% in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and will continue to be charged in the same way they were prior to the merger. Council will undertake a review of charges in the future to harmonise water and sewerage pricing.
For a Queanbeyan residential property, the water access charge for a 20mm service will increase from $251 to $257. A Braidwood or Bungendore property with a 20mm service will see an increase from $429.97 to $440. Residents in the new Googong Township will be charged two water access fees as Googong is serviced by two water systems - one containing potable water and the other to contain recycled water. A second charge is required to ensure ongoing maintenance of the system is funded.
Water consumption within Queanbeyan is largely influenced by Council's contract with Icon Water and in 2017-18 residents will be charged $3.80 per kilolitre of water used. Residents connected to the town supplies in the former Palerang area will be charged $2.31 for the first 200 kilolitres they use annually and $3.63 per kilolitre for any additional usage over 200 kilolitres. Sewer access charges will be $657 in Queanbeyan and $1,171 in the former Palerang area.

**Waste management charges**
Waste management charges have increased by 4% to ensure costs are recovered. The average residential charge in Queanbeyan will be $312, while in the former Palerang area it will be $366.

**Stormwater Management Service Charge**
Properties in the Queanbeyan urban area pay a Stormwater Management Service Charge to fund the development of a Stormwater Management Plan for the urban area. The charge for 2017-18 is $20 for residential properties and $12.50 for residential strata/flats.

**Borrowing**
Council proposes to take out the following loans during 2017-18:
- Ellerton Drive Extension - $36m
- Queanbeyan headquarters - $25m
- Braidwood Waste Transfer Station - $2.7m

7

**How much will my rates increase by?**
Council's rate base for the 2017-18 financial year will increase by 1.5%; the equivalent of about about $20 per year extra for the average residential ratepayer.
All properties in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Local Government Area were revalued in 2016 by the Valuer-General. Valuations increased overall by 1.46% in the former Queanbeyan area and 3.81% in the former Palerang area.

Council's total revenue received from ordinary rates does not increase as a result of the general revaluation. The total income from ordinary rates can only increase by the percentage of the rate peg, which is 1.5%. The ordinary rate on individual properties may change at a greater or lesser percentage than the allowed rate peg, depending on the percentage change of the valuation when compared to the average change of the relative rate category.

**How are my rates calculated?**
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council uses the base rate system. The base rating system has two parts:
- a set rate (base rate) and
- a variable rate (ad valorem) multiplied by the land value (cents in the dollar land valuation).

**Example**
If you own a residential property in Bungendore valued at the average value of $336,000 your general rates would be:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Base rate:** | $475 |
| **Ad Valorem:** | $598 (336,000 x 0.1781) |
| **Total:** | $1,073 |

If you own a residential property in Queanbeyan valued at the average value of $272,000 your general rates would be:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Base rate:** | $310 |
| **Ad Valorem:** | $1024 (272,000 x 0.3763) |
| **Total:** | $1,334 |

**Note:** the amount above does not include water access, sewer access and domestic waste management charges that will appear on your rates notice. Prices for these charges are shown in this brochure.

**Pensioner discounts - who is eligible?**
Under NSW legislation, some pensioners are eligible for concessions. This concession is limited to $250 for ordinary rates and domestic waste management services combined. In addition, an $87.50 rebate applies to eligible residents in the urban area for both water and sewerage charges.

8

**Article 4**

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Integrated planning and reporting

- The framework
  - The State Plan and other key State and regional plans
  - Community Engagement
  - Community Strategic Plan
  - Other Strategic Plans
  - The Resourcing Strategy
  - The Delivery Program
  - **The Operational Plan**
  - Annual Report (Reporting)
- The process
- Development and support

## The Operational Plan







The Operational Plan spells out the detail of the Delivery Program, identifying the individual projects and activities that will be undertaken in a specific year to achieve the commitments made in the Delivery Program.

The Operational Plan must include the council's detailed annual budget, along with the council's Statement of Revenue Policy, which includes the proposed rates, fees and charges for that financial year.

It should be apparent how the Operational Plan activities work towards achieving the Delivery Program, and in turn work towards achieving the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. The activities of the Operational Plan are enabled by the Resourcing Strategy.

Operational Plan responsibilities should be linked to team planning and the staff performance system, so that they become an intrinsic part of a staff member's work planning and regular performance review.

**Article 5**

# Petition to QPRC for greater transparency in community dealings.

I, the undersigned, hereby petition the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council to undertake to a greater degree of transparency, in its dealings with the community it has undertaken to represent.
The following are the reasons I request this greater transparency:
As a long-term resident and QPRC ratepayer, it is of great concern that the rate-payers of the QPRC will seemingly be indebted for extremely large amounts of money for the long-term foreseeable future.
In a very smallish pamphlet, the 2017-2018 Operational Plan Summary Overview, by QPRC with small print and very tightly printed information with an incredibly long list, yet small printed figure listings, some on coloured background that many older residents and others with poor sight, would have difficulty reading, ratepayers were presented with an estimated expenditure by QPRC of $211 million over the proposed 2017/2018 period.
“Council was expecting a small surplus of $13,384”, yet Council was proposing loans of:
“$38 million for Ellerton Drive, $25 million for Queanbeyan Headquarters and $2.7 million for Braidwood Waste Transfer”
Ellerton Drive is later estimated at “$8.25 million”.“Estimated income from General Rates, 2017/2018 was $34.5 million”.
“2017/2018 expenditure of $211 million”
From a recent QPRC meeting, 27/9/2017, the QPRC general manager, stated that the initial $25 million for Queanbeyan Council Headquarters was originally costed at $25 million, and this initial costing is listed in the proposed 2017/2018 Operational Summary Brochure.
The general manager then stated that the costing had then become $35 million, and now seems to be estimated at $57.4 million as a Hub, extra parking, etc., had been added.
$10 million seems to have been estimated as rent from a major tenant from this new Queanbeyan Administrative Council building, but I would suspect that this would be from rent over several years, and this money would not, possibly, be immediately available from the tenant to the QPRC on occupation.
A $39 million borrowing, rather than a $25 million loan for Queanbeyan Headquarters seemed to be now suggested by council, but this seemed to be presented as OK and reasonable, as the council could possibly get a government loan for under 4% for 20 years, and the council could also use some of the money accumulated in the water and sewage funds, and the water and sewage would then own parts of this building.
Would not ratepayers, via QPRC administration, own these assets, with council as custodians of our assets and not water and sewage?
In a recent Queanbeyan Chronicle, Mr. Tim Overall, the previous administrator and present QPRC mayor, stated that 3 independent administrators, decided on the approval of the Ellerton Drive Extension road, without also mentioning that he was one of those three administrators, and that the other two administrators were from outside the QPRC region and would, therefore, have little background or knowledge of this proposal.
QPRC has not seemed to inform ratepayers and residents:
Why the old Queanbeyan Administrative building needed to be demolished?
With strong foundations to allow future floors to be added to the old Queanbeyan Council administrative building, why this option was not considered and/or why it was not possible?
If this old administrative building had to be demolished, why a replacement building could not then be built on the original footprints of this old administrative building?
With the QPRC region greatly expanding and the geographical regional centre of QPRC no longer Queanbeyan, why a Bungendore Council Administrative Building could not now be used as the main QPRC Administrative Building, with a smaller Queanbeyan Administrative Building, even if some minor refurbishments may be needed for the Bungendore Council site to become the main QPRC administrative site.
Why the Queanbeyan Bicentennial Hall could not then be sometimes used for perhaps any larger

council meetings that may be needed in Queanbeyan.?
With rapidly escalating costs, why does not the QPRC council ask for other quotes for this Queanbeyan Headquarters costly building?
What happens to the old trees in the present site of council building proposal?
What happens to a few buildings, such as the old fire station and cottages, as some of these buildings seem to be presently heritage listed, so if sold, should not be then able to be demolished and redeveloped, under the present heritage listing restraints?
Why public cars spaces that were previously donated by some local business for the Q car park, can now be incorporated into a council building, where they will no longer be available for 24 hour public car parking, with many probably assigned to either, council and/or tenant parking, and these car parks would then be unavailable to the public outside council hours?
It appears that QPRC will now be operating with an additional $14 million deficit, at the start of the new QPRC elected council operations.
(A $25 million loan for the Queanbeyan Headquarters has now seemingly morphed into a $39 million loan, so $39 million-$25 million equals an additional $14 million loan that QPRC will need.)
Regards, [redacted] Young, Queanbeyan.

**Article 7**

https://districtbulletin.com.au/who-wins-from-qprc-downtown-land-sales-agreement/

**Article 8**

https://districtbulletin.com.au/finding-administrator-overstepped-in-land-sales-approval/

**Article 9**

https://districtbulletin.com.au/qprc-ratepayer-downtown-bids-plans-and-value-for-money/

**Article 10**

https://the-riotact.com/boomtown-q-town-impressive-line-up-of-development-initiatives-set-for-queanbeyan/271590?utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=ra&fbclid=IwAR2_XceOrjKtOoWMJe6FE59x-t9SpH7KvFjuA0hO5L-rYSJXksvwd_BZ9eE

**Article 11**

https://districtbulletin.com.au/?s=confusion+erupts

**Article 12**

Our Ref: SF160650/01-06
26 February 2019
Ms S[redacted] Young
Email: [redacted]
Dear Ms Young

**Queanbeyan CBD Development**

I refer to your correspondence on 31 October 2018 to the NSW Premier's Office, which included a copy of your letter to the editor titled "Invigorating Queanbeyan CBD, or not getting much ratepayer return for valuable city assets".

The Premier's office advised you on 5 November 2018 that it had referred your correspondence to Council for a response, as it dealt with local council issues. I apologise for the delay in replying to you.

Council developed a structured approach from 2016 to derive value from its CBD property assets, aiming to recycle several of those assets into other uses such as public domain, decked carparks, offices and aged care residential, following establishment of a new head office and the subsequent sale, lease or development of other CBD buildings vacated by Council's staff.

That approach established the governance framework for dealing with property, and also sought to place the CBD strategy and masterplan at the centre of the CBD transformation and to guide subsequent developments. Strategies, policies and plans were published for community feedback, and reported back to Council. The elements of the structured approach included:

- Property Strategy and Policy 2016
- CBD Property Feasibility Study 2016
- Unsolicited Proposals Framework 2016
- Probity Framework 2016
- Cinema and Carparks Strategy 2016
- Queanbeyan CBD Transformation Strategy 2016/17
- Heads of Agreement/s (HoA) 2016/17
- Various Council reports: - incl heads of agreements, valuations, reduction of number of properties under consideration, staging of the disposal or development of sites. Those open session reports and all resolutions are published on Council's website
  - 23 November 2016 (closed session)
  - 27 September 2017
  - 23 May 2018
  - 27 June 2018
  - 24 October 2018 (closed session)

- 19 December 2018
- Carparking Strategy 2018
- CBD business case 2018, based on 6 stages of CBD redevelopment:
  - River walk, caravan park, smart city
  - Head office and Lowe public domain redevelopment
  - Morriset carpark redevelopment
  - Rutledge carpark redevelopment
  - Monaro St refurbishment
  - Crawford carpark redevelopment
- CBD masterplan refresh 2017/19, due for consultation from April

Concept plans from the HoA proponents for stage 1 are yet to be considered, to then progress to DA (and associated community feedback), then independent valuation and potential sale, with subdivision of allotments and design of proponent's buildings and public domain to be guided by the new CBD masterplan.
Council has also received a number of questions from you and other members of the public about the Queanbeyan CBD development during the Public Forums in October 2017, February 2018, May 2018, July 2018, October 2018, November 2018, December 2018 and January 2019.
All responses to these questions are available on Council's website at https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-business/Public-Forums
Council has issued media releases on the matter on 19 July 2017 and 25 October 2018. These may be accessed on Council's website under News & Media.
The topic was also discussed at Community Forums in Queanbeyan on 3 May and 18 October 2018, and the recordings from these meetings are available on Council's website.
Council believes that all the questions you raised in your letter to the editor have been answered openly and comprehensively through the above avenues. Council will continue to inform its ratepayers of progress with the Queanbeyan CBD transformation and redevelopment through the CBD masterplan, business paper reports, community forums and media channels, except for those matters that are deemed commercial-in-confidence and considered in closed session.
A copy of this letter will be forwarded to the NSW Premier's Office for their information.
Yours sincerely

[redacted]
CEO/General Manager

**Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council**

**Article 14**

**3. From the council amalgamation, has water and sewer money ever been used, or transferred, to projects other than water and sewer? If water and sewer money has been transferred and/or used for other projects, how much water and sewer money has been used, or transferred, from council accumulated internal water and sewer reserves, and what were these projects?**

**Response - Finance**
Councils are not permitted to utilise water and sewer funds for projects within the general fund unless there is an internal loan arrangement. QPRC does not hold existing internal loan arrangements between general and water/sewer funds.

**Article 16**

- **Re: past responses to public forum questions aren't appearing on the "questions on notice" page.**

  The QPRC website has been developed to provide information that is easily accessible and current rather than be an archive of all past material that is rarely accessed.

  Our current "Questions on Notice" page only includes responses to questions from this year. Past responses to public forum questions have been sent directly to enquirers such as yourself. You should have a copy. We also keep them in our records management system to meet our record keeping requirements.

  With the changes to the Model Code of Meeting Practice, and the fact that public presentations, petitions and responses to questions on notice are all included in a part of the meeting now referred to as Public Forum, responses to questions on notice will form part of the official minutes for that part of the meeting. Those minutes will be available on our web site.

Regards

[redacted]

**Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council**

**Tel:** 02 [redacted] **Mob:** [redacted]

**Web:** www.qprc.nsw.gov.au

**Mail:** PO Box 90 Queanbeyan NSW 2620

**Article 17**

1. As trustees of public money, with expenditure procedures that should:
    a. Keep rates, fees and charges affordable.
    b. Preserve capital.
    c. Meet financial future benchmarks, to be “fit for the future”.
    d. Act as would a “prudent person standard”, acting with similar diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise.

    How can the QPRC have accumulated present loans of nearly $36,894,571?
    Since the QPRC has less than 28,000 ratepayers, this seems to have ratepayers presently indebted by $1,318 for each ratepayer.

    Within a couple of years this ratepayer loan indebtedness will grow by $52,650,000 in 2018/19, another, $25,900,000 in 2019/20, and a further $105,400,00 in 2020/21, making the total indebtedness, $220,854,571, by 2021, excluding any council loan repayments, added interest on council loan repayments, or additional council loans.

    Assuming we have approximately 28,000 ratepayers, and we actually have less ratepayers, our ratepayer loan indebtedness will then mean every ratepayer is indebted by over $7,000, approximately $7,888 by 2021.
    (Financial loan figures are taken from Public Forum QPRC loan answers 12th September, 2018)

2. How does QPRC intend to ensure that future and present ratepayers, and also future QPRC councils, are not so indebted in the future by loan repayments, that little council core maintenance projects can be undertaken, and council rates do not become excessive?

**Article 18**

# ATTACHMENT TO MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC FORUM HELD ON *8 May 2019*

**4 'Questions on Notice' from the Public**

Responses to the following 'Questions on Notice' received up to *Wednesday 1 May 2019* were provided and tabled at the meeting

## Questions submitted by: S[redacted] Young

**1. In the September 2018 Quarterly QPRC Budget Review Statement, (page 3 Significant Budget Variations), the anticipated costing for the demolition of the Queanbeyan old council administrative building was calculated at being $2,247,000. Would this amount have included the initial demolisher's costing and the present replacement demolisher's costings for this Queanbeyan administrative building?**

**Response – Community Connections**

The amount of $2.247m included in the September 2018 Budget Review Statement represented the estimated asset write-down associated with 257 Crawford St. The actual asset write-down was $2.181m.

**2. When will we know the final total costings for the demolition of this old Queanbeyan administrative building?**

**Response – Community Connections**

As previously advised, the final cost will not be known until the works are complete

**3. Some internal reserves, such as water and sewer were previously agreed by council to be used in the original replacement administrative building, such as around $13.3 million. Will any water and sewer reserve funds be used for the new Queanbeyan administrative building?**

**Response – Finance**

No funding from the Queanbeyan water and sewer funds is proposed to fund the construction of the new Queanbeyan head office and smart hub.

**4. If so, what amounts of water and sewer funds will be used in this new administrative building?**

**Response – Finance**

See above

**5. What is the estimated total costing for the new Queanbeyan administrative building?**

**Response – Community Connections**

Council is preparing an updated cost estimate for the project based on concept plans. Variable include size of basement car parking, conference/smart hub facilities, tenant space and new foyer for Bicentennial Hall.

**6. What loans will be taken out for this proposed new Queanbeyan administrative building (e.g. How will it be financed?) Response – Finance**

Council's adopted Delivery Program shows that it plans to borrow $42m for the project. Any change to this figure would require Council resolution following consideration of the development application approved plans.

**7. Since the QPRC amalgamation, what approximate fees have been paid to consultants?**

**Response – Finance**

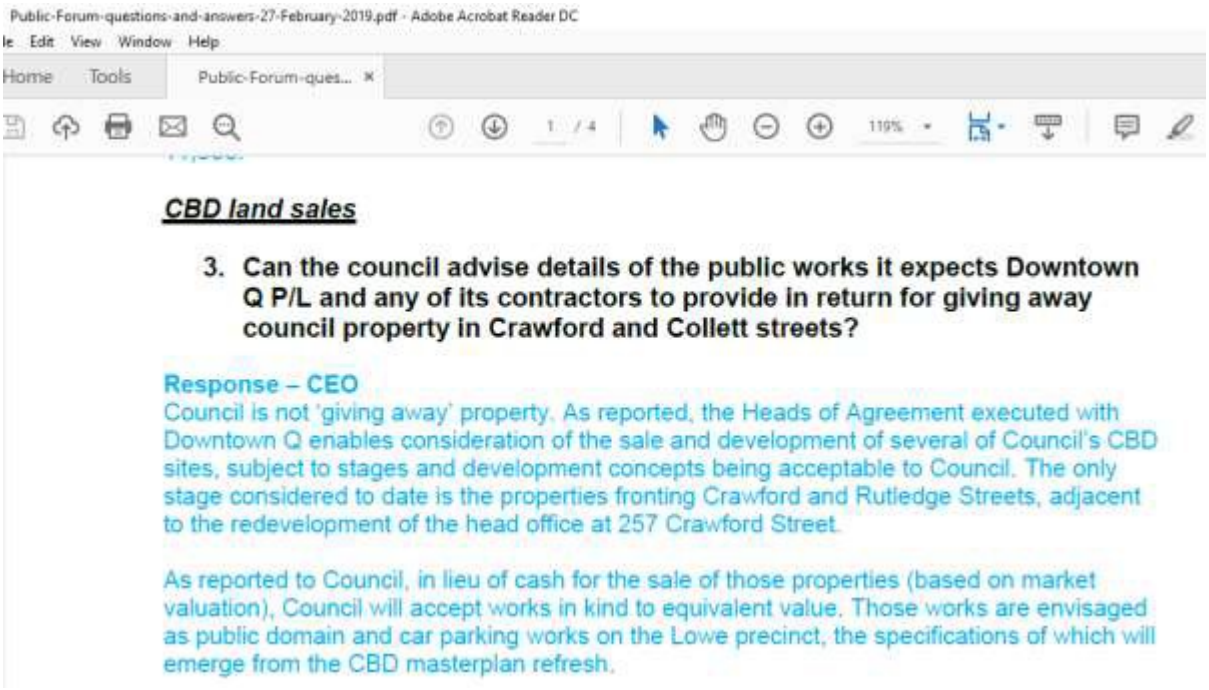
Council engages consultants regularly to provide professional or expert advice on a range of matters, including planning, strategy, design and project work.

As of May 2019, Council has spent $12.3m on consultants since the merger in May 2016.

**8. The council has previously purchased the Queanbeyan Westpac bank building, using council water and sewer funds. Does the rental money from this building go back into council water and sewer funding, or is it perhaps transferred to general council funds?**

**Response – Finance**
As this property is an asset of the Queanbeyan sewer fund, all income goes directly to the sewer fund.

## Article 19


Public-Forum-questions-and-answers-27-February-2019.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader DC

***CBD land sales***

3. **Can the council advise details of the public works it expects Downtown Q P/L and any of its contractors to provide in return for giving away council property in Crawford and Collett streets?**

**Response – CEO**
Council is not 'giving away' property. As reported, the Heads of Agreement executed with Downtown Q enables consideration of the sale and development of several of Council's CBD sites, subject to stages and development concepts being acceptable to Council. The only stage considered to date is the properties fronting Crawford and Rutledge Streets, adjacent to the redevelopment of the head office at 257 Crawford Street.

As reported to Council, in lieu of cash for the sale of those properties (based on market valuation), Council will accept works in kind to equivalent value. Those works are envisaged as public domain and car parking works on the Lowe precinct, the specifications of which will emerge from the CBD masterplan refresh.

(Above question 3 from [redacted]

## Article 20




**Questions – S [redacted] Young**

***Loans and financials***

16. **What are the approximate total costings for all QPRC loans from the date of the QPRC amalgamation to the end of March, 2019? Approximately how much interest is paid per month for these loans?**

**Response – Finance**
Since merging in May 2016, QPRC has entered borrowing agreements for $50.4 million. QPRC is expecting total interest charges for 2018-19 to be $2.5m.

17. **What is the approximate total value of council investments in late March 2019?**

**Response – Finance**
Council reports monthly on its investments and investment income. As highlighted in the March report, Council's total cash and investments for end of March is $223.6 million.

18. **What is the approximate income that council receives per month, and what are the main sources of this income?**

**Response – Finance**
Council's annual income sources are:

- Rates & Annual Charges $69.9 million
- User Charges $27.7 million
- Interest on Investment Income: $4.8 million
- Other Income: $2.5 million
- Operating Contributions: $2 million
- Operating Grants: $17.8 million
- Capital Contribution: $23.4 million
- Capital Grants: $ 61.3 million

Total Income: $209.6 million

***Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub***

19. **What is the estimated total cost of the re-design of the proposed new Queanbeyan council administrative building, including the original previous $700,000 costing?**

**Response – Community Connections**
The estimated cost to complete the concept design, including the costs incurred to design the previous version is approximately $1.1m.

On 26 April 2017, Council appointed Cox Architecture to develop a concept design for the building within the Lowe St car park. This tender was valued at $700,000. Council later resolved to not continue with the development on this site after the proposed major tenant declined to proceed.

On 24 October 2018, Council resolved to engage Cox Architecture to complete the concept design for the Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub on the site of the former administration building at 257 Crawford St. The fee agreed to by Council was $399,094.

By awarding the second contact to Cox Architecture, who already had some knowledge of the proposed developed, Council reduced the cost as opposed to engaging a new company to complete the concept design.

**20. Will the architects/designers of the new administrative building also receive a further % of the total building costs when this building is completed, and if this is correct, what % of the building costs would additional costings be?**

**Response – Community Connections**
The architects/designers for the Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub are engaged on a lump sum fee basis. The architects/designers will not receive an additional fee based on the final cost of the completed building. Cost estimates will be prepared at key milestones during the design phase and these will be used to amend the design to remain within budget.

**21. What will be the estimated total costing be for the demolition of the old Queanbeyan council administrative building, including the initial demolition costings for the firm that started the demolition process, but were later replaced?**

**Response – Community Connections**
The total cost to demolish the former Queanbeyan Council administrative building, including the cost to replace the original contractor, will not be known until the demolition works are complete. It is expected that the total cost will be similar to the funding allocated by Council when appointing the original contractor.

**Article 21**

***Finance – loans and debt*** *(From Public Forum 12th September) Questions from* [redacted]

**18. Can the Council provide the following details of all its loans that are either approved and drawn down, or that have been proposed for Council's consideration, as follows:**

- **The purpose of each loan**
- **The Loan amount, repayment period, starting date and current outstanding balance of each loan**
- **The loan amount as a proportion of the total project cost**
- **Where a loan is an internal loan, i.e. funded from other council reserves**

**Response – Finance**

The table below shows the loans that have been drawn down.

| Loan Purpose | Loan Amount ($) | Repayment Period | Starting Date | Principal Outstanding ($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crawford Street | 3,950,000 | 10 years | 30-03-2012 | 3,242,808 |
| Queanbeyan Library | 1,670,000 | 10 years | 30-03-2012 | 1,371,011 |
| Edwin Land Parkway | 2,710,000 | 10 years | 30-03-2012 | 2,224,814 |
| Queanbeyan Depot Extension | 950,000 | 10 years | 22-05-2013 | 779,448 |
| Queanbeyan Admin Building | 500,000 | 10 years | 22-05-2013 | 410,235 |
| Queanbeyan CBD Improvements | 4,800,000 | 20 years | 30-06-2014 | 4,231,020 |
| Seiffert Oval Upgrade | 500,000 | 10 years | 30-06-2015 | 371,901 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Braidwood Office | 93,000 | 25 years | 04-03-2013 | 83,577 |
| Jembaicumbene Bridge | 651,000 | 25 years | 04-03-2013 | 585,043 |
| Waste Strategy | 465,000 | 25 years | 04-03-2013 | 417,887 |
| Water - Braidwood | 651,000 | 25 years | 04-03-2013 | 585,043 |
| Sewer - Braidwood | 930,000 | 25 years | 04-03-2013 | 835,775 |
| Sewer - Bungendore | 930,000 | 25 years | 04-03-2013 | 835,775 |
| Water Reticulation Bungendore | 3,000,000 | 9 years | 04-05-2010 | 600,000 |
| Bungendore CBD | 200,000 | 25 years | 11-06-2012 | 172,921 |
| Waste Strategy | 503,000 | 25 years | 11-06-2012 | 434,898 |
| Water - Braidwood | 785,000 | 25 years | 11-06-2012 | 678,717 |
| Water - Bungendore | 471,000 | 25 years | 11-06-2012 | 407,230 |
| Sewer - Braidwood | 500,000 | 25 years | 11-06-2012 | 432,304 |
| Sewer - Bungendore | 4,841,000 | 25 years | 11-06-2012 | 4,185,571 |
| Bungendore Off Street Parking | 706,375 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 641,268 |
| Bungendore CBD Drainage | 136,014 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 123,477 |
| Land Playing Fields | 243,477 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 221,036 |
| Software IT | 608,693 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 552,590 |
| Solar Array | 45,579 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 41,377 |
| Kings Highway Culvert – Sth Bungendore | 79,297 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 71,987 |
| Jembaicumbene Bridge | 93,042 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 84,466 |
| Molonglo River Bridge | 594,725 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 539,909 |
| Saleyards Improvements | 58,435 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 53,048 |
| Waste Strategy | 5,780,558 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 5,247,763 |
| Sewer Reticulation Braidwood | 1,055,069 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 957,822 |
| Sewer Reticulation Bungendore | 1,239,079 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 1,124,872 |
| Water Reticulation Braidwood | 1,453,553 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 1,319,578 |
| Water Reticulation Bungendore | 1,128,836 | 25 years | 22-12-2014 | 1,024,790 |
| Braidwood Recreation Ground | 100,000 | 20 years | 26-06-2015 | 90,094 |
| Braidwood Library Solar | 25,000 | 20 years | 26-06-2015 | 22,523 |
| Waste Strategy | 600,000 | 20 years | 26-06-2015 | 540,569 |
| Water Reservoir - Braidwood | 1,500,000 | 20 years | 26-06-2015 | 1,351,424 |

2018-19

- South Bungendore Drainage $250,000
- Braidwood Waste Transfer Station $2,750,000
- Indoor Sports Centre Upgrade $2,750,000
- Royalla Land Cemetery $2,750,000
- Local Roads Renewal $5,400,000
- Burra S Bends $1,000,000
- Ellerton Drive Extension $36,000,000

Proposed borrowing for 19/20 is (as per Delivery Program)

- Local Roads Renewal $5,400,000
- Sewer Treatment Plant $10,000,000
- Lowe Public Domain $3,500,000
- Morisset Car Park $7,000,000

Proposed borrowing for 20/21 is (as per Delivery Program)

- Regional Sports Complex $15,000,000
- Memorial Park $5,000,000

- Lowe Street Pedestrian Corridor $1,000,000
- Local Roads Renewal $5,400,000
- Sewer Treatment Plant $30,000,000
- Head Office & Smart Hub $42,000,000
- Morisset Car Park $7,000,000

**Article 22**





**Article 23**

# Model code of conduct

**Model Code of Conduct and Procedures 2018**

The 2018 Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW and the associated Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW were prescribed on 14 December 2018.

**Adoption**

Councils must adopt the new Model Code of Conduct and Procedures within 6 months of prescription, (**14 December 2018 – 14 June 2019**). Councils' existing adopted codes of conduct and procedures will remain in force until councils adopt a new code of conduct and procedures, based on the Model Code of Conduct and Procedures prescribed under the Regulation.

Please note that the 2018 Model Code of Conduct and Procedures only apply from 14 June 2019 or the date they are adopted by each council (whichever is first). They are not retrospective. For any allegations that relate to behaviour or conduct that occurred prior to the new Model Code and Procedures being adopted by council, the previous versions of the Model Code and Procedures apply.

Councils may include supplementary provisions in their adopted codes of conduct and may also impose more onerous requirements than those prescribed under the Model Code of Conduct. However, councils must not dilute the standards prescribed in the Model Code of Conduct.

**New Requirements**

The new Model Code of Conduct applies to more than 45,000 staff and nearly 1,300 councillors at 128 councils across NSW.

Key changes include:

- it incorporates the pecuniary interest provisions previously contained in the *Local Government Act 1993* and Regulation
- new standards relating to discrimination and harassment, bullying, work health and safety, behaviour at meetings, access to information and maintenance of council records
- new rules governing the acceptance of gifts including mandatory reporting
- a new ongoing disclosure requirement for councillors and designated persons requiring disclosure of new interests in returns of interests within three months of becoming aware of them
- councillors will be required to disclose in their returns of interests whether they are a property developer or a close associate of a property developer.

**Article 24**

# Ellerton Drive Extension

- Project typeCapital Works
- Project value$86,000,000
- Project scheduleThis project is due for completion in 2020
- Contractor nameWBHO Infrastructure Pty Ltd

Ellerton Drive extension provides an alternative route around the Central Business District and connects east and west Queanbeyan to the new southern population growth areas. The extension runs from the current end point of Ellerton Drive, near Yass Road/Bungendore Road, in Queanbeyan East to the Old Cooma Road/Edwin Land Parkway intersection in Karabar. Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council and NSW Roads and Maritime Services are working together to deliver the project.

The key features of the extension include:

- One lane in each direction with climbing lanes
- Bridge crossing over Queanbeyan River and Barracks Flat Drive
- Shared off-road cyclist and pedestrian pathway
- Provision of space for on-road cyclists
- Additional access points for Fairlane Estate
- Emergency egress for Greenleigh Estate at Lonergan Drive and the East Queanbeyan reservoir
- Stormwater drainage system, including pavement surface drainage
- Three fauna under-passes and three rope crossings
- Potential for a pedestrian undercrossing at Jumping Creek Estate
- Noise mitigation measures

- Edwin Land Parkway Intersection upgrade.

### Funding

The Australian and NSW Governments have provided $25m each in funding for the extension. The extension is estimated to cost $86m with the remaining funding to be sourced via a low-interest loan from Council and will be fully repaid, including interest, by developer contributions.

### Works schedule

The RMS has awarded the construction tender to WBHO Infrastructure Pty Ltd, with works starting in October 2017. It is envisaged that the project will be completed in 2020.

## Overview of the project

The Ellerton Drive Extension has been 'on the maps' since the 1970s and has been supported in some form by eight successive councils. In recent years, the Extension has been subject to many studies, reviews, modelling and community consultation, with approvals provided by State and Federal Government departments.

Googong, located in the south of Queanbeyan, currently has around 400 occupied houses. In 10-15 years, that will rise to 5,500 – meaning an additional 15,000 residents within the Queanbeyan area. The impact these additional 15,000 residents will have on the Queanbeyan road network is significant and the Ellerton Drive Extension will play a major role in ensuring the new residents, along with our current residents, can travel to their destination without unacceptable delays.

Modelling undertaken by industry experts shows that main arterial roads such as Cooma St, Monaro St (Queanbeyan's main street) and the Queens Bridge would suffer network failure well before Googong reaches its full capacity without the construction of the Ellerton Drive Extension. The Ellerton Drive Extension will allow traffic travelling from Googong, Jerrabomberra, Karabar and many other areas of Queanbeyan to central and northern Canberra, the coast, Bungendore and Braidwood to bypass the Queanbeyan CBD. The Extension will also provide an alternate route for trucks travelling to and from the quarry on Old Cooma Rd, in fact it is a requirement of the quarry's development approval that when the Extension is complete, trucks must use this route.

In 2009, Council developed the Googong and Tralee Traffic Study (2031) which looked at the impact the increased population would have on the road network. The Study looked at many options, including Dunns Creek Rd and a Northern Bypass. Traffic modelling showed that the Ellerton Drive Extension provided the best solution to ease pressure on central Queanbeyan and main arterial roads. That's not to say Dunns Creek Rd is not required if further residential development occurs beyond that already planned at Googong and Tralee, however the Ellerton Drive Extension is the priority. Council has identified a preferred route

for Dunns Creek Rd and will continue planning, however any construction is not expected until after 2036. Early estimates suggest Dunns Creek Rd would cost well over $200m to construct. The Study also recommended a number of other road improvements, including the duplication of Old Cooma Rd from Googong to Karabar and some intersection improvements around Queanbeyan.

Some will point out that the Ellerton Drive Extension will dump additional traffic on to Yass Rd. The fact is, the traffic that will travel along Yass Rd is going there anyway, the Ellerton Drive Extension will allow it to get there much quicker. Council has been in discussion with the ACT Government to duplicate Pialligo Avenue to handle the increased traffic and planning is already underway to duplicate the first section of Pialligo Ave from the NSW/ACT border towards the Canberra Airport.

The environmental impact of the road has been addressed via the Species Impact Statement and Review of Environmental Factors which were approved by government departments (these documents are available for download below). The road will include rope crossings and underpasses for fauna as well as exclusion fencing to encourage fauna to stay out of the road corridor.

With the tender process for the major construction component of the work now concluded, the current project budget can be confirmed as $86m. The NSW and Federal Government have contributed $50m towards the construction. The remaining $36m will be funded via a long-term, low interest loan taken out by Council which will be fully repaid by developer contributions, including interest. This is standard practice by councils across Australia to ensure infrastructure is built well before the road network fails. There will be no increase to rates to fund the construction of this project and maintenance costs will be built into Council's existing budgets.

# Contact details

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WBHO Infrastructure Pty Ltd have been appointed by Roads and Maritime Services to build the extension. For construction related matters contact WBHO on:
Ph: 1800 116 337
Email: ellertondrive@wbho.com.au

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## Draft Revenue Policy 2019-20

**General Rating Information – 2019-20 Rates and Charges**
The notional income yield for 2019-20 totals $37,598,288 and equates to an overall rate increase of 2.7% on the notional income for 2019-20.
The rates to apply to each rating category/sub-category are shown below:

| Rating Sub-Category | Number of Assess – Feb 2019 | Ad Valorem Rate | Base Amount $ | Land Value 2016 base date | Ad Valorem Total | Base Amount Total | % base | Notional Income | Average Rate | % Revenue |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Former Queanbeyan City Council area** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Residential – Ordinary | 227 | 0.1500 | 499.70 | 99,429,000 | 149,094 | 113,432 | 43.21% | 262,526 | $1,157 | 0.70% |
| Residential – Urban | 15064 | 0.3953 | 326.40 | 3,286,403,725 | 12,990,792 | 4,916,889 | 27.46% | 17,,907,862 | $1,189 | 47.63% |
| Residential – Googong | 1977 | 0.4959 | 402.60 | 468,718,700 | 2,324,306 | 795,940 | 25.51% | 3,120,246 | $1,578 | 8.30% |
| Residential – Tralee | 0 | 0.4831 | 392 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Rural Residential | 507 | 0.1499 | 499.70 | 242,665,000 | 363,876 | 253,348 | 41.05% | 617,224 | $1,217 | 1.64% |
| Farmland | 48 | 0.1054 | 870.00 | 137,389,800 | 144,873 | 41,760 | 22.38% | 186,633 | $3,888 | 0.50% |
| Business - Ordinary | 119 | 1.3825 | 442.30 | 69,858,720 | 965,399 | 52,634 | 5.17% | 1,018,033 | $8,555 | 2.71% |
| Business - CBD | 143 | 1.8650 | 653.40 | 78,555,420 | 1,465,080 | 93,436 | 6.00% | 1,558,517 | $10,899 | 4.15% |
| Business - Industrial | 787 | 0.8289 | 443.50 | 317,741,237 | 2,633,698 | 349,035 | 11.70% | 2,982,832 | $3,790 | 7.93% |
| Business - Karabar | 4 | 2.2368 | 534.50 | 2,055,000 | 45,966 | 2138 | 4.44% | 48,104 | $12,026 | 0.13% |
| Business – Jerrabomberra | 6 | 2.2368 | 534.50 | 6,546,000 | 146,421 | 3207 | 2.14% | 149,628 | $24,938 | 0.40$ |
| Business – Googong | 34 | 2.1565 | 534.50 | 7,991,000 | 172,326 | 18,173 | 9.23% | 196,914 | $5,792 | 0.50% |
| **Former Palerang Council area** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Residential – Palerang | 6775 | 0.1870 | 488.00 | 1,913,311,900 | 3,577,893 | 3,306093 | 47.55 | 6,953,228 | $1,026 | 18.49% |
| Business – Palerang | 240 | 0.1844 | 450.00 | 61,470,747 | 115,792 | 108,099 | 48.28% | 223,890 | $932 | 0.60% |
| Farmland – Palerang | 972 | 0.1953 | 1,142.20 | 632,822,000 | 1,236,154 | 1,110,510 | 47.55% | 2,347,270 | $2,415 | 6.24% |
| Mining – Palerang | 2 | 0.5276 | 1060.00 | 4,428,000 | 23,360 | 2,120 | 8.32% | 25,480 | $12,740 | 0.07% |
| | **26,905** | | | | | **Notional General Income Yield** | | **37,598,288** | | **100.00%** |



QPRC

**Article 26**



**Article 27**

Home - Queanbeyan-Palerang
https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au ▾
Capital works a key feature of $260 million expenditure in 2019-20. Published on 26 April 2019.
**Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council** will invest $140m to enhance, rehabilitate and renew assets across the local government area in 2019-20.

**Article 28**

# Capital works a key feature of $260 million expenditure in 2019-20

Published on 26 April 2019




Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council will invest $140m to enhance, rehabilitate and renew assets across the local government area in 2019-20.

The capital works program forms part of Council's overall budget for 2019-20 which shows total expenditure of more than $260m and delivers an operating surplus of $2.7m.

"Council has been very fortunate to receive grant funding for a number of projects that we would have been unlikely to be able to progress without government contributions," Queanbeyan-Palerang Mayor, Cr Tim Overall said.

"This influx of grants is welcomed, especially by the community, but is placing pressure on the organisation in regard to resourcing with a number of projects being carried over from the 2018-19 financial year."

Some of the highlights of Council's 2019-20 capital works program include:

- Regional Sports Complex - stage 1
- Bungendore sports hub
- Development of an off-street car park in Bungendore
- Intersection improvements at Uriarra/Ross/Stornaway Rds in Queanbeyan
- Continuation of the Nerriga Rd sealing project
- Upgrades to the Bungendore and Queanbeyan sewage treatment plants
- Finalisation of the Ellerton Drive extension and Old Cooma Rd projects in Queanbeyan
- Burra 's' bends
- Monkittee Bridge Path at Braidwood (subject to grant funding)

Council's draft Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges show that rates, fees and charges will generally increase by 2.7% which is in line with the rate peg limit set by the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal. This will see a total bill increase of about $100 per year for residential ratepayers (includes general rates, water access, sewer access, waste and water usage).

Council's draft Operational Plan, Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges for 2019-20 are now on public exhibition until Monday 3 June and can be viewed at: yourvoice.qprc.nsw.gov.au

Community meetings will be held in Queanbeyan (7 May), Braidwood (9 May) and Bungendore (21 May) to discuss a range of matters, including the draft documents.

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

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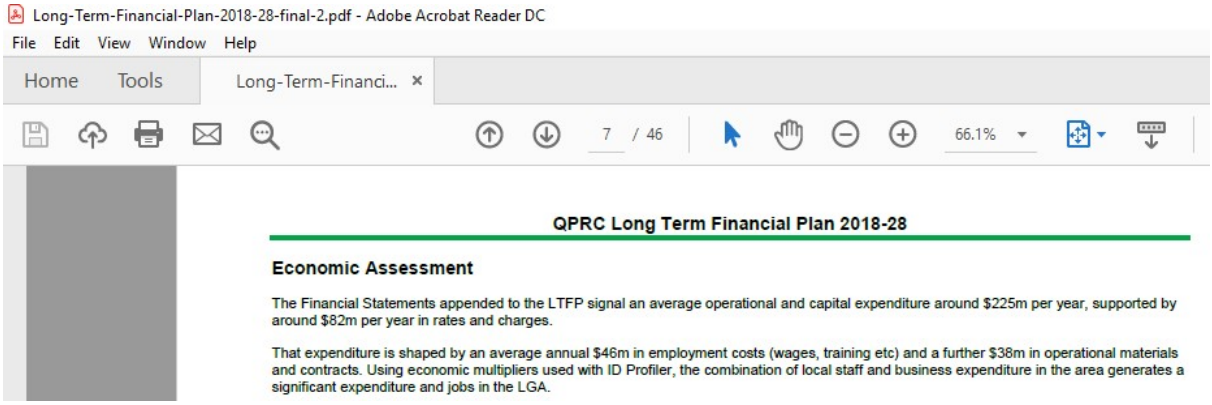
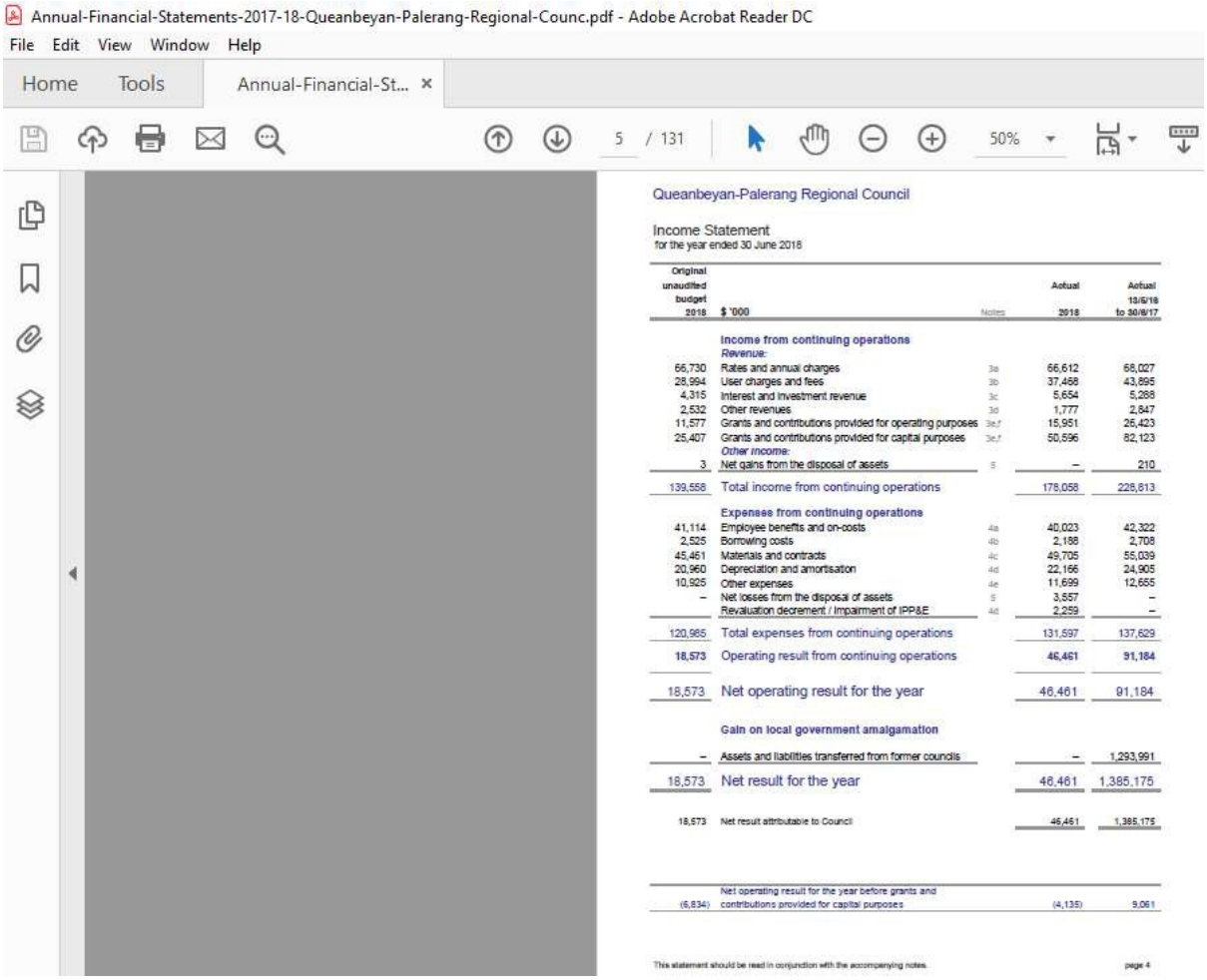
**Article 29**




**Article 30**

QPRC Financial Summary



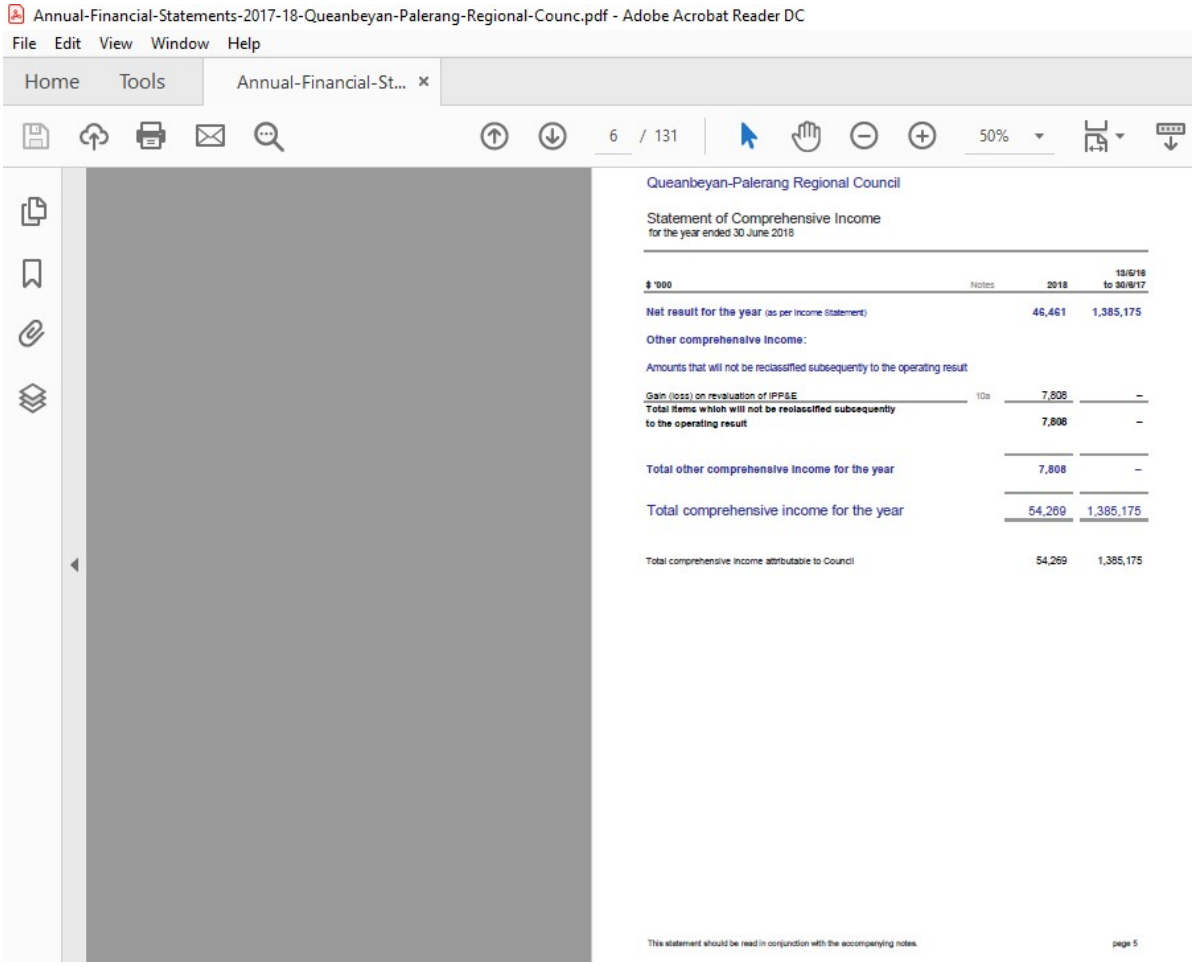

## Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

### Income Statement
for the year ended 30 June 2018

| Original unaudited budget 2018 | $ '000 | Notes | Actual 2018 | Actual 13/6/16 to 30/6/17 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Income from continuing operations** | | | |
| | *Revenue:* | | | |
| 66,730 | Rates and annual charges | 3a | 66,612 | 68,027 |
| 28,994 | User charges and fees | 3b | 37,468 | 43,895 |
| 4,315 | Interest and investment revenue | 3c | 5,654 | 5,288 |
| 2,532 | Other revenues | 3d | 1,777 | 2,647 |
| 11,577 | Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes | 3e,f | 15,951 | 26,423 |
| 25,407 | Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes | 3e,f | 50,596 | 82,123 |
| | *Other income:* | | | |
| 3 | Net gains from the disposal of assets | 5 | – | 210 |
| 139,558 | Total income from continuing operations | | 176,058 | 228,813 |
| | **Expenses from continuing operations** | | | |
| 41,114 | Employee benefits and on-costs | 4a | 40,023 | 42,322 |
| 2,525 | Borrowing costs | 4b | 2,188 | 2,708 |
| 45,461 | Materials and contracts | 4c | 49,705 | 55,039 |
| 20,960 | Depreciation and amortisation | 4d | 22,166 | 24,905 |
| 10,925 | Other expenses | 4e | 11,699 | 12,655 |
| – | Net losses from the disposal of assets | 5 | 3,557 | – |
| | Revaluation decrement / impairment of IPP&E | 4d | 2,259 | – |
| 120,985 | Total expenses from continuing operations | | 131,597 | 137,629 |
| **18,573** | Operating result from continuing operations | | **46,461** | **91,184** |
| 18,573 | Net operating result for the year | | 46,461 | 91,184 |
| | **Gain on local government amalgamation** | | | |
| – | Assets and liabilities transferred from former councils | | – | 1,293,991 |
| 18,573 | Net result for the year | | 46,461 | 1,385,175 |
| 18,573 | Net result attributable to Council | | 46,461 | 1,385,175 |
| (6,834) | Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes | | (4,135) | 9,061 |

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes. page 4

QPRC Financial Summary



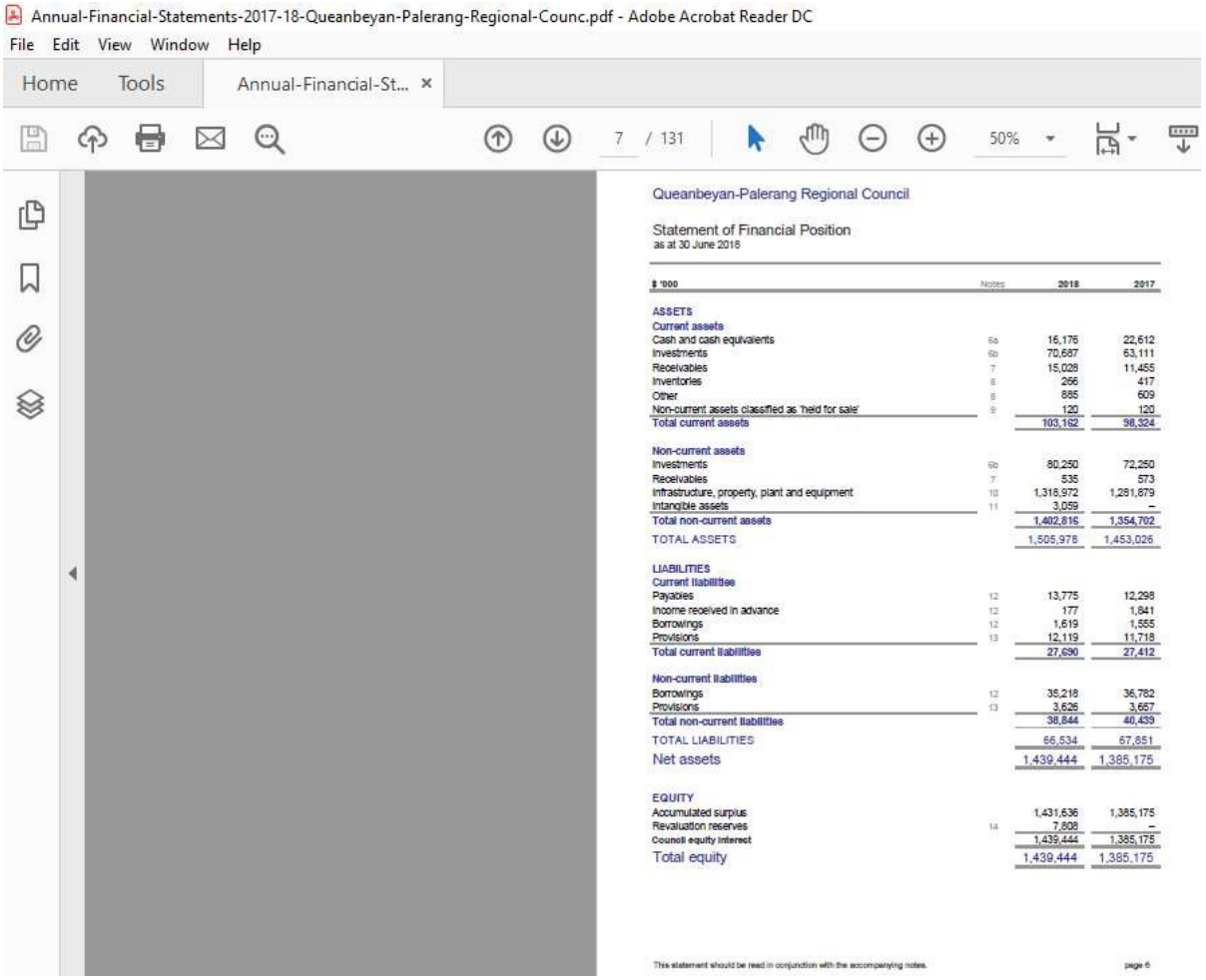

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

## Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the year ended 30 June 2018

| $ '000 | Notes | 2018 | 13/6/16 to 30/6/17 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Net result for the year** (as per Income Statement) | | 46,461 | 1,385,175 |
| **Other comprehensive income:** | | | |
| Amounts that will not be reclassified subsequently to the operating result | | | |
| Gain (loss) on revaluation of IPP&E | 10a | 7,808 | – |
| **Total items which will not be reclassified subsequently to the operating result** | | 7,808 | – |
| **Total other comprehensive income for the year** | | 7,808 | – |
| Total comprehensive income for the year | | 54,269 | 1,385,175 |
| Total comprehensive income attributable to Council | | 54,269 | 1,385,175 |

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

QPRC Financial Summary



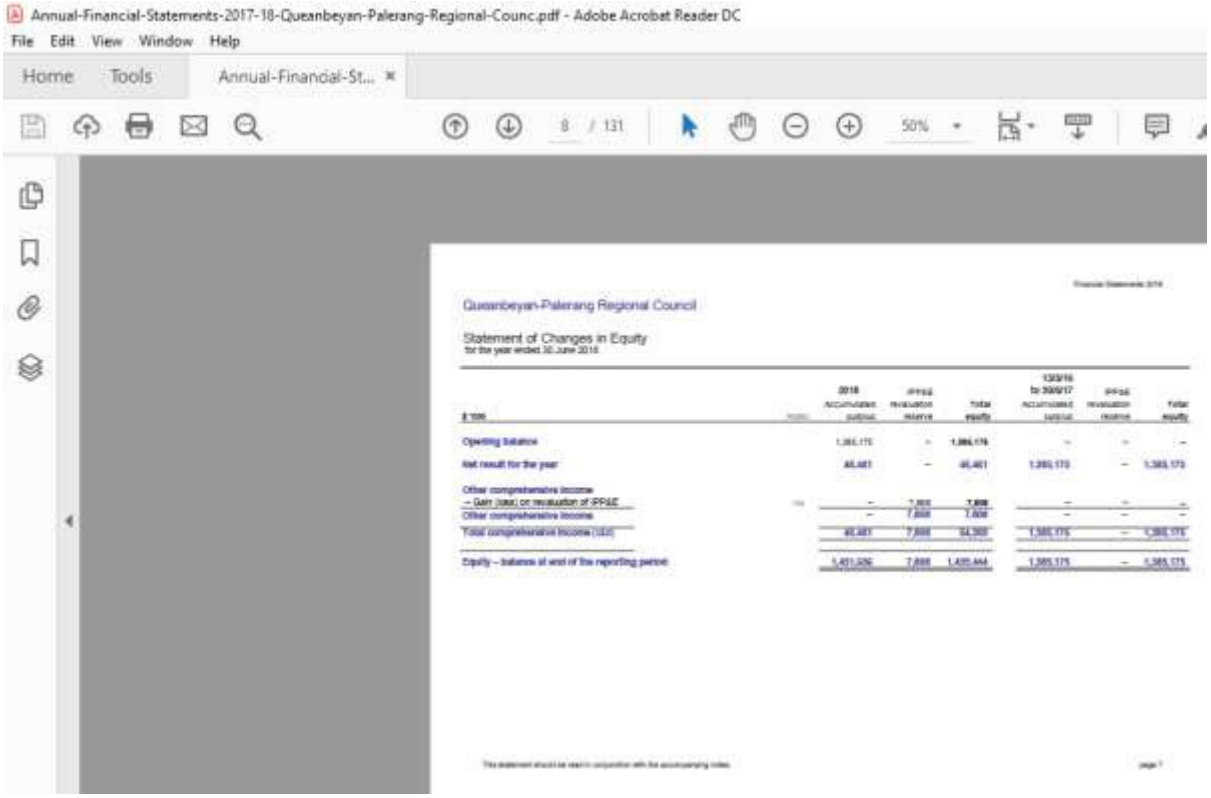

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Statement of Financial Position
as at 30 June 2018

| $ '000 | Notes | 2018 | 2017 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ASSETS** | | | |
| **Current assets** | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 6a | 16,176 | 22,612 |
| Investments | 6b | 70,687 | 63,111 |
| Receivables | 7 | 15,028 | 11,455 |
| Inventories | 8 | 266 | 417 |
| Other | 8 | 885 | 609 |
| Non-current assets classified as 'held for sale' | 9 | 120 | 120 |
| **Total current assets** | | 103,162 | 98,324 |
| **Non-current assets** | | | |
| Investments | 6b | 80,250 | 72,250 |
| Receivables | 7 | 535 | 573 |
| Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment | 10 | 1,316,972 | 1,281,879 |
| Intangible assets | 11 | 3,059 | – |
| **Total non-current assets** | | 1,402,816 | 1,354,702 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | 1,505,978 | 1,453,026 |
| **LIABILITIES** | | | |
| **Current liabilities** | | | |
| Payables | 12 | 13,775 | 12,298 |
| Income received in advance | 12 | 177 | 1,841 |
| Borrowings | 12 | 1,619 | 1,555 |
| Provisions | 13 | 12,119 | 11,718 |
| **Total current liabilities** | | 27,690 | 27,412 |
| **Non-current liabilities** | | | |
| Borrowings | 12 | 35,218 | 36,782 |
| Provisions | 13 | 3,626 | 3,657 |
| **Total non-current liabilities** | | 38,844 | 40,439 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | | 66,534 | 67,851 |
| Net assets | | 1,439,444 | 1,385,175 |
| **EQUITY** | | | |
| Accumulated surplus | | 1,431,636 | 1,385,175 |
| Revaluation reserves | 14 | 7,808 | – |
| **Council equity interest** | | 1,439,444 | 1,385,175 |
| Total equity | | 1,439,444 | 1,385,175 |

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

page 6




Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

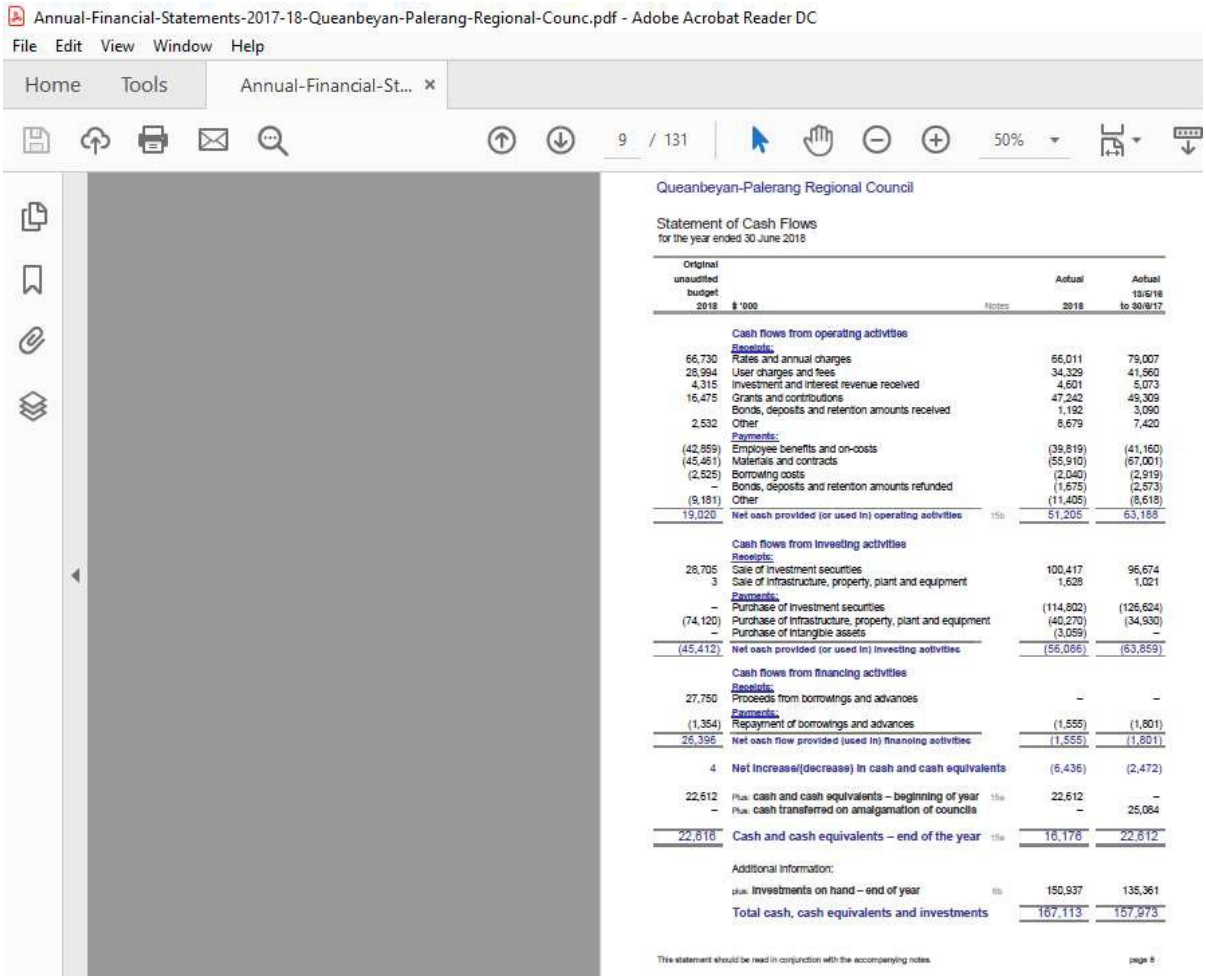
Statement of Changes in Equity
for the year ended 30 June 2018

| $ '000 | Notes | 2018 Accumulated surplus | IPP&E revaluation reserve | Total equity | 1/07/16 to 30/06/17 Accumulated surplus | IPP&E revaluation reserve | Total equity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Opening balance | | 1,385,175 | – | 1,385,175 | – | – | – |
| Net result for the year | | 46,461 | – | 46,461 | 1,385,175 | – | 1,385,175 |
| Other comprehensive income | | | | | | | |
| – Gain (loss) on revaluation of IPP&E | 14a | – | 7,808 | 7,808 | – | – | – |
| Other comprehensive income | | – | 7,808 | 7,808 | – | – | – |
| Total comprehensive income (1&OCI) | | 46,461 | 7,808 | 54,269 | 1,385,175 | – | 1,385,175 |
| Equity – balance at end of the reporting period | | 1,431,636 | 7,808 | 1,439,444 | 1,385,175 | – | 1,385,175 |

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

page 7

QPRC Financial Summary




Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

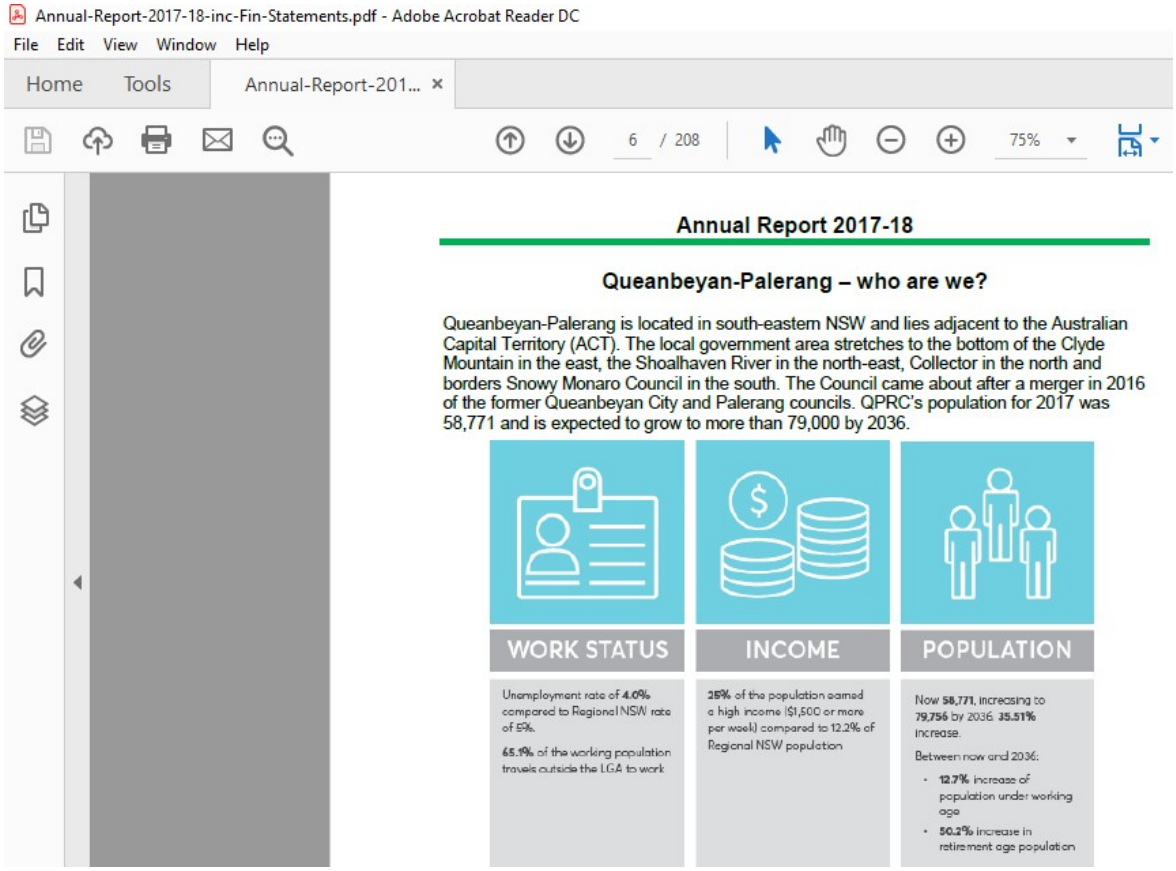
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ended 30 June 2018

| Original unaudited budget 2018 | $ '000 | Notes | Actual 2018 | Actual 13/5/16 to 30/6/17 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Cash flows from operating activities** | | | |
| | Receipts: | | | |
| 66,730 | Rates and annual charges | | 66,011 | 79,007 |
| 28,994 | User charges and fees | | 34,329 | 41,560 |
| 4,315 | Investment and interest revenue received | | 4,601 | 5,073 |
| 16,475 | Grants and contributions | | 47,242 | 49,309 |
| | Bonds, deposits and retention amounts received | | 1,192 | 3,090 |
| 2,532 | Other | | 8,679 | 7,420 |
| | Payments: | | | |
| (42,859) | Employee benefits and on-costs | | (39,819) | (41,160) |
| (45,461) | Materials and contracts | | (55,910) | (67,001) |
| (2,525) | Borrowing costs | | (2,040) | (2,919) |
| – | Bonds, deposits and retention amounts refunded | | (1,675) | (2,573) |
| (9,181) | Other | | (11,405) | (8,618) |
| 19,020 | **Net cash provided (or used in) operating activities** | 15b | 51,205 | 63,188 |
| | **Cash flows from investing activities** | | | |
| | Receipts: | | | |
| 28,705 | Sale of investment securities | | 100,417 | 96,674 |
| 3 | Sale of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment | | 1,628 | 1,021 |
| | Payments: | | | |
| – | Purchase of investment securities | | (114,802) | (126,624) |
| (74,120) | Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment | | (40,270) | (34,930) |
| – | Purchase of intangible assets | | (3,059) | – |
| (45,412) | **Net cash provided (or used in) investing activities** | | (56,086) | (63,859) |
| | **Cash flows from financing activities** | | | |
| | Receipts: | | | |
| 27,750 | Proceeds from borrowings and advances | | – | – |
| | Payments: | | | |
| (1,354) | Repayment of borrowings and advances | | (1,555) | (1,801) |
| 26,396 | **Net cash flow provided (used in) financing activities** | | (1,555) | (1,801) |
| 4 | **Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents** | | (6,436) | (2,472) |
| 22,612 | Plus: cash and cash equivalents – beginning of year | 15a | 22,612 | – |
| – | Plus: cash transferred on amalgamation of councils | | – | 25,084 |
| 22,616 | **Cash and cash equivalents – end of the year** | 15a | 16,176 | 22,612 |
| | Additional information: | | | |
| | plus: **Investments on hand – end of year** | 6b | 150,937 | 135,361 |
| | **Total cash, cash equivalents and investments** | | 167,113 | 157,973 |

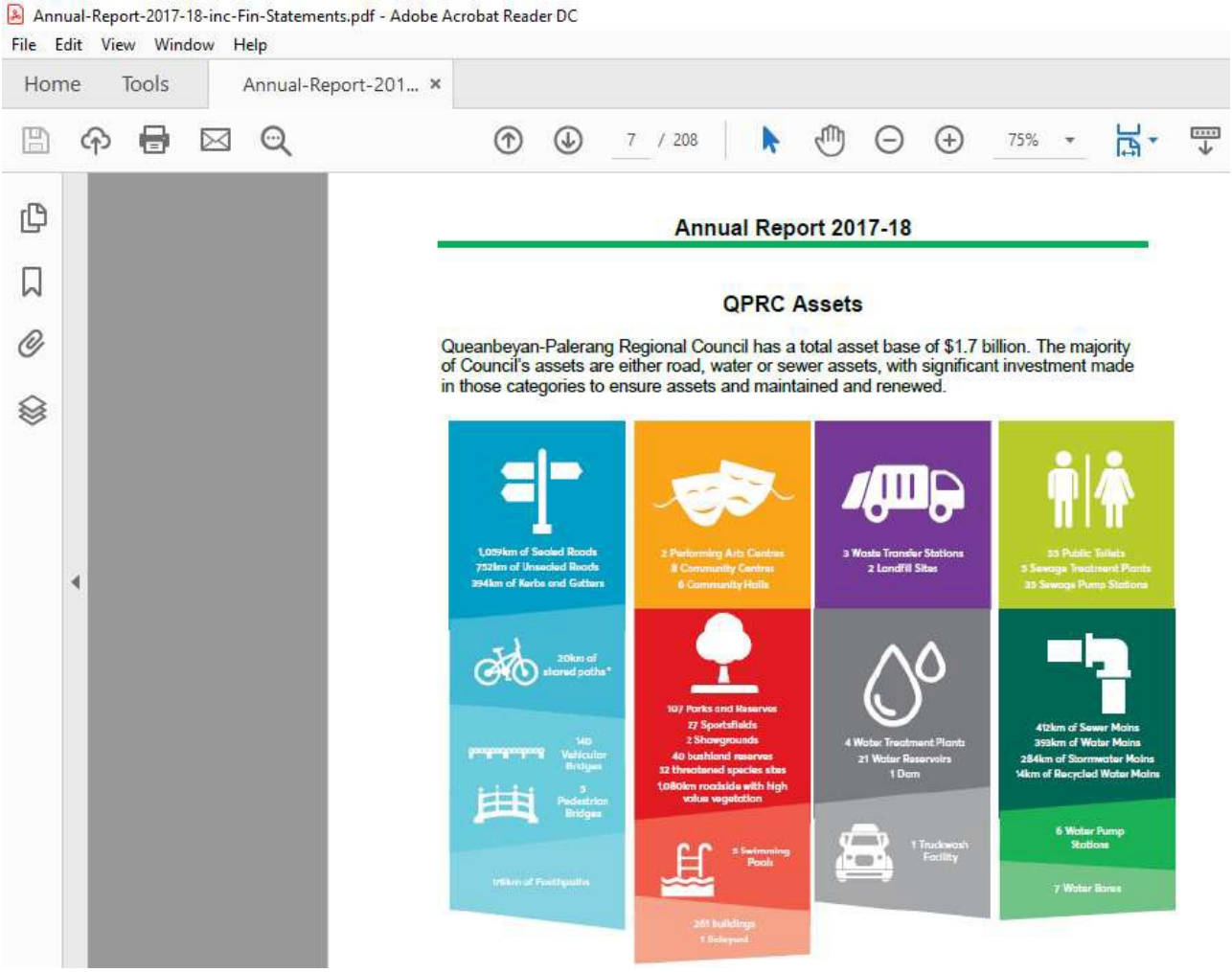
This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes. page 8

**Article 31**

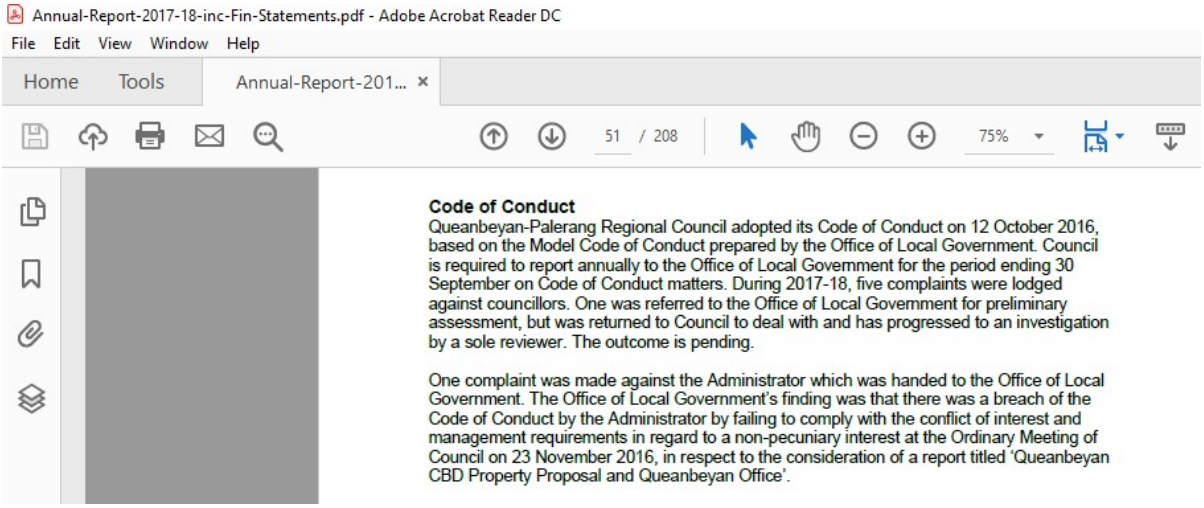
QPRC Financial Summary




**Article 32**




**Article 33**




**Article 34**

# Local representatives - Queanbeyan-Palerang

*www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/**Council**/**Council**-business/**Local-representatives***

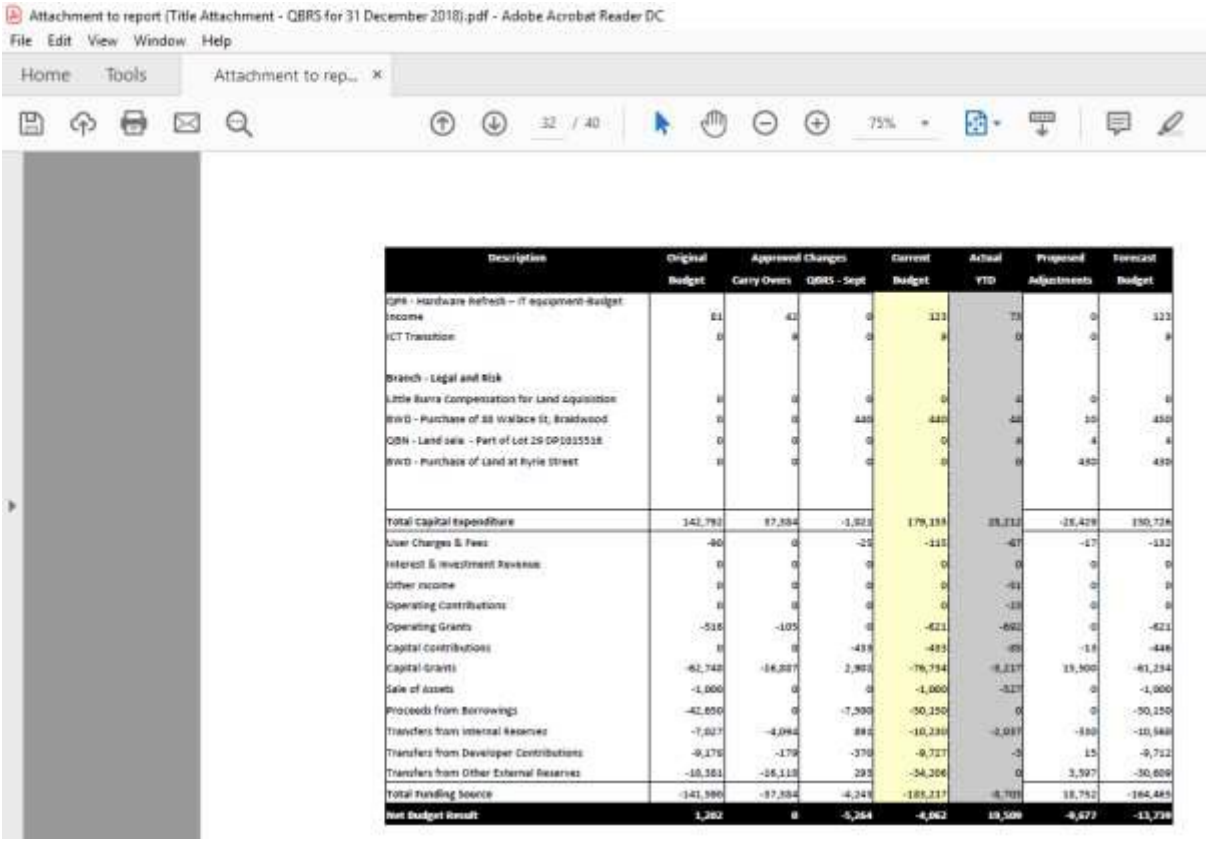
1. Elected **Council**. The **elections** held on 9 September 2017 saw 11 new councillors elected to represent the community.

**Article 35**

**https://www.governmentnews.com.au/councils-accused-of-willful-ignorance-on-infrastructure/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter%20-%2011th%20June%202019&utm_content=Newsletter%20-%2011th%20June%202019+Version+B+CID_c3af0e8ba0a71a1be43bf97de335e7c7&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=Councils%20accused%20of%20willful%20ignorance%20on%20infrastructure**

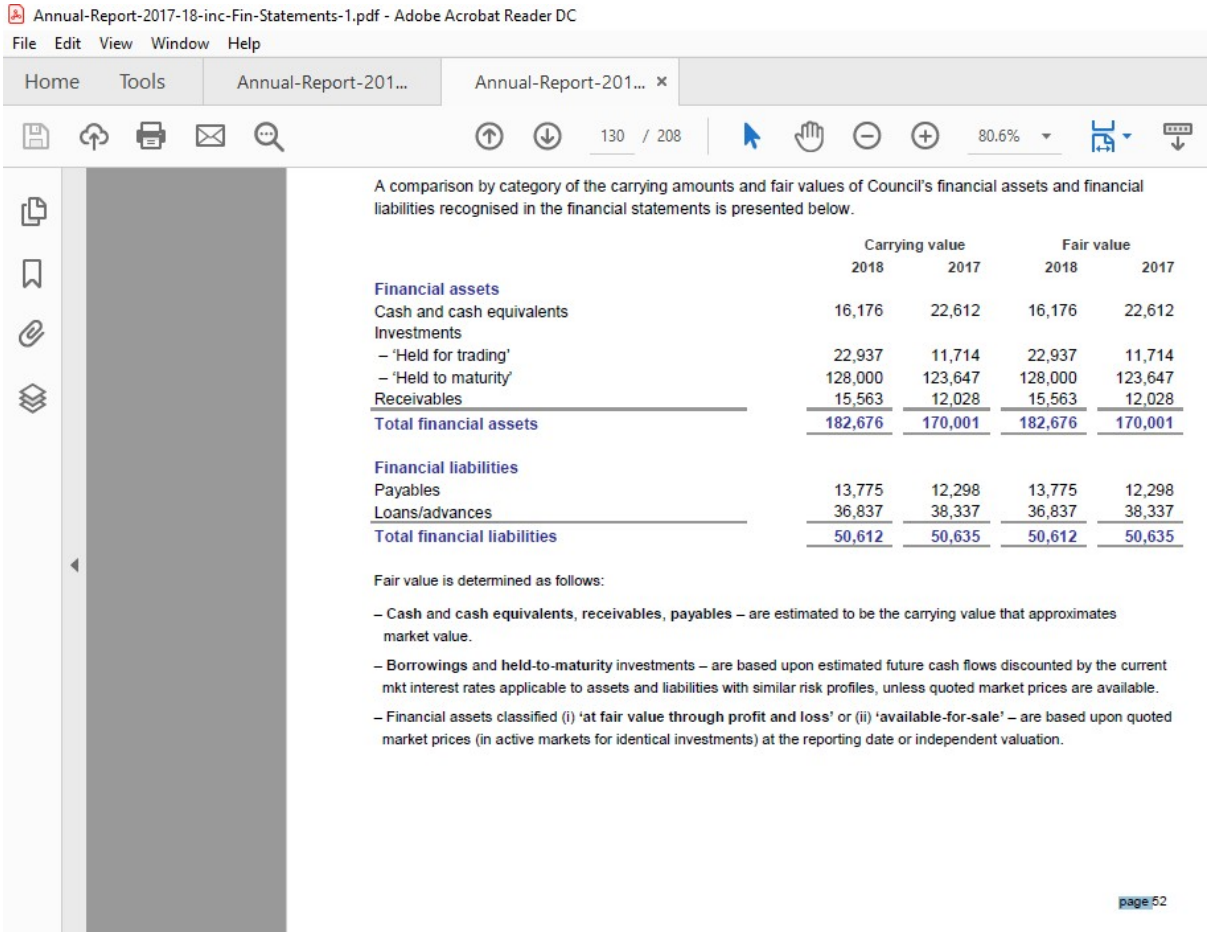
**Article 36**

QPRC Financial Summary




| Description | Original Budget | Approved Changes Carry Overs | Approved Changes QBRS - Sept | Current Budget | Actual YTD | Proposed Adjustments | Forecast Budget |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QPR - Hardware Refresh – IT equipment-Budget Income | 81 | 42 | 0 | 123 | 73 | 0 | 123 |
| ICT Transition | 0 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| Branch - Legal and Risk | | | | | | | |
| Little Burra Compensation for Land Aquisition | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| BWD - Purchase of 88 Wallace St, Braidwood | 0 | 0 | 440 | 440 | 44 | 10 | 450 |
| QBN - Land sale - Part of Lot 29 DP1015518 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| BWD - Purchase of Land at Ryrie Street | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 450 | 450 |
| Total Capital Expenditure | 142,792 | 37,384 | -1,021 | 179,155 | 25,212 | -25,429 | 150,726 |
| User Charges & Fees | -90 | 0 | -25 | -115 | -67 | -17 | -132 |
| Interest & Investment Revenue | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -91 | 0 | 0 |
| Operating Contributions | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -13 | 0 | 0 |
| Operating Grants | -516 | -105 | 0 | -621 | -692 | 0 | -621 |
| Capital Contributions | 0 | 0 | -433 | -433 | -89 | -13 | -446 |
| Capital Grants | -62,748 | -16,887 | 2,901 | -76,734 | -8,217 | 15,500 | -61,234 |
| Sale of Assets | -1,000 | 0 | 0 | -1,000 | -527 | 0 | -1,000 |
| Proceeds from Borrowings | -42,650 | 0 | -7,500 | -50,150 | 0 | 0 | -50,150 |
| Transfers from Internal Reserves | -7,027 | -4,094 | 891 | -10,230 | -2,037 | -330 | -10,560 |
| Transfers from Developer Contributions | -9,179 | -179 | -370 | -9,727 | -5 | 15 | -9,712 |
| Transfers from Other External Reserves | -10,381 | -16,118 | 293 | -34,206 | 0 | 3,597 | -30,609 |
| Total Funding Source | -141,586 | -37,384 | -4,243 | -183,217 | -8,703 | 18,752 | -164,465 |
| Net Budget Result | 1,202 | 0 | -5,264 | -4,062 | 19,509 | -9,677 | -13,739 |

**Article 37**



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130 / 208 80.6%

A comparison by category of the carrying amounts and fair values of Council's financial assets and financial liabilities recognised in the financial statements is presented below.

| | Carrying value | | Fair value | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2018 | 2017 | 2018 | 2017 |
| **Financial assets** | | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 16,176 | 22,612 | 16,176 | 22,612 |
| Investments | | | | |
| – 'Held for trading' | 22,937 | 11,714 | 22,937 | 11,714 |
| – 'Held to maturity' | 128,000 | 123,647 | 128,000 | 123,647 |
| Receivables | 15,563 | 12,028 | 15,563 | 12,028 |
| **Total financial assets** | 182,676 | 170,001 | 182,676 | 170,001 |
| **Financial liabilities** | | | | |
| Payables | 13,775 | 12,298 | 13,775 | 12,298 |
| Loans/advances | 36,837 | 38,337 | 36,837 | 38,337 |
| **Total financial liabilities** | 50,612 | 50,635 | 50,612 | 50,635 |

Fair value is determined as follows:

– **Cash** and **cash equivalents**, **receivables**, **payables** – are estimated to be the carrying value that approximates market value.

– **Borrowings** and **held-to-maturity** investments – are based upon estimated future cash flows discounted by the current mkt interest rates applicable to assets and liabilities with similar risk profiles, unless quoted market prices are available.

– Financial assets classified (i) '**at fair value through profit and loss**' or (ii) '**available-for-sale**' – are based upon quoted market prices (in active markets for identical investments) at the reporting date or independent valuation.

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## Article 38

**Letter to the Editor**

**Invigorating Queanbeyan CBD, or not getting much ratepayer return for valuable city assets.**

With the amalgamation of Queanbeyan and Palerang councils, into the QPRC, our new regional council inherited numerous Queanbeyan valuable CBD council-owned buildings.

In the QPRC administrative phase, the administrator and general manager, (now Mayor and CEO) accepted an unsolicited proposal from one consortium, to help council develop these valuable Queanbeyan CBD assets.

It seems to me as a ratepayer, that this one proposal was handled by the administration without advertising, due diligence, business plan, or professional independent assessment required by local authorities - there appears to me to have been little scrutiny.

This consortium, Downtown Q Pty, is generally unknown to ratepayers, and ratepayers need to be informed more about this company, especially as it will be dealing with large council assets paid for by ratepayers, and especially if it is associated with any real estate firms.

Instead of tendering these buildings, a “Heads of Agreement” was signed by council and Downtown Q Pty for them to assist council in developing these Queanbeyan CBD assets.

It appears to me, that there was not much regulatory tendering process undertaken.

There have been many closed sessions of council meetings, and many “in confidence” information papers that ratepayers could not be informed about. All this seems to suggest a lack of respect for Queanbeyan ratepayers, and lack of respect for due process. There has been little ratepayer opposition to the Queanbeyan CBD transformation plans, basically because ratepayers have been kept in the dark, and are completely oblivious to the financial implications of proceeding with such a major investment, a 5-storey replacement Queanbeyan council administrative building, which will cost over $40 million, not including architect and demolition fees for the old and new buildings.

When will ratepayers be fully informed of how this transformation will affect ratepayers’ and council assets?

This new administrative building will seemingly include some of the now available public car parking spaces, near the Queanbeyan Q theatre, into this new mega Queanbeyan council building.

The surrounding buildings could then become multi-storey buildings, forever changing the appearance and character of a few Queanbeyan main streets.

Council staff effectively fill most of the car parks in the vicinity of the Council complex, so when will ratepayers be informed how this will be replaced and additional spaces provided for general use and at what cost?

And what return will Council gain from passing very valuable CBD real estate to a mysterious consortium?

Ratepayers have been given little information on why seemingly most real estate companies in the Queanbeyan region could not tender for these buildings, or offer a differing development proposal, and most decisions seem to have been taken in closed council sessions and if questions were asked, by ratepayers, they could not then be answered as the information would supposedly jeopardise business confidentiality.

I think amalgamation has sold QPRC ratepayers an extremely sick pup, as we no longer seem to be either heard by council and/or council do not seem to concern themselves much with accountability to their ratepayers.

After 2020, or perhaps 2022, as the QPRC mayor stated at tonight’s (30/10/2018) QPRC Bungendore council community meeting when the council rates can be legally increased, I suspect we will all be unhappily surprised by QPRC rate rises to cover the borrowings that have not been disclosed, as a result of this nefarious process.

S[redacted] Young, Queanbeyan.

**Article 39**

Our Ref: SF160650/01-06
26 February 2019
Ms S[redacted] Young
Email:[redacted]
Dear Ms Young

**Queanbeyan CBD Development**

I refer to your correspondence on 31 October 2018 to the NSW Premier's Office, which included a copy of your letter to the editor titled "Invigorating Queanbeyan CBD, or not getting much ratepayer return for valuable city assets".

The Premier's office advised you on 5 November 2018 that it had referred your correspondence to Council for a response, as it dealt with local council issues. I apologise for the delay in replying to you.

Council developed a structured approach from 2016 to derive value from its CBD property assets, aiming to recycle several of those assets into other uses such as public domain, decked carparks, offices and aged care residential, following establishment of a new head office and the subsequent sale, lease or development of other CBD buildings vacated by Council's staff.

That approach established the governance framework for dealing with property, and also sought to place the CBD strategy and masterplan at the centre of the CBD transformation and to guide subsequent developments. Strategies, policies and plans were published for community feedback, and reported back to Council. The elements of the structured approach included:

- Property Strategy and Policy 2016
- CBD Property Feasibility Study 2016
- Unsolicited Proposals Framework 2016
- Probity Framework 2016
- Cinema and Carparks Strategy 2016
- Queanbeyan CBD Transformation Strategy 2016/17
- Heads of Agreement/s (HoA) 2016/17
- Various Council reports: - incl heads of agreements, valuations, reduction of number of properties under consideration, staging of the disposal or development of sites. Those open session reports and all resolutions are published on Council's website
  - 23 November 2016 (closed session)
  - 27 September 2017
  - 23 May 2018
  - 27 June 2018
  - 24 October 2018 (closed session)

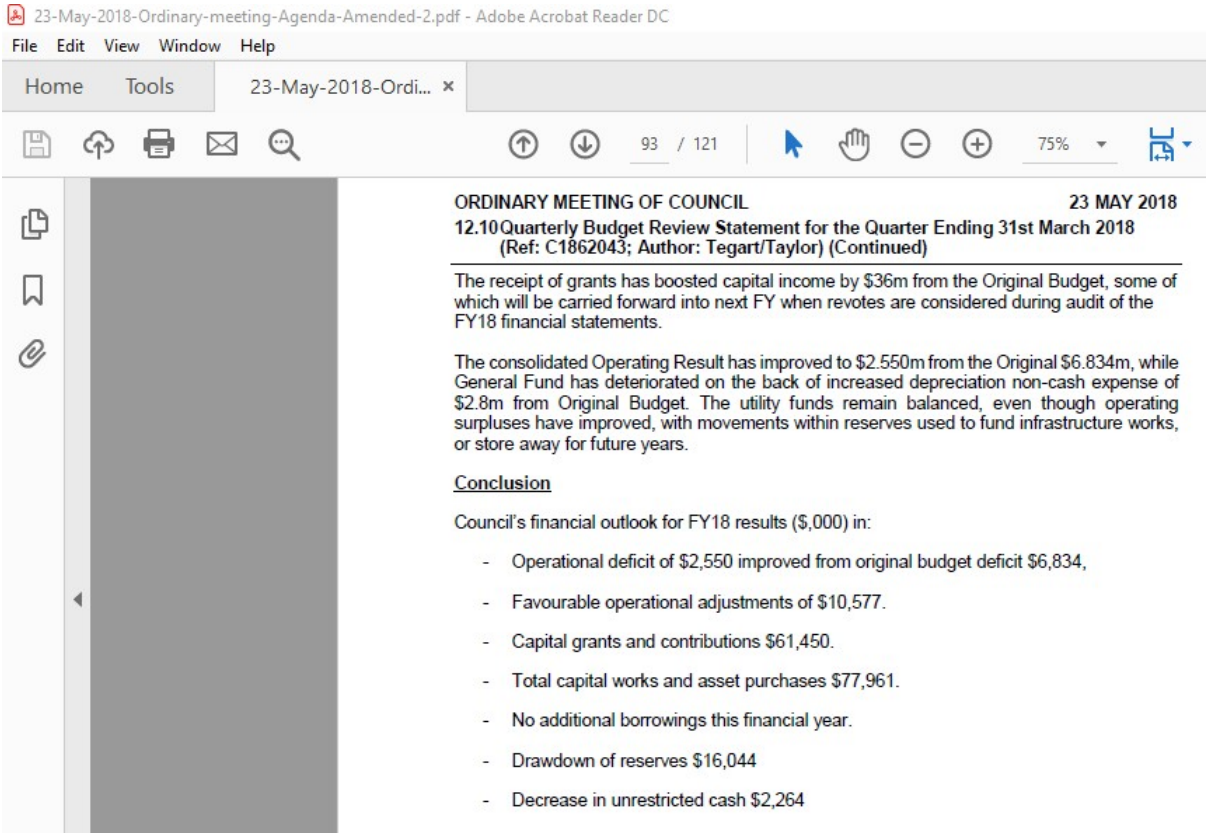
- 19 December 2018
- Carparking Strategy 2018
- CBD business case 2018, based on 6 stages of CBD redevelopment:
  - River walk, caravan park, smart city
  - Head office and Lowe public domain redevelopment
  - Morriset carpark redevelopment
  - Rutledge carpark redevelopment
  - Monaro St refurbishment
  - Crawford carpark redevelopment
- CBD masterplan refresh 2017/19, due for consultation from April

Concept plans from the HoA proponents for stage 1 are yet to be considered, to then progress to DA (and associated community feedback), then independent valuation and potential sale, with subdivision of allotments and design of proponent's buildings and public domain to be guided by the new CBD masterplan.
Council has also received a number of questions from you and other members of the public about the Queanbeyan CBD development during the Public Forums in October 2017, February 2018, May 2018, July 2018, October 2018, November 2018, December 2018 and January 2019.
All responses to these questions are available on Council's website at https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-business/Public-Forums
Council has issued media releases on the matter on 19 July 2017 and 25 October 2018. These may be accessed on Council's website under News & Media.
The topic was also discussed at Community Forums in Queanbeyan on 3 May and 18 October 2018, and the recordings from these meetings are available on Council's website.
Council believes that all the questions you raised in your letter to the editor have been answered openly and comprehensively through the above avenues. Council will continue to inform its ratepayers of progress with the Queanbeyan CBD transformation and redevelopment through the CBD masterplan, business paper reports, community forums and media channels, except for those matters that are deemed commercial-in-confidence and considered in closed session.
A copy of this letter will be forwarded to the NSW Premier's Office for their information.
Yours sincerely

[redacted]
CEO/General Manager

**Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council**

**Article 40**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ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL 23 MAY 2018

**12.10 Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the Quarter Ending 31st March 2018 (Ref: C1862043; Author: Tegart/Taylor) (Continued)**

The receipt of grants has boosted capital income by $36m from the Original Budget, some of which will be carried forward into next FY when revotes are considered during audit of the FY18 financial statements.

The consolidated Operating Result has improved to $2.550m from the Original $6.834m, while General Fund has deteriorated on the back of increased depreciation non-cash expense of $2.8m from Original Budget. The utility funds remain balanced, even though operating surpluses have improved, with movements within reserves used to fund infrastructure works, or store away for future years.

Conclusion

Council's financial outlook for FY18 results ($,000) in:

- Operational deficit of $2,550 improved from original budget deficit $6,834,
- Favourable operational adjustments of $10,577.
- Capital grants and contributions $61,450.
- Total capital works and asset purchases $77,961.
- No additional borrowings this financial year.
- Drawdown of reserves $16,044
- Decrease in unrestricted cash $2,264

**Article 41**

Attachment to report (Title Attachment - QBRS for 31 December 2018)

**7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The financial indicators have been selected to address operational liquidity, fiscal responsibility and financial sustainability goals across short, medium and long-term time frames. The indicators will highlight projected actual performance, showing in green where it is forecast that they will be achieved, orange where forecast performance is satisfactory and red where forecast performance is outside its target range.

- The Operating Performance ratio assesses whether or not Council generates enough revenue to cover operating costs (including the cost of replacing assets reflected through depreciation). The ratio is calculated by taking the operating result (before capital) as a percentage of operating revenue (excluding capital). Local Government benchmark is > 0.00%.

  Council's long term target is a result greater than 0% (green), a result better than -10% is satisfactory (orange), while a result outside of these factors will be considered unsatisfactory (red).

- The Own Source Operating Revenue ratio measures fiscal flexibility or reliance on external funding sources. Council's financial flexibility improves the higher the level of its own source revenue. The ratio is calculated by taking the total rates, utilities and charges as a percentage of total operating revenue.

  Council's target is to maintain levels results at 60% (green), while a result of 40% or better will be considered satisfactory (orange), and any result below 40% will be considered unsatisfactory (red).

- The Debt Service cover ratio demonstrates the ability of a council to service their annual debt obligations as a proportion of available revenue. The ratio is calculated by taking the total principal and interest loan payments as a ratio of operating revenue (excluding capital and specific purpose grants and contributions).

  Council's target is to maintain levels above the Local Government benchmark >2 (green), while a ratio of >1 but less than 2 will be considered satisfactory (orange), and any result worse than this will be considered unsatisfactory (red).

- The Asset maintenance ratio compares Council's measured actual asset maintenance expenditure relative to the asset maintenance expenditure for the period that the council deemed was warranted in the Percy Allen Report (Special Schedule 7 should also identify). A council needs to ensure that actual and future planned maintenance levels are consistent with warranted maintenance levels. It can do this by ensuring its asset management plans are based on preferred and affordable service levels and annual expenditure budgets are generally consistent with asset management plans.

- The Infrastructure Renewal ratio assesses the rate at which these assets are being renewed relative to the rate at which they are being depreciated. The ratio is calculated by taking the total spend on asset renewal projects as a percentage of total depreciation for those asset classes (this includes buildings and infrastructure assets like roads, stormwater pipes etc.).

  Council's benchmark is a 100% (green) while a satisfactory Result is greater than 80% (orange) and anything under 80% is considered unsatisfactory (red).

  This ratio is used to encourage Council's to shift their focus on asset renewal for existing services rather than focusing on building new assets or providing new services.

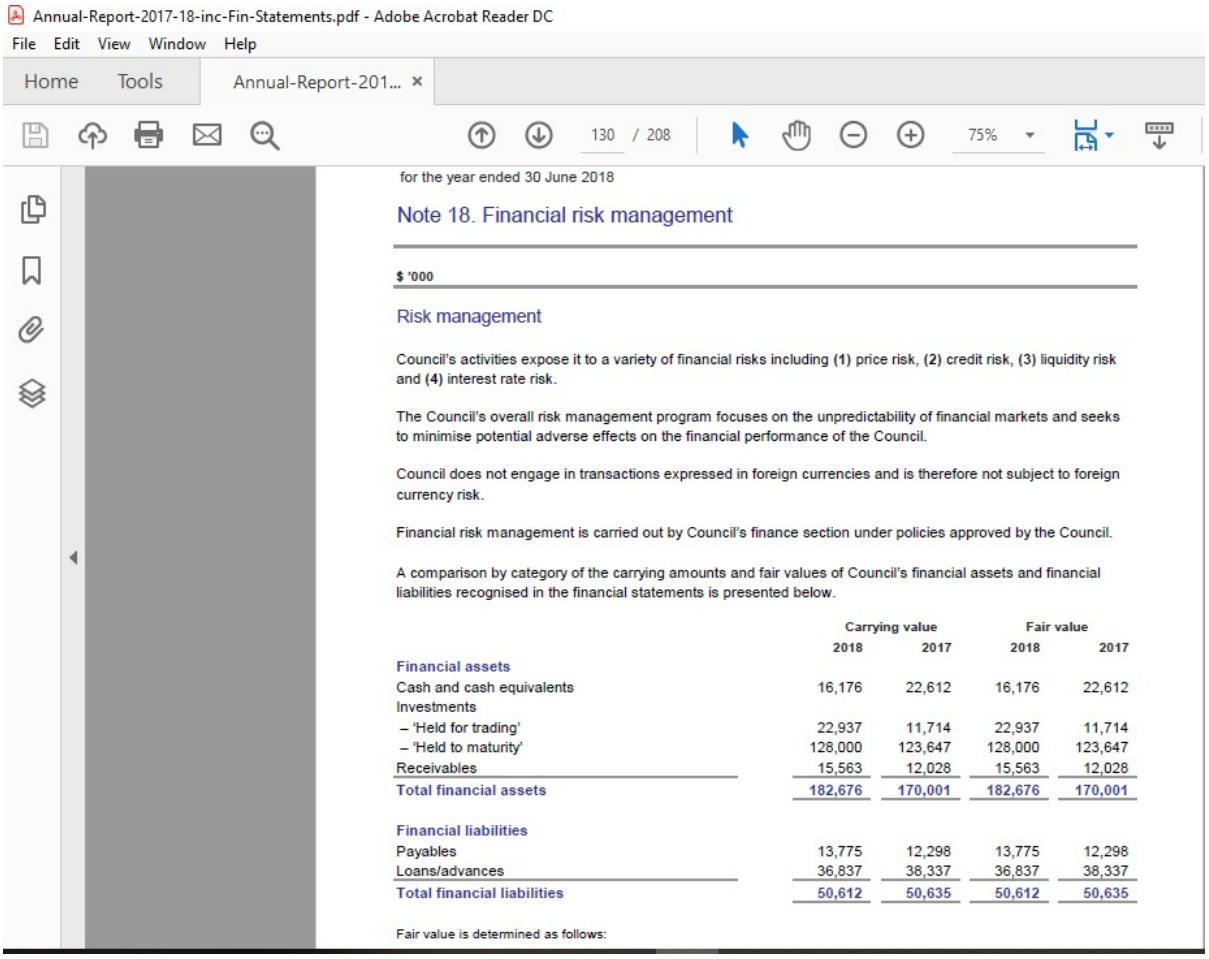
he KPI results forecast for the 2018/19 year as at the December budget review are:

**Key Performance Indicator Forecasts**

| KPI | Original Budget $,000 | Current Budget $,000 | Forecast Budget $,000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Operating Performance Ratio** | | | |
| Forecast | 3.01% | 3.76% | 3.90% |
| Target | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| **Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio** | | | |
| Forecast | 52.38% | 47.33% | 50.06% |
| Target | 60.00% | 60.00% | 60.00% |
| **Debt Service Cover Ratio** | | | |
| Forecast | 4.67 | 4.40 | 3.64 |
| Target | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| **Infrastructure Renewals Ratio** | | | |
| Forecast | 180.26% | 194% | 196% |
| Target | 100.00% | 100.00% | 100.00% |
| **Asset Maintenance Ratio** | | | |
| Forecast | 76.26% | 82.66% | 85.91% |
| Target | 100.00% | 100.00% | 100.00% |

| Description | Original Budget | Approved Changes Carry Overs | Approved Changes QBRS - Sept | Current Budget | Actual YTD | Proposed Adjustments | Forecast Budget |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QPR - Hardware Refresh – IT equipment-Budget Income | 81 | 42 | 0 | 123 | 73 | 0 | 123 |
| ICT Transition | 0 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| **Branch - Legal and Risk** | | | | | | | |
| Little Burra Compensation for Land Aquisistion | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| BWD - Purchase of 88 Wallace St, Braidwood | 0 | 0 | 440 | 440 | 44 | 10 | 450 |
| QBN - Land sale - Part of Lot 29 DP1015516 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| BWD - Purchase of Land at Ryrie Street | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 430 | 430 |
| **Total Capital Expenditure** | 142,792 | 37,384 | -1,021 | 179,155 | 28,212 | -28,429 | 150,726 |
| User Charges & Fees | -90 | 0 | -25 | -115 | -67 | -17 | -132 |
| Interest & Investment Revenue | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -51 | 0 | 0 |
| Operating Contributions | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -23 | 0 | 0 |
| Operating Grants | -516 | -105 | 0 | -621 | -692 | 0 | -621 |
| Capital Contributions | 0 | 0 | -433 | -433 | -85 | -13 | -446 |
| Capital Grants | -62,748 | -16,887 | 2,901 | -76,734 | -5,217 | 15,500 | -61,234 |
| Sale of Assets | -1,000 | 0 | 0 | -1,000 | -527 | 0 | -1,000 |
| Proceeds from Borrowings | -42,650 | 0 | -7,500 | -50,150 | 0 | 0 | -50,150 |
| Transfers from Internal Reserves | -7,027 | -4,094 | 891 | -10,230 | -2,037 | -330 | -10,560 |
| Transfers from Developer Contributions | -9,178 | -179 | -370 | -9,727 | -3 | 15 | -9,712 |
| Transfers from Other External Reserves | -18,381 | -16,118 | 293 | -34,206 | 0 | 3,597 | -30,609 |
| **Total Funding Source** | -141,590 | -37,384 | -4,243 | -183,217 | -8,703 | 18,752 | -164,465 |
| **Net Budget Result** | **1,202** | **0** | **-5,264** | **-4,062** | **19,509** | **-9,677** | **-13,739** |

**Article 42**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for the year ended 30 June 2018

## Note 18. Financial risk management

$ '000

### Risk management

Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks including **(1)** price risk, **(2)** credit risk, **(3)** liquidity risk and **(4)** interest rate risk.

The Council's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Council.

Council does not engage in transactions expressed in foreign currencies and is therefore not subject to foreign currency risk.

Financial risk management is carried out by Council's finance section under policies approved by the Council.

A comparison by category of the carrying amounts and fair values of Council's financial assets and financial liabilities recognised in the financial statements is presented below.

| | Carrying value | | Fair value | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2018 | 2017 | 2018 | 2017 |
| **Financial assets** | | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 16,176 | 22,612 | 16,176 | 22,612 |
| Investments | | | | |
| – 'Held for trading' | 22,937 | 11,714 | 22,937 | 11,714 |
| – 'Held to maturity' | 128,000 | 123,647 | 128,000 | 123,647 |
| Receivables | 15,563 | 12,028 | 15,563 | 12,028 |
| **Total financial assets** | 182,676 | 170,001 | 182,676 | 170,001 |
| **Financial liabilities** | | | | |
| Payables | 13,775 | 12,298 | 13,775 | 12,298 |
| Loans/advances | 36,837 | 38,337 | 36,837 | 38,337 |
| **Total financial liabilities** | 50,612 | 50,635 | 50,612 | 50,635 |

Fair value is determined as follows:

**Article 43**

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While the Income Statement included in this General Purpose Financial Report must disclose the original budget adopted by Council, the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council to review its financial budget on a quarterly basis, so that it is able to manage the various variations between actuals versus budget that invariably occur throughout the year.

This note sets out the details of **material variations** between Council's original budget and its actual results for the year as per the Income Statement – even though such variations may have been adjusted for during each quarterly budget review.

**Note that for variations* of budget to actual :**
Material variations represent those variances that amount to **10%** or more of the original budgeted figure.
F = Favourable budget variation, U = Unfavourable budget variation

| $ '000 | 2018 Budget | 2018 Actual | 2018 Variance* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **REVENUES** | | | | | |
| Rates and annual charges | 66,730 | 66,612 | (118) | (0%) | U |
| User charges and fees | 28,994 | 37,468 | 8,474 | 29% | F |
| Roads and Maritime Services additional private works | | | | | |
| Interest and investment revenue | 4,315 | 5,654 | 1,339 | 31% | F |
| Capital Expenditure not utilised resulting in increased interest revenue. Tcorp Managed Investments performed better than expected. | | | | | |
| Other revenues | 2,532 | 1,777 | (755) | (30%) | U |
| Insurance Claim Recovery did not occur | | | | | |
| Operating grants and contributions | 11,577 | 15,951 | 4,374 | 38% | F |
| Additional non capital developer contributions received was passed back to the Developer of Googong Township. | | | | | |
| Capital grants and contributions | 25,407 | 50,596 | 25,189 | 99% | F |
| Received Monaro Road Package - unbudgeted capital contribution. | | | | | |
| Net gains from disposal of assets | 3 | – | (3) | (100%) | U |
| Motor vehicle sales not budgeted for. | | | | | |

**Article 44**

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104 / 121 75%

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Special Schedule 2(a) – Statement of Long Term Debt (all purpose)
for the period 13 May 2016 to 30 June 2017

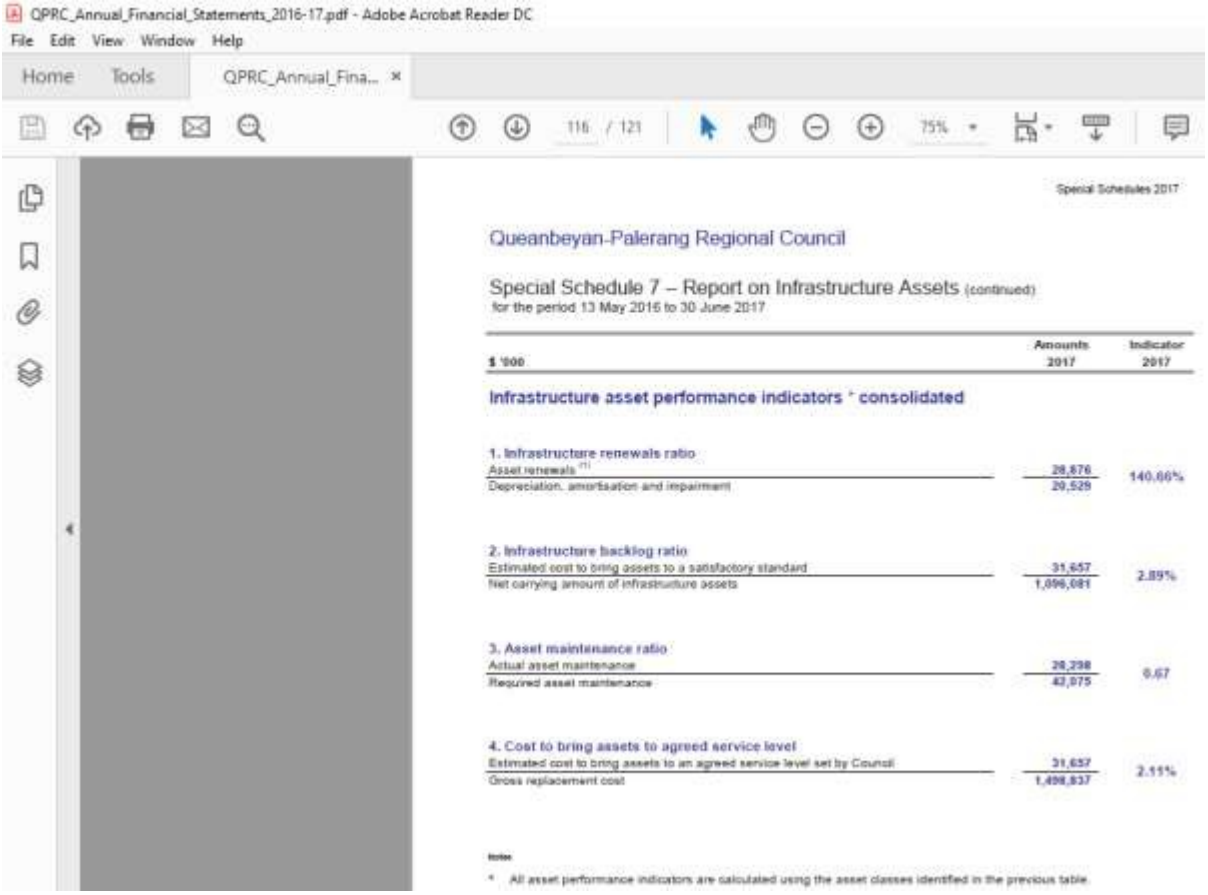
$'000

| Classification of debt | Principal outstanding at beginning of the year (former Councils) | | | New loans raised during the year | Debt redemption during the year | | Transfers to sinking funds | Interest applicable for year | Principal outstanding at the end of the year | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Current | Non-current | Total | | From revenue | Sinking funds | | | Current | Non-current | Total |
| Loans (by source) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Commonwealth Government | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| NSW Treasury Corporation | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Other State Government | 300 | 900 | 1,200 | – | 300 | – | – | 71 | 300 | 600 | 900 |
| Public subscription | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Financial institutions | 1,755 | 37,183 | 38,938 | – | 1,501 | – | – | 2,560 | 1,255 | 36,182 | 37,437 |
| Other | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Total loans | 2,055 | 38,083 | 40,138 | – | 1,801 | – | – | 2,631 | 1,555 | 36,782 | 38,337 |
| Other long term debt | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ratepayers advances | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Government advances | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Finance leases | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Deferred payments | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Total long term debt | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Total debt | 2,055 | 38,083 | 40,138 | – | 1,801 | – | – | 2,631 | 1,555 | 36,782 | 38,337 |

Notes: excludes (i) internal loans and (ii) principal inflows/outflows relating to loan re-financing
This schedule is prepared using the face value of debt obligations, rather than fair value (which are reported in the GPFS).

page 4

**Article 45**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Special Schedules 2017

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Special Schedule 7 – Report on Infrastructure Assets (continued)
for the period 13 May 2016 to 30 June 2017

| $ '000 | Amounts 2017 | Indicator 2017 |
|---|---|---|
| **Infrastructure asset performance indicators * consolidated** | | |
| 1. Infrastructure renewals ratio | | |
| Asset renewals [1] / Depreciation, amortisation and impairment | 28,876 / 20,529 | 140.66% |
| 2. Infraestructure backlog ratio | | |
| Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard / Net carrying amount of infrastructure assets | 31,657 / 1,096,081 | 2.89% |
| 3. Asset maintenance ratio | | |
| Actual asset maintenance / Required asset maintenance | 28,298 / 42,075 | 0.67 |
| 4. Cost to bring assets to agreed service level | | |
| Estimated cost to bring assets to an agreed service level set by Council / Gross replacement cost | 31,657 / 1,498,937 | 2.11% |

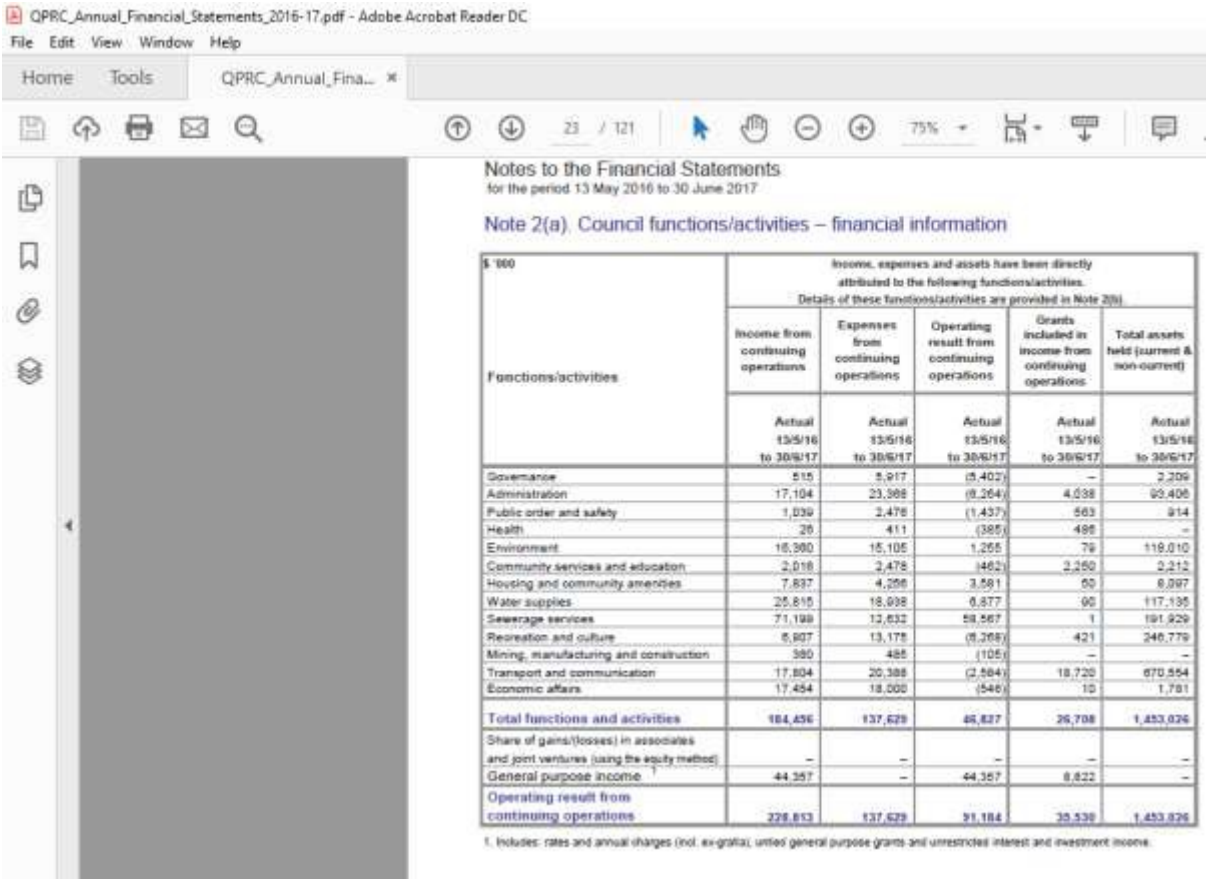
Notes

* All asset performance indicators are calculated using the asset classes identified in the previous table.

(1) Asset renewals represent the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity/performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets (or the refurbishment of old assets) that increases capacity/performance.

**Article 46**

QPRC Financial Summary



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Notes to the Financial Statements

for the period 13 May 2016 to 30 June 2017

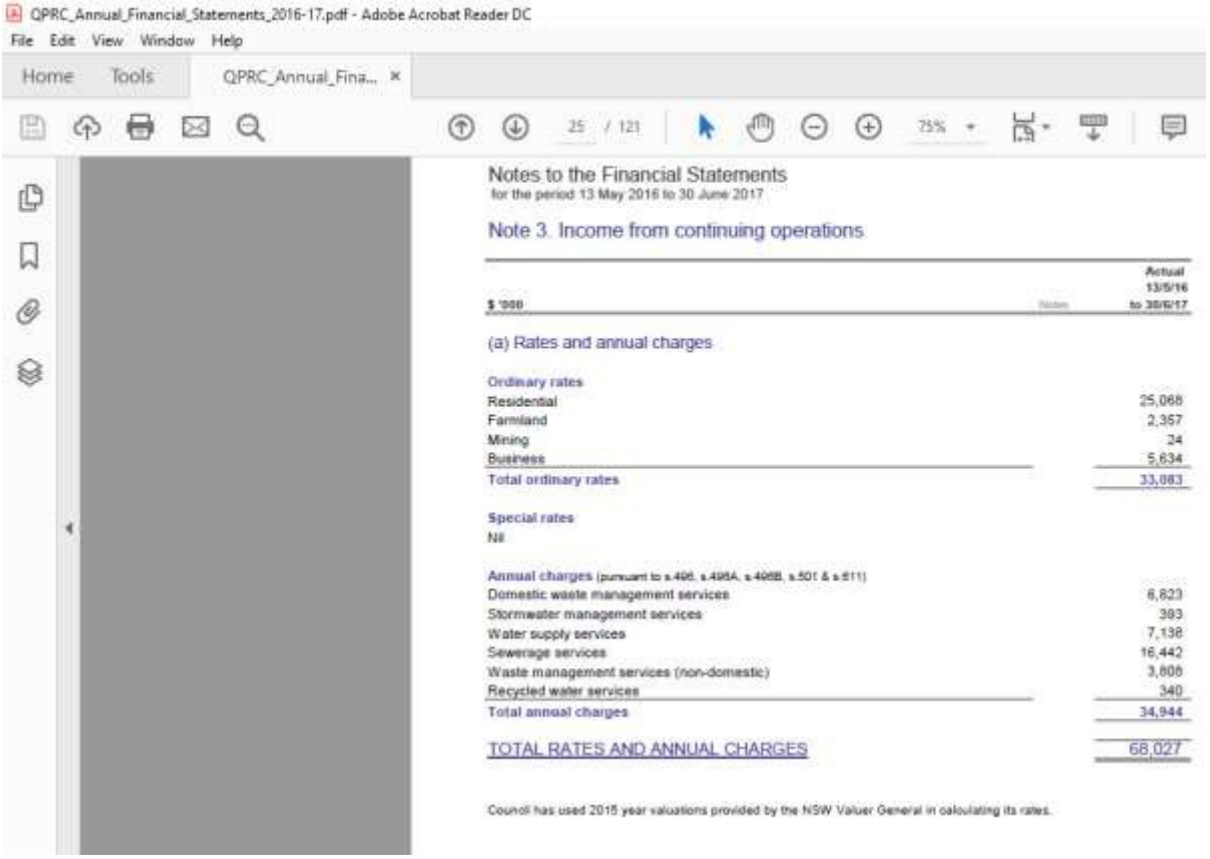
Note 2(a). Council functions/activities – financial information

| $ '000 | Income, expenses and assets have been directly attributed to the following functions/activities. Details of these functions/activities are provided in Note 2(b). | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Functions/activities | Income from continuing operations | Expenses from continuing operations | Operating result from continuing operations | Grants included in income from continuing operations | Total assets held (current & non-current) |
| | Actual 13/5/16 to 30/6/17 | Actual 13/5/16 to 30/6/17 | Actual 13/5/16 to 30/6/17 | Actual 13/5/16 to 30/6/17 | Actual 13/5/16 to 30/6/17 |
| Governance | 515 | 5,917 | (5,402) | – | 2,209 |
| Administration | 17,104 | 23,368 | (6,264) | 4,038 | 99,406 |
| Public order and safety | 1,039 | 2,476 | (1,437) | 563 | 914 |
| Health | 26 | 411 | (385) | 486 | – |
| Environment | 16,380 | 15,105 | 1,265 | 79 | 119,010 |
| Community services and education | 2,016 | 2,478 | (462) | 2,350 | 2,212 |
| Housing and community amenities | 7,837 | 4,256 | 3,581 | 50 | 6,097 |
| Water supplies | 25,815 | 18,938 | 6,877 | 90 | 117,135 |
| Sewerage services | 71,199 | 13,632 | 58,567 | 1 | 191,929 |
| Recreation and culture | 6,907 | 13,175 | (6,268) | 421 | 246,779 |
| Mining, manufacturing and construction | 380 | 485 | (105) | – | – |
| Transport and communication | 17,804 | 20,388 | (2,584) | 18,720 | 670,554 |
| Economic affairs | 17,454 | 18,000 | (546) | 10 | 1,781 |
| **Total functions and activities** | **184,456** | **137,629** | **46,827** | **26,708** | **1,453,026** |
| Share of gains/(losses) in associates and joint ventures (using the equity method) | – | – | – | – | – |
| General purpose income [1] | 44,357 | – | 44,357 | 8,822 | – |
| **Operating result from continuing operations** | **228,813** | **137,629** | **91,184** | **35,530** | **1,453,026** |

1. Includes: rates and annual charges (incl. ex-gratia); untied general purpose grants and unrestricted interest and investment income.

**Article 47**

QPRC Financial Summary




Notes to the Financial Statements
for the period 13 May 2016 to 30 June 2017

## Note 3. Income from continuing operations

| $ '000 | Notes | Actual 13/5/16 to 30/6/17 |
|---|---|---|
| **(a) Rates and annual charges** | | |
| **Ordinary rates** | | |
| Residential | | 25,068 |
| Farmland | | 2,357 |
| Mining | | 24 |
| Business | | 5,634 |
| **Total ordinary rates** | | 33,083 |
| **Special rates** | | |
| Nil | | |
| **Annual charges** (pursuant to s.496, s.496A, s.496B, s.501 & s.611) | | |
| Domestic waste management services | | 6,823 |
| Stormwater management services | | 393 |
| Water supply services | | 7,138 |
| Sewerage services | | 16,442 |
| Waste management services (non-domestic) | | 3,808 |
| Recycled water services | | 340 |
| **Total annual charges** | | 34,944 |
| TOTAL RATES AND ANNUAL CHARGES | | 68,027 |

Council has used 2015 year valuations provided by the NSW Valuer General in calculating its rates.

**Article 48**

## Civic Centre Questions 11 October 2017

**3. The cost of the Queanbeyan headquarters has increased from $25m in the Operational Plan Summary Overview to $57.4m with the smart hub, extra carparking etc., can you explain the increase and that this cost will not further increase in the future if this proposal is accepted?**

**Response – Community Choice**

At the time of the adoption of the Operational Plan, Council had allocated $25m for the head office, however a change of the scope of the project to include an office tenancy, basement carparking, smart hub and new public domain has increased the budget required for this project.

This has taken the building to six stories, with two allocated to a major tenant and three to Council offices, Council Chambers and meeting rooms, while one storey is dedicated to the smart hub.

Council is now intending to borrow $27.7m for the building and a further $11.3m for the carparking and public domain (total $39m). The remainder of the development would be



funded via contributions from the Queanbeyan cash reserves (including $11.3m from water and sewer) and other sources as shown in the table below. The estimates are based on independent quantity surveyor assessment for the size of building and scope of public works.

| Description | Budget 2017-18 $,000 | Source of funds: Grants &Contributions $,000 | Loans &Leases $,000 | Asset Sales $,000 | Reserves $,000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub - building construction and professional and application fees** | 41,000 | 0 | 27,700 | 0 | 13,300 |
| **Basement carparking and public domain works - Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub** | 16,400 | 2,100 | 11,300 | 3,000 | 0 |

**4. How confident is Council that it will be able to obtain a loan at 4% over 20 years and what are the expected total repayments, including interest?**

**Response – Community Choice**

As a Fit for the Future Council, QPRC has access to borrowings from the NSW Treasury Corporation which offers rates of around 4% over a 20-year period. Loan repayments, including interest, are expected to be $2.55m per year, with that to be offset by the rent paid by the major tenant.

**5. The Interim General Manager stated at the 27 September Council meeting, that by making contributions to the buildings, the water and sewer funds would be part owners. Would not ratepayers, via QPRC administration, own these assets, with council as custodians of our assets and not water and sewage?**

**Response – Community Choice**

Council's general, water and sewer administrative staff will occupy the new building, therefore it is acceptable for the water and sewer funds to contribute to the cost of the building. The water and sewer funds currently have a combined $41m in reserve. The $11.3m contribution will not be required for another two years, during which those reserves balances are naturally expected to increase.

**6. Why does the old Queanbeyan Administration building needed to be demolished?**
**Response – Community Connections**
The former administration building has been unoccupied for nearly two years, largely due to the significant cost required to replace the heating and cooling system. Refurbishment options were explored, but the site was deemed to have limited scope to increase the height of the building and difficult to extend the footprint. The report to the 27 September Council meeting stated: **Public Forum Questions/Answers 11 October 2017 3**

**10 September 2019**

**10. What is the current estimated cost for building the HOSH (or proposed new Queanbeyan**
**Council Administrative Headquarters Office building site)?**
**Response – Community Connections**
Council is currently working with the architect to finalise the scope and concept design of the project which includes new public domain spaces and better connectivity between The Q and
Version: 5, Version Date: 10/09/2019
Document Set ID: 388975
Bicentennial Hall. The cost of the construction will be further refined as this design is progressed.
An estimate will be available when the concept is placed on public exhibition.
**11. What is the timeframe for completion?**
**Response – Community Connections**
Council is aiming to complete the design and development approval process by early 2020 to
allow for tendering to occur in mid-2020. It is estimated that construction could take up to two years to complete.
**12. What is the breakdown (loans/cash/reserves/other) for funding this project?**
**Response – Community Connections**
The construction of the head office and smart hub will be funded by a mixture of debt, asset sales, grants, developer contributions and merger savings, the specific values of which will be
determined once the scope and project estimate are finalised.

*An option to re-site the office in the same Lowe carpark, having regard to the 2015 Carparking Strategy and 2017 QCBD Transformation Strategy, was explored following:*
- *discussions with the major tenant regarding their accommodation requirements*
- *examination of site restrictions (eg underground mains) at 257 Crawford St*
- *assessment of potential impacts of a sizeable building on that site on the mixed-use development prospects on the Rutledge frontage properties (ie solar access and encroaching its proposed green plaza); and subsequent impact on potential sale price*

*Relocating the building site to 50 Lowe Street was assessed as optimal to meet the tenant requirements; provide a discreet street frontage for the tenant; avoid the underground main; minimise delays to construction brought about by early demolition and excavation of 257 Crawford and relocations of Telstra and Essential Energy plant; provide suitable carparking; and open up the prospect of a substantial public domain capable of connecting Queanbeyan's green corridors as contemplated in the QCBD Transformation Strategy*
*By way of comparison, refurbishment and extension of the former office at 257 Crawford Street for the chambers and occupation by staff offices only with equivalent floor area, excluding carparking, is estimated at $3300/m2, requiring borrowings of $20m with annual loan payments of $1.6m.*

**7. With strong foundations to allow future floors to be added to the old Queanbeyan Administrative building, why this option was not considered and/or why it was not possible?**

**Response – Community Connections**

See question 6

**8. If this old administrative building had to be demolished, why a replacement building could not be then built on the original footprints of this old administrative building?**

**Response – Community Connections**

See question 6

**9. Why has the new building seemingly been radically changed from the original proposed building (increased scope on site within Lowe St carpark) and what study was conducted that would try to prevent any adverse short and long term consequences for local business, such as Gibbs Real Estate, Walsh's Hotel etc.?**

**Response – Community Connections**

The scope of the project has expanded to provide for a smart hub, basement carparking and major tenancy and that concept design formed the basis of community consultation in July/August. An impact assessment will be undertaken during the development application process as required under planning legislation..

**12. With rapidly escalating costs, why does not the QPRC council ask for other quotes for this Queanbeyan Headquarters costly building?**

**Response – Community Choice**

To date, Council has not called for quotes or tenders for the construction of the Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub. The $39m estimate for the building has been provided by a quantity surveyor. As resolved at the 27 September Council meeting, the Interim General Manager will not call for tenders until a lease agreement is executed. Tenders will be assessed on a number of criteria, including cost.

**13. What was the total costing for the architectural consultations for this proposed building?**

**Response – Community Choice**

An open tender process was undertaken in earlier 2017 and the contract awarded to Cox Architecture was valued at $700,000 for a building concept design and plans for the Lowe St carpark.

**15. What happens to a few buildings in the future, such as the old fire station and cottages, as some of these buildings seem to be presently heritage listed, so if sold, should not be then able to be demolished and redeveloped, under the present heritage listing restraints?**

**Response – Community Choice Public Forum Questions/Answers 11 October 2017 5**

The old Fire Station and Dutton's Cottage (263 Crawford St) are heritage listed and would not be demolished. Council would look to repurpose these for use as cafes or art galleries for example.

**16. Why public car spaces that were previously donated by some local businesses for the Q car park, can now be incorporated into a council building, where they will no longer be available for 24 hour public car parking, with many probably assigned to either, council and/or tenant parking, and these car parks would then be unavailable to the public outside council hours?**

**Response – Community Connections**

Carparking was one of the key considerations taken into account during the development of this proposal. Public carparking will be provided in a publicly-accessible underground carpark and also via on-street carparking on the new road that will be established linking the green civic plaza to Crawford St. Two levels of basement carparking will be provided underneath the building for the major tenant and Council staff. Council staff and other employees already occupy these CBD carparks. In total, there will be more carparking than is currently available. Council is also looking at the prospect of building a multi-storey carpark within the Morisset St carpark (behind Centrelink).

**17. What is the predicted deficit of QPRC over the coming years?**

**Response - Finance**

While a small surplus is forecast in 2017-18, Council is yet to prepare its 2018-2021 Delivery Program and associated Resourcing Strategy following the Council reviews of services and assets. The financial plan prepared in advance of the election proposed a number of significant capital projects and showed nett borrowings or use of reserves each year to achieve the positive operating result required of NSW councils.

**18. Why public tender was not used for the proposed redevelopment for the Queanbeyan council administrative building?**

**Response – Community Choice**

An open tender was called for the concept design. This was awarded to Cox Architecture in April 2017. In regards to the final design and construction of the building, Council will be calling for tenders for design and construction from suitably qualified companies.

# PUBLIC FORUM QUESTIONS/ANSWERS 11 October 2017

## Questions – S[redacted] Young

1. **The Operational Plan Summary Overview brochure was difficult to read, can this be addressed by Council? (Perhaps a larger pamphlet with larger font size and black type only in the future for these brochures)**

**Response – Community Choice**
Staff will take the colouring and font size into consideration when developing next year's Overview. This document is available on our website for download.

2. **The Operational Plan Summary Overview states that expenditure for the Ellerton Drive Extension is $8.25m, yet $36m in loan funding is required. Can you explain this discrepancy? (Perhaps one is the estimate for all the proposed road expenditure and the other the proposed expenditure for only the Ellerton Drive Extension)**

**Response - Community Choice**
The figures contained in the Overview relating to the Ellerton Drive Extension (EDE) and Queanbeyan Council Head Office were related to the expected expenditure in the 2017-18 financial year. The Operational Plan stated that the Council's component of EDE expenditure is expected to be $8.25m (as the initial construction costs are borne by federal and state grants); while the Queanbeyan head office was expected to cost $35m, with $25m of that to be expended during 2017-18. The total approved project cost and timeline information is available on the website at https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Major-Works-Projects/Queanbeyan-Head-Office-and-Smart-Hub

3. **The cost of the Queanbeyan headquarters has increased from $25m in the Operational Plan Summary Overview to $57.4m with the smart hub, extra carparking etc., can you explain the increase and that this cost will not further increase in the future if this proposal is accepted?**

**Response – Community Choice**
At the time of the adoption of the Operational Plan, Council had allocated $25m for the head office, however a change of the scope of the project to include an office tenancy, basement carparking, smart hub and new public domain has increased the budget required for this project.

This has taken the building to six stories, with two allocated to a major tenant and three to Council offices, Council Chambers and meeting rooms, while one storey is dedicated to the smart hub.

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funded via contributions from the Queanbeyan cash reserves (including $11.3m from water and sewer) and other sources as shown in the table below. The estimates are based on independent quantity surveyor assessment for the size of building and scope of public works.

| | | Source of funds | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Description** | **Budget 2017-18 $,000** | **Grants &Contributions $,000** | **Loans &Leases $,000** | **Asset Sales $,000** | **Reserves $,000** |
| **Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub - building construction and professional and application fees** | 41,000 | 0 | 27,700 | 0 | 13,300 |
| **Basement carparking and public domain works - Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub** | 16,400 | 2,100 | 11,300 | 3,000 | 0 |

In line with the Local Government Act 1993, Council is required to publicly exhibit any significant changes it proposes to make to its adopted Operational Plan. Comments on the proposed amendment to the Operational Plan 2017-18 will be accepted from 29 September 2017 until 27 October 2017 and can be lodged via yourvoice.qprc.nsw.gov.au, email to council@qprc.nsw.gov.au, mail to PO Box 90, Queanbeyan NSW or delivered to any Council office.

4. **How confident is Council that it will be able to obtain a loan at 4% over 20 years and what are the expected total repayments, including interest?**

**Response – Community Choice**
As a Fit for the Future Council, QPRC has access to borrowings from the NSW Treasury Corporation which offers rates of around 4% over a 20-year period. Loan repayments, including interest, are expected to be $2.55m per year, with that to be offset by the rent paid by the major tenant.

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**Response – Community Choice**
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6. **Why does the old Queanbeyan Administration building needed to be demolished?**

**Response – Community Connections**
The former administration building has been unoccupied for nearly two years, largely due to the significant cost required to replace the heating and cooling system. Refurbishment options were explored, but the site was deemed to have limited scope to increase the height of the building and difficult to extend the footprint. The report to the 27 September Council meeting stated:

*An option to re-site the office in the same Lowe carpark, having regard to the 2015 Carparking Strategy and 2017 QCBD Transformation Strategy, was explored following:*

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*Relocating the building site to 50 Lowe Street was assessed as optimal to meet the tenant requirements; provide a discreet street frontage for the tenant; avoid the underground main; minimise delays to construction brought about by early demolition and excavation of 257 Crawford and relocations of Telstra and Essential Energy plant; provide suitable carparking; and open up the prospect of a substantial public domain capable of connecting Queanbeyan's green corridors as contemplated in the QCBD Transformation Strategy*

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**Response – Community Connections**
See question 6

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**Response – Community Connections**
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9. **Why has the new building seemingly been radically changed from the original proposed building (increased scope on site within Lowe St carpark) and what study was conducted that would try to prevent any adverse short and long term consequences for local business, such as Gibbs Real Estate, Walsh's Hotel etc.?**

**Response – Community Connections**
The scope of the project has expanded to provide for a smart hub, basement carparking and major tenancy and that concept design formed the basis of community consultation in July/August. An impact assessment will be undertaken during the development application process as required under planning legislation..

10. **With the QPRC region greatly expanding and the geographical regional centre of QPRC no longer Queanbeyan, why a Bungendore Council Administrative Building could not now be used as the main QPRC Administrative Building, with a smaller Queanbeyan Administrative Building, even if some minor**

**refurbishments may be need for the Bungendore Council site to become the main QPRC administrative site.**

**Response – Community Connections**
That option was considered. The Bungendore Office is almost at capacity with over 50 staff currently located within the building. While it is capable of expansion, it is unlikely to be able to accommodate the approximate 200 Queanbeyan-based staff on that site and allow for growth, with the restrictions of the railway nearby. Queanbeyan-based staff are currently housed in 11 buildings and cottages within the Queanbeyan CBD. While Bungendore is close to the geographical centre of the new Local Government Area (LGA), around 70% of the LGA population lives in Queanbeyan and nearby suburbs.

11. **Why the Queanbeyan Bicentennial Hall could not then be sometimes used for perhaps any larger council meetings that may be needed in Queanbeyan?**

**Response – Community Choice**
This has occurred in the past for Council meetings relating to the Ellerton Drive Extension and South Tralee development for example.

12. **With rapidly escalating costs, why does not the QPRC council ask for other quotes for this Queanbeyan Headquarters costly building?**

**Response – Community Choice**
To date, Council has not called for quotes or tenders for the construction of the Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub. The $39m estimate for the building has been provided by a quantity surveyor. As resolved at the 27 September Council meeting, the Interim General Manager will not call for tenders until a lease agreement is executed. Tenders will be assessed on a number of criteria, including cost.

13. **What was the total costing for the architectural consultations for this proposed building?**

**Response – Community Choice**
An open tender process was undertaken in earlier 2017 and the contract awarded to Cox Architecture was valued at $700,000 for a building concept design and plans for the Lowe St carpark.

14. **What happens to the old trees in the present site of council building proposal? Should not our old trees, especially in the main 2 roads around council owned buildings, in the Queanbeyan CBD be themselves heritage listed, if this has not already been proposed?**

**Response – Community Connections**
The old trees along Crawford and Rutledge Streets are not proposed for removal. This will be further explored in the development application process.

15. **What happens to a few buildings in the future, such as the old fire station and cottages, as some of these buildings seem to be presently heritage listed, so if sold, should not be then able to be demolished and redeveloped, under the present heritage listing restraints?**

**Response – Community Choice**

The old Fire Station and Dutton's Cottage (263 Crawford St) are heritage listed and would not be demolished. Council would look to repurpose these for use as cafes or art galleries for example.

16. **Why public car spaces that were previously donated by some local businesses for the Q car park, can now be incorporated into a council building, where they will no longer be available for 24 hour public car parking, with many probably assigned to either, council and/or tenant parking, and these car parks would then be unavailable to the public outside council hours?**

**Response – Community Connections**
Carparking was one of the key considerations taken into account during the development of this proposal. Public carparking will be provided in a publicly-accessible underground carpark and also via on-street carparking on the new road that will be established linking the green civic plaza to Crawford St. Two levels of basement carparking will be provided underneath the building for the major tenant and Council staff. Council staff and other employees already occupy these CBD carparks. In total, there will be more carparking than is currently available. Council is also looking at the prospect of building a multi-storey carpark within the Morisset St carpark (behind Centrelink).

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**Response - Finance**
While a small surplus is forecast in 2017-18, Council is yet to prepare its 2018-2021 Delivery Program and associated Resourcing Strategy following the Council reviews of services and assets. The financial plan prepared in advance of the election proposed a number of significant capital projects and showed nett borrowings or use of reserves each year to achieve the positive operating result required of NSW councils.

18. **Why public tender was not used for the proposed redevelopment for the Queanbeyan council administrative building?**

**Response – Community Choice**
An open tender was called for the concept design. This was awarded to Cox Architecture in April 2017. In regards to the final design and construction of the building, Council will be calling for tenders for design and construction from suitably qualified companies.

19. **Why an unsolicited proposal by a consortium of seemingly one real estate/building/development group was so quickly accepted by council, without seemingly any ratepayer feedback, or other consortium groups being allowed to also tender for this large proposed expenditure of ratepayer money.**

**Response – Interim General Manager**
Following the endorsement of the CBD Property Feasibility Study in April 2016, Council resolved to authorise the General Manager to negotiate unsolicited and joint venture proposals for some of its CBD sites, for further report and endorsement of Council.

On 24 August 2016, Council adopted the QPRC Unsolicited Proposals Guidelines, based on NSW Government documents, which outlined the procedure for the submissions and assessment of unsolicited bids.

An unsolicited bid was presented to the General Manager in late 2016 which was assessed in line with the adopted guidelines.

The unsolicited bid was presented to Council in November 2016 where it was resolved to enter into a heads of agreement with the proponent.

Council has not contracted to the sale of any buildings at this stage. Council has received an unsolicited bid from Downtown Q for a proposed development on property that Council owns. Council has requested Downtown Q provide a master plan and information on staging of this development.

Once the plans for the Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub are at DA stage, negotiations for the sale of some of the CBD sites ultimately vacated by the occupation of the new head office will commence. These negotiations will be in line with the terms of the heads of agreement and the resolution of Council to consider the sale and redevelopment on a staged and site basis. Subdivision of the current lots to accommodate a potential sale is required. The sale/s are based on independent valuations on current and potential redeveloped use, to enable negotiation on cash or public works in kind, the results of which are reported to Council for determination.

20. **Why one seemingly independent real estate valuation of Queanbeyan owned properties can be used, rather than the use of several different real estate valuation type quotes and who would be providing this independent valuation of valuable Queanbeyan council owned assets?**

**Response – Organisational Capability**
In line with legal and ICAC advice, and in accord with the heads of agreement, independent market-based valuations are acceptable. Valuations were originally provided late in 2016 for several CBD sites. The valuation for the Rutledge St properties provided by HillPDA was reported to Council in September 2017.

21. **Is it legal for ratepayer funds, that were collected and initially allocated for water and sewage, to be later transferred into helping to pay for a proposed new administrative council building and how would this fund transfer affect future proposed water and sewage works in the QPRC, as proposed new developments, which would occur with the Ellerton Drive Extension would also incur additional ratepayer costs of supplying water, sewage, footpaths etc. for these proposed new housing developments?**

**Response – Community Choice**
Council's water and sewer functions will be users of the new building and therefore are eligible to make a contribution towards the project. Construction of a new Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) is expected to be funded by a mix of loans, reserves and Government grants. The $11.3m contribution to this project will not impact on the ability to complete the STP.

22. **What would the proposed increase in rates by, after the 2020 freeze on council rate increases in lifted?**

**Response - Finance**
Council's Resourcing Strategy, which is yet to be adopted, forecasts a 1% increase on rates above the NSW rate peg, which is set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal. Council is yet to formally make a decision on this matter and will consider a new financial plan following its reviews of service and asset standards with the Delivery Program next year.

23. **Can you explain how the two members of the Determination Panel for the Ellerton Drive Extension that was not from QPRC, were adequately informed of the project prior to the Determination Meeting?**

**Response – Community Connections**

Following the appointment of the Determination Panel (including two Administrators from other councils), detailed information was provided to the Determination Panel. This information included site tours and presentations on the:

- Project history
- Review of Environmental Factors
- Species Impact Statement and Addendum
- Submissions Report

The Determination Panel was also provided with copies of relevant documents for their information, including the Determination Report, Review of Environmental Factors, Species Impact Statement and Addendum and the Submissions Report.

**Questions to Council**

**17. What are the total expenses, so far, or in the near future, for**
**a.) the demolition and**
**removal of the old Queanbeyan council building,**
**b.) the total architectural fees so far paid,**
**or estimated costs, payable on completion of the two new proposed Queanbeyan Council buildings?**

**Response: Organisation Capability**
The cost of demolition and removal of the former building at 257 Crawford Street, Queanbeyan was $474,000 excluding GST.

The architectural costs for the new Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct are as follows:
• Concept design - $200,000 excluding GST
• Detail design (including interior design and construction phase services) - $1,682,000 excluding GST

These costs are the architectural fees only and exclude other building consultants' fees which amount to $2.6M excluding GST.

**Questions to Council**

**18. What is the cost of consultants to QPRC over the past 12 months and what is the purpose of each consultancy?**

**Response: Organisation Capability**
The following consultancy costs will be reported in Council's end of year financial statements,
noting that the cost of consultants used in capital works projects is included in the total cost of the
capital project for reporting, and therefore are not shown in the below list.

- Governing Council 3,346
- Customer Service Counter 26,780
- Financial Accounting 26,151
- Managing Investments & Loans 12,000
- Management Accounting 66,075
- Library Online Services 1,990
- Procurement 65,000
- Managing ICT Network 212,342
- Integrated Planning 49,520
- Staff Learning and Development 114,227
- Waste Station management 9,523
- Survey Investigation & Design 95,835
- Asset Management 172,614
- Advisory Services 25,594
- Water Headwork Operations 4,329
- Water Reservoir Maintenance 1,091
- Dam Maintenance 62,148
- Sewer Treatment Operation 2,282
- Sewer Testing 3,180
- Telemetry 15,882
- Asset Strategy/Management Plans 32,264
- Building Maintenance - Fire Security Services 1,500
- Floodplain Management 4,235
- River Water Sampling 25,999
- Heritage advisory Program 40,558
- Facilitating Development Control 55,710
- Groundwater Monitoring 7,231
- Strategic Planning 19,843
- Planning Proposal 6,432
- Domestic Waste Collection Service 7,055
- PLA - Technical Investigations 15,070
- PLA - Business Case 33,150

**$1,218,959**

## Questions to Council

## Sale of Council Land

**19. Why an unsolicited proposal by a consortium of seemingly one real estate/building/development group was so quickly accepted by council, without seemingly any ratepayer feedback, or other consortium groups being allowed to also tender for this large, proposed expenditure of ratepayer money.**

**Response – Interim General Manager**

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**20. Why one seemingly independent real estate valuation of Queanbeyan owned properties can be used, rather than the use of several different real estate valuation type quotes and who would be providing this independent valuation of valuable Queanbeyan council owned assets?**

**Response – Organisational Capability**

In line with legal and ICAC advice, and in accord with the heads of agreement, independent market-based valuations are acceptable. Valuations were originally provided late in 2016 for several CBD sites. The valuation for the Rutledge St properties provided by HillPDA was reported to Council in September 2017.

**Questions to Council – Loans & Reserves**

**9. In the last financial year, how many loans has the QPRC received from the NSW government and what was the total value of these loans?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
Nil from the State Government, but $10,180,000 from TCorp – a central borrowing authority for
the NSW public sector. Council's borrowings are disclosed in the Operational Plan. These borrowings were applied as follows:
• $7,263,000 for the first tranche of borrowing for the Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct
• $2,800,000 for street lighting LED upgrades
• $117,000 for the Bicentennial Hall upgrade

**10. In a 3-month period, how much interest is paid on all QPRC loans?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
$806,730 interest is payable in a 3-month period during 2021/22 on all existing Council loans,
including general, water and sewer fund. As referenced in Q7-9, the borrowings and interest charges are disclosed in the Operational Plan and annual financial statements.

**11. How many loans does QPRC currently hold, and what is the main purpose for each of**
**these loans?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
15 loans. The loan schedule is provided as an attachment.

20 November 2019

**1. Could you list all the QPRC current loan borrowings, including the separate amounts, the interest due and/or paid and when each loan borrowing is due. e.g.**
**Response – Organisation Capability**
The schedule of current borrowings of $94,947,729.91 is published in table below. Council increased its borrowings by $50.4m million in the last financial year to fund a suite of priority capital improvements, taking advantage of the current low interest rate environment and supplementing Federal and State capital grant funding. Council has maintained a debt service cover ratio of 6.4x, exceeding the Office of Local Government's benchmark of 2x. The debt service cover ratio is a measure of the Council's ability to pay its debt obligations and is an indicator of financially responsible use of loan funding.
The Ellerton Drive extension project is funded from grant funding ($50m) and low-interest loan funding ($36m). The loan is a 10-year, fixed interest loan at 3.08%; and also attracts an additional interest rate subsidy from the Office of Local Government of 1.54%.

**2. Are there any future loans foreshadowed, and if so, please complete similar information that was asked in question 1, such as the amount, the loan's name, interest paid, when the loan is due, and the purpose of the loan.**
**Response – Organisation Capability**
Yes, Council's Long Term Financial Plan forecasts further borrowings in the future. Under the Plan, Council's debt will peak in 2021-22 with borrowings forecast for the Queanbeyan Sewage Treatment Plant (~$50m) and **Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Hub (~$50m).**
Apart from that year, Council will still meet, or better, the debt service cover ratio set by the NSW Office of Local Government. We expect this financing will also be eligible for the additional Office of Local Government interest rate subsidy of 50%

The LTFP, incorporating the proposed future borrowings schedule, will be reviewed again in the current financial year to ensure Council has adequate funding for those two major priority capital projects.
The updated loan schedule will be available for public exhibition in the coming months with the revised long term financial plan once final estimates have been completed and considered by Council.

The adopted Long Term Financial Plan can be downloaded from
https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-business/Budgets-and-planning

**3.**

**Questions to Council**

**8. As of August 1, 2021, what are the total unencumbered financial reserves for QPRC (or those not subject to loan repayments etc)?**

**Response: Organisation Capability**

$15,000,000 as at 30 June 2021 – this figure is currently in the final stages of reconciliation, taking into account the external income sources that Council receives.
The reserves balances are disclosed in the annual financial statements.

**Questions to Council**

**Water & Sewerage Funds**

**7. What is the current balance of the Queanbeyan water and sewer funds?**
**Response – Organisational Capability**

As at Council's last reporting period (30 June 2019) the balance of Water and Sewer funds were:

- Water Fund: $31.1m
- Sewer Fund: $69.0m

| | | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Number of staff (total) - EFT | | 271 | 274 | 277 | 278 | 300 | 304 | 289 | 248 | 266 | ? | |
| b) Number of full time and part time staff | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| c) Number of consultancies | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| d) Total amount paid for the respective year for salaries and wages *combined* ($,000) | | 17,916 | 18,095 | 17,844 | 16,821 | 16,583 | 15,389 | 13,529 | 12,334 | 11,450 | 10,924 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Average cost per head** | | $ 66,111 | $ 66,040 | $64,419 | $60,507 | $55,277 | $50,622 | $54,552 | $49,734 | $43,045 | | |
| **% cost per year** | | 0.11% | 2.52% | 6.46% | 9.46% | 9.19% | -7.21% | 9.68% | 15.50% | | | |
| **% cost for period** | | $66,111 | | | $60,507 | | | | | $43,045 | | 40.56% |
| **Increased staff numbers for period** | | 53.58% | | | 278 | | | | | 266 | | 12 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| e) Total amount paid for the respective year for wages | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| f) Total amount paid for the respective consultancies ($,000) | | 872 | 633 | 408 | 679 | 823 | 1,966 | 1,575 | 822 | 750 | 723 | |
| g) Total amount of overheads for (c) & (d) ($,000) | | 5148 | 5012 | 5972 | 5,070 | 5,039 | 4,524 | 3,596 | 3,415 | 3,326 | 2,975 | |
| *Employee Leave Entitlements* | | 1978 | 1794 | 2741 | *1,861* | *1,797* | *1,882* | *1,344* | *1,151* | *1,284* | *1,183* | |
| *Superannuation (1)* | | 1483 | 1458 | 1430 | *1,301* | *1,252* | *900* | *850* | *857* | *840* | *793* | |
| *Superannuation (2)* | | 561 | 547 | 579 | *780* | *839* | *660* | *343* | *233* | *159* | | |
| *Workers Compensation Insurance* | | 534 | 551 | 556 | *563* | *547* | *539* | *462* | *725* | *583* | *582* | |
| *Fringe Benefit Tax* | | 85 | 144 | 76 | *67* | *110* | *83* | *94* | *67* | *88* | *60* | |
| *Payroll Tax* | | 51 | 45 | 58 | *74* | *72* | *51* | *39* | *48* | *41* | *38* | |
| *Training* | | 327 | 366 | 397 | *344* | *298* | *281* | *379* | *240* | *233* | *220* | |
| *Other* | | 129 | 107 | 135 | *80* | *124* | *128* | *85* | *94* | *98* | *99* | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 5148 | 5012 | 5972 | 5070 | 5039 | 4524 | 3596 | 3415 | 3326 | 2975 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | $ 23,064 | $ 23,107 | $ 23,816 | $ 21,891 | $ 21,622 | $ 20,063 | $ 17,125 | $ 15,749 | $ 14,776 | $ 13,899 | |

**Staffing Numbers**

**12. What is the number of staff on the Council Payroll, internal and external?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
Council has 535 ongoing and fixed term staff members. This includes almost 100 casuals.

**13. In a 3-month period, what is the total for all QPRC staff salary payments?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
Based on current staff numbers and pay rates, Council expects to pay $9,347,162 wages over a
three-month period
Total employment costs are disclosed in the Operational Plan and annual financial statements.

**14. How many staff are paid more than $200, 000 per year?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
There are eight staff with a total remuneration package greater than $200,000.

**15. What are the 3-month super payments that the QPRC are liable for?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
Based on current staff numbers and pay rates, Council can expect to pay $902,297 in super

payments over a three-month period.
**16. Over the next 10 years, what are the expected super and staff payments expected to be**
**every 3 months?**
**Response: Organisation Capability**
Detailed figures are unable to be provided due to the likelihood of change over the next 10 years, noting annual Award increases and super guarantee increases are expected over that period.
Projections in Council's Long Term Financial Plan include an annual 2.5% increase in employee benefits.
Employee costs are estimated at $35.8m as disclosed in the 2021-22 Operational Plan, representing 27% of the Budget.
Council is currently reviewing its Long-Term Financial Plan.

# Available Jobs

Corporate Planning & Performance Officer
Corporate Planning & Performance Officer
10 Jobs. Select a job to view the details.



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 23 January 2023
Reference
JR1326
Animal Attendant
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
CUSTOMER AND COMMUNICATIONS
Permanent
Queanbeyan



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 24 April 2023
Reference
JR1344
Building Surveyor
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
CONTROL
Permanent
Queanbeyan



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 6 February 2023
Reference
JR1343
Corporate Planning & Performance Officer
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
Directorate - Corporate Services

Permanent
Queanbeyan



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 30 January 2023
Reference
JR1338
Development Compliance Officer
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
DEVELOPMENT
Permanent
Queanbeyan



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 6 February 2023
Reference
JR1342
Financial Accountant
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING
Permanent
Queanbeyan



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 13 February 2023
Reference
JR1345
General Equipment Operator
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
TRANSPORT MAINTENANCE
Permanent
Bungendore



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 13 February 2023
Reference
JR1334
Leading Hand - Construction Grader
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
TRANSPORT AND FACILITIES
Permanent
Bungendore



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 30 January 2023
Reference
JR1340
Library Officer
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
LIBRARY
Permanent
Queanbeyan



Applications close 9:00 AM Tuesday, 31 January 2023
Reference
JR1292
Town Planner
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
PROGRAM - ASSESSMENT
Permanent
Bungendore



Applications close 9:00 AM Monday, 30 January 2023
Reference
JR1331
Trainee Gardener
Queanbeyan - Palerang Regional Council
CBD AND HORTICULTURE
Fixed Term
Queanbeyan

Enterprise software, incredibly simple
Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council Privacy Statement
Powered by TechnologyOne

| Fleet no | Registration | Delivery date | Make | Model | Series |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F03500 | [redacted] | 27/03/2014 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 7 | LS 2.2L DIESEL |
| F03543 | | 23/05/2011 | MITSUBISHI | LANCER | ES |
| F03544 | | 15/04/2011 | HOLDEN | COMMODORE | OMEGA |
| F03545 | | 12/08/2011 | TOYOTA | CAMRY HYBRID | |
| F03546 | | 23/01/2012 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03547 | | 23/05/2011 | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | LS |
| F03548 | | 01/06/2011 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03549 | | 25/07/2011 | HOLDEN | EPICA | |
| F03550 | | 17/08/2011 | TOYOTA | CAMRY ALTISE | |
| F03562 | | 27/06/2011 | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | LS |
| F03570 | | 20/01/2012 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03573 | | 24/04/2012 | HOLDEN | COMMODORE | OMEGA |
| F03576 | | 31/01/2012 | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | LS |
| F03580 | | 18/05/2012 | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | DUAL CAB |
| F03584 | | 01/05/2012 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03586 | | 31/07/2012 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03588 | | 31/07/2012 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03593 | | 03/08/2012 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03594 | | 24/08/2012 | HOLDEN | COMMODORE | OMEGA |
| F03595 | | 11/09/2012 | TOYOTA | COROLLA | ASCENT |
| F03602 | | 22/01/2013 | TOYOTA | CAMRY ALTISE | |
| F03603 | | 20/08/2013 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 7 | SX 2.4L PETROL |
| F03604 | | 21/12/2012 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 7 | LX 2.2L DIESEL |
| F03605 | | 04/10/2013 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 7 | SX 2.4L PETROL |
| F03609 | | 21/12/2012 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 7 | SX 2.2L DIESEL |
| F03611 | | 19/08/2013 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 7 | SX 2.2L DIESEL |
| F03612 | | 22/10/2013 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 5 | LT 2.2L DIESEL A |
| F03615 | | 15/07/2013 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03616 | | 11/07/2013 | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA 5 | LT 2.2L DIESEL A |
| F03618 | | 26/07/2013 | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | LS |
| F03620 | | 07/08/2013 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03621 | | 09/08/2013 | SUBARU | FORESTER | X |
| F03622 | | 30/08/2013 | SUBARU | LIBERTY | UNKNOWN |
| F03624 | | 02/10/2013 | TOYOTA | RAV 4 | |
| F03632 | | 03/04/2014 | HYUNDAI | I40 | VF2 ELITE |
| F03633 | | 27/03/2014 | HYUNDAI | IX35 | WG ACTIVE |
| F03634 | | 11/04/2014 | TOYOTA | CAMRY ATARA SL | |
| F03913 | | 26/02/2014 | SUBARU | FORESTER | 2.5I |
| F03929 | | 28/03/2014 | TOYOTA | CAMRY ALTISE | |
| F04200 | | 03/06/2014 | ISUZU | DMAX 2WD | SX 3.0TD |
| F04540 | | 05/04/2011 | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | DUAL CAB |
| F04541 | | 05/04/2011 | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | DUAL CAB |
| F04571 | | 02/04/2012 | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | DUAL CAB |
| F04574 | | 28/05/2012 | TOYOTA | HILUX | 4WD DUALCAB |
| F04587 | | 11/09/2012 | TOYOTA | HILUX | 4WD DUALCAB |
| F04591 | | 17/08/2012 | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | DUAL CAB |
| F04597 | | 08/10/2012 | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | DUAL CAB |
| F04623 | | 06/09/2013 | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | DUAL CAB |

Inc

| Driver | Purchase price | OD | Odo date | Age | Annualised |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| [redacted] | $ 32,655.21 | 13120.00 | 30/06/2014 | 95 | 50408 |
| | $ 22,438.99 | 70478.00 | 28/06/2014 | 1132 | 22725 |
| | $ 31,776.80 | 83115.00 | 18/07/2014 | 1190 | 25493 |
| | $ 34,991.35 | 55115.00 | 23/06/2014 | 1046 | 19232 |
| | $ 30,805.98 | 78590.00 | 29/06/2014 | 888 | 32303 |
| | $ 32,396.00 | 57730.00 | 29/06/2014 | 1133 | 18598 |
| | $ 31,474.50 | 52476.00 | 28/06/2014 | 1123 | 17056 |
| | $ 27,738.00 | 67465.00 | 26/06/2014 | 1067 | 23078 |
| | $ 26,151.00 | 86256.00 | 29/06/2014 | 1047 | 30070 |
| | $ 31,846.00 | 39870.00 | 21/06/2014 | 1090 | 13351 |
| | $ 28,648.48 | 48887.00 | 29/06/2014 | 891 | 20027 |
| | $ 33,741.64 | 69902.00 | 30/06/2014 | 797 | 32013 |
| | $ 32,360.00 | 85164.00 | 25/06/2014 | 876 | 35485 |
| | $ 34,470.70 | 82321.00 | 30/06/2014 | 773 | 38871 |
| | $ 30,820.00 | 50918.00 | 24/06/2014 | 784 | 23705 |
| | $ 29,950.00 | 36017.00 | 30/06/2014 | 699 | 18807 |
| | $ 31,175.36 | 36115.00 | 30/06/2014 | 699 | 18858 |
| | $ 28,966.00 | 43459.00 | 23/06/2014 | 689 | 23023 |
| | $ 33,960.71 | 51515.00 | 30/06/2014 | 675 | 27856 |
| | $ 21,572.00 | 82625.00 | 27/06/2014 | 654 | 46113 |
| | $ 26,286.01 | 16427.00 | 18/06/2014 | 512 | 11711 |
| | $ 30,476.09 | 21856.00 | 27/06/2014 | 311 | 25651 |
| | $ 40,158.59 | 61494.00 | 29/06/2014 | 555 | 40442 |
| | $ 30,419.99 | 25286.00 | 26/06/2014 | 265 | 34828 |
| | $ 32,456.25 | 57216.00 | 11/06/2014 | 537 | 38890 |
| | $ 33,430.00 | 64384.00 | 28/06/2014 | 313 | 75080 |
| | $ 31,352.51 | 25629.00 | 26/06/2014 | 247 | 37873 |
| | $ 40,193.33 | 27390.00 | 29/06/2014 | 349 | 28646 |
| | $ 30,871.26 | 35690.00 | 27/06/2014 | 351 | 37114 |
| | $ 32,341.00 | 39367.00 | 28/06/2014 | 337 | 42638 |
| | $ 30,756.43 | 20923.00 | 29/06/2014 | 326 | 23426 |
| | $ 29,711.42 | 14914.00 | 25/06/2014 | 320 | 17011 |
| | $ 38,826.21 | 52725.00 | 28/06/2014 | 302 | 63724 |
| | $ 42,808.89 | 20861.00 | 28/06/2014 | 269 | 28306 |
| | $ 32,935.00 | 1710.00 | 30/06/2014 | 88 | 27875 |
| | $ 26,255.00 | 6175.00 | 21/06/2014 | 86 | 26208 |
| | $ 35,271.95 | 5801.00 | 27/06/2014 | 77 | 27498 |
| | $ 30,700.55 | 10504.00 | 25/06/2014 | 119 | 32218 |
| | $ 25,451.80 | 7400.00 | 27/06/2014 | 91 | 29681 |
| | $ 33,157.96 | 2990.00 | 07/07/2014 | 34 | 32099 |
| | $ 35,503.80 | 76986.00 | 24/06/2014 | 1176 | 23894 |
| | $ 34,966.80 | 93967.00 | 24/07/2014 | 1206 | 28439 |
| | $ 37,319.71 | 56050.00 | 24/06/2014 | 813 | 25164 |
| | $ 32,392.99 | 19370.00 | 27/06/2014 | 760 | 9303 |
| | $ 38,154.00 | 56819.00 | 21/06/2014 | 648 | 32005 |
| | $ 35,889.50 | 41897.00 | 28/07/2014 | 710 | 21539 |
| | $ 37,539.51 | 39102.00 | 27/06/2014 | 627 | 22763 |
| | $ 39,750.70 | 34209.00 | 02/07/2014 | 299 | 41760 |

| | | Fixed Dep (exc) | Opp Cost % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 20% | 3.5% | |
| Ant. Life | Residual | Depreciation | Opp Cost | Registration |
| 1.5 | $ 14,694.84 | $ 5,877.94 | $ 1,028.64 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 8,975.60 | $ 4,039.02 | $ 706.83 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.9 | $ 12,710.72 | $ 5,719.82 | $ 1,000.97 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 17,495.68 | $ 6,298.44 | $ 1,102.23 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.3 | $ 15,402.99 | $ 5,545.08 | $ 970.39 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 12,958.40 | $ 5,831.28 | $ 1,020.47 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 15,737.25 | $ 5,665.41 | $ 991.45 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 11,095.20 | $ 4,992.84 | $ 873.75 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.5 | $ 10,460.40 | $ 4,707.18 | $ 823.76 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 12,738.40 | $ 5,732.28 | $ 1,003.15 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 14,324.24 | $ 5,156.73 | $ 902.43 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.3 | $ 13,496.66 | $ 6,073.50 | $ 1,062.86 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.1 | $ 12,944.00 | $ 5,824.80 | $ 1,019.34 | $ 498.00 |
| 1.9 | $ 20,682.42 | $ 6,204.73 | $ 1,085.83 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 15,410.00 | $ 5,547.60 | $ 970.83 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 14,975.00 | $ 5,391.00 | $ 943.43 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 15,587.68 | $ 5,611.56 | $ 982.02 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 14,483.00 | $ 5,213.88 | $ 912.43 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.7 | $ 13,584.28 | $ 6,112.93 | $ 1,069.76 | $ 719.00 |
| 1.6 | $ 8,628.80 | $ 3,882.96 | $ 679.52 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 10,514.40 | $ 4,731.48 | $ 828.01 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.9 | $ 13,714.24 | $ 5,485.70 | $ 960.00 | $ 719.00 |
| 1.9 | $ 18,071.37 | $ 7,228.55 | $ 1,265.00 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.2 | $ 13,689.00 | $ 5,475.60 | $ 958.23 | $ 719.00 |
| 1.9 | $ 14,605.31 | $ 5,842.13 | $ 1,022.37 | $ 719.00 |
| 1.0 | $ 15,043.50 | $ 6,017.40 | $ 1,053.05 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.0 | $ 14,108.63 | $ 5,643.45 | $ 987.60 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.6 | $ 20,096.67 | $ 7,234.80 | $ 1,266.09 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.0 | $ 13,892.07 | $ 5,556.83 | $ 972.44 | $ 719.00 |
| 1.8 | $ 12,936.40 | $ 5,821.38 | $ 1,018.74 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 15,378.22 | $ 5,536.16 | $ 968.83 | $ 498.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 14,855.71 | $ 5,348.06 | $ 935.91 | $ 498.00 |
| 1.2 | $ 19,413.11 | $ 6,988.72 | $ 1,223.03 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.6 | $ 19,264.00 | $ 7,705.60 | $ 1,348.48 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.7 | $ 14,820.75 | $ 5,928.30 | $ 1,037.45 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.9 | $ 10,502.00 | $ 4,725.90 | $ 827.03 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.7 | $ 14,108.78 | $ 6,348.95 | $ 1,111.07 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.3 | $ 15,350.28 | $ 5,526.10 | $ 967.07 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.5 | $ 10,180.72 | $ 4,581.32 | $ 801.73 | $ 498.00 |
| 2.3 | $ 16,578.98 | $ 5,968.43 | $ 1,044.48 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 21,302.28 | $ 6,390.68 | $ 1,118.37 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.6 | $ 20,980.08 | $ 6,294.02 | $ 1,101.45 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 22,391.83 | $ 6,717.55 | $ 1,175.57 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 19,435.79 | $ 5,830.74 | $ 1,020.38 | $ 719.00 |
| 2.3 | $ 22,892.40 | $ 6,867.72 | $ 1,201.85 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 21,533.70 | $ 6,460.11 | $ 1,130.52 | $ 719.00 |
| 3.0 | $ 22,523.71 | $ 6,757.11 | $ 1,182.49 | $ 719.00 |
| 1.8 | $ 23,850.42 | $ 7,155.13 | $ 1,252.15 | $ 719.00 |

## FIXED COSTS

| Fleet Value | Insurance Prem | | Fleet Items | Admin Cost |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $ 7,100,000.00 | $ 106,504.58 | $ 134.00 | 48 | $ 36,000.00 |

| CTP | Insurance | Roadside Assist | Garaging | Administration |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $ 386.00 | $ 440.86 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 302.94 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 429.01 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 472.40 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 415.90 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 437.36 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 424.92 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 374.48 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 353.05 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 429.94 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 386.77 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 455.53 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 436.88 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 465.37 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 416.09 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 404.34 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 420.89 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 391.06 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 458.49 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 291.23 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 354.88 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 411.44 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 542.16 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 410.69 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 438.18 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 451.32 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 423.28 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 542.63 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 416.78 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 436.62 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 415.23 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 401.12 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 524.18 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 577.94 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 444.64 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 354.46 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 476.19 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 414.48 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 343.61 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 447.65 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 479.32 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 472.07 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 503.84 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 437.32 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 515.10 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 484.53 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 506.81 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |
| $ 386.00 | $ 536.66 | $ 134.00 | | $ 750.00 |

## VARIABLE

| GST exc | cents/L | $/tyre | FBT Rate | Gross Up |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $ 1.50 | $ 160.00 | 47% | 2.0802 |

| Op Dep | Fuel | Tyres | Maintenance | FBT Payable | Fixed Total | Var Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $ 4,986.31 | $ 6,124.62 | $ 806.53 | $ 1,303.23 | $ 1,782.81 | $ 9,336.44 | $ 15,003.50 |
| $ - | $ 2,454.28 | $ 363.60 | $ 409.05 | $ 1,207.39 | $ 6,816.79 | $ 4,434.31 |
| $ 112.85 | $ 3,403.35 | $ 407.89 | $ 575.81 | $ 1,612.06 | $ 9,138.80 | $ 6,111.96 |
| $ - | $ 1,500.12 | $ 307.72 | $ 356.69 | $ 1,834.67 | $ 9,862.07 | $ 3,999.20 |
| $ 425.74 | $ 3,924.85 | $ 516.85 | $ 604.72 | $ 1,692.95 | $ 8,699.36 | $ 7,165.11 |
| $ - | $ 2,092.27 | $ 297.57 | $ 370.97 | $ 2,274.59 | $ 9,057.12 | $ 5,035.39 |
| $ - | $ 2,072.29 | $ 272.89 | $ 319.29 | $ 1,823.67 | $ 8,849.78 | $ 4,488.14 |
| $ - | $ 3,219.45 | $ 369.26 | $ 546.19 | $ 1,702.11 | $ 8,009.07 | $ 5,837.00 |
| $ 954.64 | $ 3,518.21 | $ 481.12 | $ 557.70 | $ 1,914.68 | $ 7,651.99 | $ 7,426.35 |
| $ - | $ 1,501.98 | $ 213.62 | $ 266.31 | $ 1,761.08 | $ 8,933.37 | $ 3,742.99 |
| $ - | $ 2,433.24 | $ 320.43 | $ 374.90 | $ 1,271.08 | $ 8,213.92 | $ 4,399.64 |
| $ 1,703.70 | $ 4,273.71 | $ 512.21 | $ 723.06 | $ 1,996.26 | $ 9,580.89 | $ 9,208.94 |
| $ 2,442.92 | $ 3,992.06 | $ 567.76 | $ 707.81 | $ 1,861.59 | $ 9,049.02 | $ 9,572.14 |
| $ 226.82 | $ 4,956.03 | $ 621.93 | $ 1,727.94 | $ 2,747.89 | $ 9,744.93 | $ 10,280.61 |
| $ - | $ 2,880.21 | $ 379.29 | $ 443.77 | $ 6,026.51 | $ 8,702.52 | $ 9,729.77 |
| $ - | $ 2,285.07 | $ 300.91 | $ 352.07 | $ 1,525.57 | $ 8,506.77 | $ 4,463.63 |
| $ - | $ 2,291.29 | $ 301.73 | $ 353.03 | $ 1,765.18 | $ 8,782.47 | $ 4,711.23 |
| $ - | $ 2,797.24 | $ 368.36 | $ 430.98 | $ 1,333.16 | $ 8,285.37 | $ 4,929.75 |
| $ 698.40 | $ 3,718.81 | $ 445.70 | $ 629.18 | $ 2,039.10 | $ 9,630.18 | $ 7,531.20 |
| $ 3,279.29 | $ 4,911.07 | $ 737.81 | $ 1,118.40 | $ 1,037.86 | $ 6,621.71 | $ 11,084.44 |
| $ - | $ 1,370.15 | $ 187.37 | $ 217.19 | $ 1,621.29 | $ 7,682.37 | $ 3,396.00 |
| $ - | $ 3,116.59 | $ 410.41 | $ 663.16 | $ 1,356.70 | $ 8,846.14 | $ 5,546.87 |
| $ 3,490.47 | $ 4,913.70 | $ 647.07 | $ 1,045.56 | $ 2,104.84 | $ 11,024.71 | $ 12,201.64 |
| $ 1,516.86 | $ 4,231.59 | $ 557.25 | $ 900.42 | $ 1,345.74 | $ 8,833.52 | $ 8,551.85 |
| $ 2,488.51 | $ 4,725.11 | $ 622.24 | $ 1,005.43 | $ 1,743.90 | $ 9,291.68 | $ 10,585.20 |
| $ 10,548.19 | $ 9,122.27 | $ 1,201.29 | $ 1,941.08 | $ 1,934.31 | $ 9,510.77 | $ 24,747.13 |
| $ 2,193.44 | $ 4,658.36 | $ 605.97 | $ 979.14 | $ 1,682.89 | $ 9,043.33 | $ 10,119.79 |
| $ - | $ 3,480.45 | $ 458.33 | $ 536.25 | $ 2,716.63 | $ 10,811.52 | $ 7,191.66 |
| $ 2,005.07 | $ 4,564.96 | $ 593.82 | $ 959.51 | $ 1,588.78 | $ 8,935.05 | $ 9,712.14 |
| $ 4,107.06 | $ 4,796.76 | $ 682.21 | $ 850.48 | $ 1,857.87 | $ 9,044.74 | $ 12,294.38 |
| $ - | $ 2,846.27 | $ 374.82 | $ 438.54 | $ 1,683.26 | $ 8,688.21 | $ 5,342.88 |
| $ - | $ 2,066.87 | $ 272.18 | $ 318.45 | $ 1,478.92 | $ 8,453.09 | $ 4,136.42 |
| $ 7,856.23 | $ 7,646.87 | $ 1,019.58 | $ 1,603.29 | $ 2,246.20 | $ 10,503.92 | $ 20,372.18 |
| $ 291.89 | $ 3,608.99 | $ 452.89 | $ 721.61 | $ 3,634.03 | $ 11,621.03 | $ 8,709.41 |
| $ 130.92 | $ 2,843.25 | $ 446.00 | $ 701.71 | $ 2,357.10 | $ 9,178.39 | $ 6,478.98 |
| $ 228.33 | $ 3,341.50 | $ 419.33 | $ 542.33 | $ 1,393.57 | $ 7,675.39 | $ 5,925.05 |
| $ 634.45 | $ 3,217.29 | $ 439.97 | $ 510.00 | $ 2,160.26 | $ 9,925.21 | $ 6,961.98 |
| $ 408.59 | $ 3,914.51 | $ 515.49 | $ 603.12 | $ 1,672.34 | $ 8,675.64 | $ 7,114.05 |
| $ 857.87 | $ 3,472.71 | $ 474.90 | $ 550.49 | $ 1,458.17 | $ 7,494.67 | $ 6,814.14 |
| $ 417.50 | $ 3,996.27 | $ 513.58 | $ 1,330.59 | $ 2,491.20 | $ 9,449.56 | $ 8,749.13 |
| $ - | $ 3,046.54 | $ 382.31 | $ 1,062.19 | $ 2,949.90 | $ 9,977.38 | $ 7,440.94 |
| $ - | $ 3,626.03 | $ 455.03 | $ 1,264.23 | $ 2,844.89 | $ 9,856.55 | $ 8,190.18 |
| $ - | $ 3,208.40 | $ 402.62 | $ 1,118.62 | $ 3,304.98 | $ 10,385.96 | $ 8,034.62 |
| $ - | $ 1,325.63 | $ 148.84 | $ 290.12 | $ 1,800.42 | $ 9,277.44 | $ 3,565.02 |
| $ - | $ 4,560.65 | $ 512.07 | $ 998.11 | $ 2,926.92 | $ 10,573.67 | $ 8,997.76 |
| $ - | $ 2,746.17 | $ 344.62 | $ 957.46 | $ 3,025.32 | $ 10,064.16 | $ 7,073.57 |
| $ - | $ 2,902.25 | $ 364.20 | $ 1,011.88 | $ 3,347.96 | $ 10,435.41 | $ 7,626.29 |
| $ 812.85 | $ 5,324.42 | $ 668.16 | $ 1,856.38 | $ 3,780.33 | $ 10,932.93 | $ 12,442.14 |

## TOTALS

**Risk Allowance** **Without Depreciation**

2%

| Risk Allowance | ANNUAL | MTHLY | ANNUAL | MTHLY | Annual Leaseback Fee |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $ 486.80 | $ 24,826.74 | $ 2,068.89 | $ 13,962.49 | $ 1,163.54 | 4707.56 |
| $ 225.02 | $ 11,476.12 | $ 956.34 | $ 7,437.10 | $ 619.76 | 3252.86 |
| $ 305.02 | $ 15,555.78 | $ 1,296.31 | $ 9,723.10 | $ 810.26 | 4706.52 |
| $ 277.23 | $ 14,138.50 | $ 1,178.21 | $ 7,840.06 | $ 653.34 | 5121.74 |
| $ 317.29 | $ 16,181.77 | $ 1,348.48 | $ 10,210.95 | $ 850.91 | 4429.62 |
| $ 281.85 | $ 14,374.35 | $ 1,197.86 | $ 8,543.07 | $ 711.92 | 4152.72 |
| $ 266.76 | $ 13,604.68 | $ 1,133.72 | $ 7,939.27 | $ 661.61 | 4429.62 |
| $ 276.92 | $ 14,122.99 | $ 1,176.92 | $ 9,130.15 | $ 760.85 | 3806.66 |
| $ 301.57 | $ 15,379.91 | $ 1,281.66 | $ 9,718.08 | $ 809.84 | 3271.84 |
| $ 253.53 | $ 12,929.88 | $ 1,077.49 | $ 7,197.60 | $ 599.80 | 4567.94 |
| $ 252.27 | $ 12,865.84 | $ 1,072.15 | $ 7,709.11 | $ 642.43 | 4429.62 |
| $ 375.80 | $ 19,165.63 | $ 1,597.14 | $ 11,388.44 | $ 949.04 | 4706.52 |
| $ 372.42 | $ 18,993.58 | $ 1,582.80 | $ 10,725.86 | $ 893.82 | 4567.94 |
| $ 400.51 | $ 20,426.05 | $ 1,702.17 | $ 13,994.50 | $ 1,166.21 | 4083.56 |
| $ 368.65 | $ 18,800.93 | $ 1,566.74 | $ 13,253.33 | $ 1,104.44 | 0 |
| $ 259.41 | $ 13,229.80 | $ 1,102.48 | $ 7,838.80 | $ 653.23 | 4429.62 |
| $ 269.87 | $ 13,763.58 | $ 1,146.96 | $ 8,152.01 | $ 679.33 | 4429.62 |
| $ 264.30 | $ 13,479.42 | $ 1,123.28 | $ 8,265.54 | $ 688.79 | 4429.62 |
| $ 343.23 | $ 17,504.60 | $ 1,458.72 | $ 10,693.27 | $ 891.11 | 4706.52 |
| $ 354.12 | $ 18,060.27 | $ 1,505.02 | $ 10,898.02 | $ 908.17 | 3252.86 |
| $ 221.57 | $ 11,299.94 | $ 941.66 | $ 6,568.46 | $ 547.37 | 3598.92 |
| $ 287.86 | $ 14,680.87 | $ 1,223.41 | $ 9,195.17 | $ 766.26 | 4707.56 |
| $ 464.53 | $ 23,690.88 | $ 1,974.24 | $ 12,971.86 | $ 1,080.99 | 5878.86 |
| $ 347.71 | $ 17,733.07 | $ 1,477.76 | $ 10,740.61 | $ 895.05 | 4707.56 |
| $ 397.54 | $ 20,274.41 | $ 1,689.53 | $ 11,943.77 | $ 995.31 | 4707.56 |
| $ 685.16 | $ 34,943.05 | $ 2,911.92 | $ 18,377.47 | $ 1,531.46 | 4707.56 |
| $ 383.26 | $ 19,546.38 | $ 1,628.87 | $ 11,709.49 | $ 975.79 | 4549.22 |
| $ 360.06 | $ 18,363.24 | $ 1,530.27 | $ 11,128.44 | $ 927.37 | 5260.06 |
| $ 372.94 | $ 19,020.14 | $ 1,585.01 | $ 11,458.24 | $ 954.85 | 4549.22 |
| $ 426.78 | $ 21,765.91 | $ 1,813.83 | $ 11,837.47 | $ 986.46 | 4567.94 |
| $ 280.62 | $ 14,311.72 | $ 1,192.64 | $ 8,775.56 | $ 731.30 | 4429.62 |
| $ 251.79 | $ 12,841.30 | $ 1,070.11 | $ 7,493.25 | $ 624.44 | 4429.62 |
| $ 617.52 | $ 31,493.62 | $ 2,624.47 | $ 16,648.67 | $ 1,387.39 | 5467.8 |
| $ 406.61 | $ 20,737.04 | $ 1,728.09 | $ 12,739.56 | $ 1,061.63 | 4844.84 |
| $ 313.15 | $ 15,970.52 | $ 1,330.88 | $ 9,911.30 | $ 825.94 | 4176.12 |
| $ 272.01 | $ 13,872.45 | $ 1,156.04 | $ 8,918.22 | $ 743.18 | 3825.64 |
| $ 337.74 | $ 17,224.93 | $ 1,435.41 | $ 10,241.53 | $ 853.46 | 4844.84 |
| $ 315.79 | $ 16,105.48 | $ 1,342.12 | $ 10,170.79 | $ 847.57 | 4429.62 |
| $ 286.18 | $ 14,594.99 | $ 1,216.25 | $ 9,155.80 | $ 762.98 | 3598.92 |
| $ 363.97 | $ 18,562.66 | $ 1,546.89 | $ 12,176.73 | $ 1,014.73 | 4083.56 |
| $ 348.37 | $ 17,766.68 | $ 1,480.56 | $ 11,376.00 | $ 948.00 | 4083.56 |
| $ 360.93 | $ 18,407.66 | $ 1,533.97 | $ 12,113.64 | $ 1,009.47 | 4083.56 |
| $ 368.41 | $ 18,788.99 | $ 1,565.75 | $ 12,071.44 | $ 1,005.95 | 4083.56 |
| $ 256.85 | $ 13,099.31 | $ 1,091.61 | $ 7,268.57 | $ 605.71 | 4637.1 |
| $ 391.43 | $ 19,962.86 | $ 1,663.57 | $ 13,095.14 | $ 1,091.26 | 4637.1 |
| $ 342.75 | $ 17,480.48 | $ 1,456.71 | $ 11,020.37 | $ 918.36 | 4083.56 |
| $ 361.23 | $ 18,422.93 | $ 1,535.24 | $ 11,665.82 | $ 972.15 | 4083.56 |
| $ 467.50 | $ 23,842.57 | $ 1,986.88 | $ 15,874.60 | $ 1,322.88 | 4083.56 |

AVERAGE $ 17,576.76

206623.56

| Actual Cost to Council | |
|---|---|
| $ | 20,119.18 |
| $ | 8,223.26 |
| $ | 10,849.26 |
| $ | 9,016.76 |
| $ | 11,752.15 |
| $ | 10,221.63 |
| $ | 9,175.06 |
| $ | 10,316.33 |
| $ | 12,108.07 |
| $ | 8,361.94 |
| $ | 8,436.22 |
| $ | 14,459.11 |
| $ | 14,425.64 |
| $ | 16,342.49 |
| $ | 18,800.93 |
| $ | 8,800.18 |
| $ | 9,333.96 |
| $ | 9,049.80 |
| $ | 12,798.08 |
| $ | 14,807.41 |
| $ | 7,701.02 |
| $ | 9,973.31 |
| $ | 17,812.02 |
| $ | 13,025.51 |
| $ | 15,566.85 |
| $ | 30,235.49 |
| $ | 14,997.16 |
| $ | 13,103.18 |
| $ | 14,470.92 |
| $ | 17,197.97 |
| $ | 9,882.10 |
| $ | 8,411.68 |
| $ | 26,025.82 |
| $ | 15,892.20 |
| $ | 11,794.40 |
| $ | 10,046.81 |
| $ | 12,380.09 |
| $ | 11,675.86 |
| $ | 10,996.07 |
| $ | 14,479.10 |
| $ | 13,683.12 |
| $ | 14,324.10 |
| $ | 14,705.43 |
| $ | 8,462.21 |
| $ | 15,325.76 |
| $ | 13,396.92 |
| $ | 14,339.37 |
| $ | 19,759.01 |

$ 637,060.95

| MODEL | TARE | BUS USE REG | REG FEE | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CAMRY HYBRID | 1555 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| CAMRY ALTISE | 1465 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| CAMRY ATARA SL | 1505 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| CAPTIVA 5 | 1845 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| CAPTIVA 7 | 1893 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| COMMODORE | 1705 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| EPICA | 1460 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| I40 | 1504 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| IX35 | 1470 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| DMAX 2WD | 1820 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| DMAX 4WD | 1910 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| LANCER | 1315 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| OUTLANDER | 1457 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| FORESTER | 1488 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| LIBERTY | 1501 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| COROLLA | 1245 | $ 436.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 498.00 |
| HILUX | 1585 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |
| RAV 4 | 1615 | $ 657.00 | $ 62.00 | $ 719.00 |

| Model | Combined Con |
|---|---|
| CAMRY HYBRID | 5.2 |
| CAMRY ALTISE | 7.8 |
| CAMRY ATARA SL | 7.8 |
| CAPTIVA 5 | 8.2 |
| CAPTIVA 7 | 8.1 |
| COMMODORE | 8.9 |
| EPICA | 9.3 |
| I40 | 6.8 |
| IX35 | 8.5 |
| DMAX 2WD | 8.3 |
| DMAX 4WD | 8.5 |
| LANCER | 7.2 |
| OUTLANDER | 7.5 |
| FORESTER | 8.1 |
| LIBERTY | 8 |
| COROLLA | 7.1 |
| HILUX | 9.5 |
| RAV 4 | 8.5 |

| MODEL | $C/KM |
|---|---|
| CAMRY ALTISE | 0.018547 |
| CAMRY ATARA SL | 0.018547 |
| CAMRY HYBRID | 0.018547 |
| CAPTIVA 5 | 0.025853 |
| CAPTIVA 7 | 0.025853 |
| COMMODORE | 0.022587 |
| COROLLA | 0.024253 |
| DMAX 2WD | 0.041453 |
| DMAX 4WD | 0.044453 |
| EPICA | 0.023667 |
| FORESTER | 0.01872 |
| HILUX | 0.031187 |
| I40 | 0.025173 |
| IX35 | 0.020693 |
| LANCER | 0.018 |
| LIBERTY | 0.02516 |
| OUTLANDER | 0.019947 |
| RAV 4 | 0.025493 |

| Model | 3000 | 15000 | 30000 | 45000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CAMRY HYBRID | | $ 203.00 | $ 292.00 | $ 230.00 |
| CAMRY ALTISE | | $ 203.00 | $ 292.00 | $ 230.00 |
| CAMRY ATARA SL | | $ 203.00 | $ 292.00 | $ 230.00 |
| CAPTIVA 5 | $ 83.00 | $ 277.00 | $ 458.00 | $ 386.00 |
| CAPTIVA 7 | $ 83.00 | $ 277.00 | $ 458.00 | $ 386.00 |
| COMMODORE | | $ 270.00 | $ 361.00 | $ 323.00 |
| EPICA | | $ 262.00 | $ 393.00 | $ 311.00 |
| I40 | | $ 285.00 | $ 499.00 | $ 320.00 |
| IX35 | | $ 261.00 | $ 324.00 | $ 382.00 |
| LANCER | | $ 198.00 | $ 360.00 | $ 234.00 |
| OUTLANDER | | $ 226.00 | $ 288.00 | $ 400.00 |

| | 10,000 | 20,000 | 30,000 | 40,000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DMAX 2WD | $ 399.00 | $ 328.00 | $ 286.00 | $ 907.00 |
| DMAX 4WD | $ 379.00 | $ 328.00 | $ 432.00 | $ 860.00 |
| COROLLA | $ 203.00 | $ 238.00 | $ 203.00 | $ 328.00 |
| HILUX | $ 229.00 | $ 229.00 | $ 303.00 | $ 391.00 |
| RAV 4 | $ 202.00 | $ 237.00 | $ 203.00 | $ 424.00 |

| | 12,500 | 2,500 | 37,500 | 50,000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FORESTER | $ 248.00 | $ 248.00 | $ 330.00 | $ - |
| LIBERTY | $ 250.00 | $ 250.00 | $ 332.00 | $ 473.00 |

| 60000 | 75000 | TOTAL | /KM |
|---|---|---|---|
| $ 292.00 | $ 374.00 | $ 1,391.00 | 0.019 |
| $ 292.00 | $ 374.00 | $ 1,391.00 | 0.019 |
| $ 292.00 | $ 374.00 | $ 1,391.00 | 0.019 |
| $ 458.00 | $ 277.00 | $ 1,939.00 | 0.026 |
| $ 458.00 | $ 277.00 | $ 1,939.00 | 0.026 |
| $ 339.00 | $ 401.00 | $ 1,694.00 | 0.023 |
| $ 393.00 | $ 416.00 | $ 1,775.00 | 0.024 |
| $ 499.00 | $ 285.00 | $ 1,888.00 | 0.025 |
| $ 324.00 | $ 261.00 | $ 1,552.00 | 0.021 |
| $ 360.00 | $ 198.00 | $ 1,350.00 | 0.018 |
| $ 356.00 | $ 226.00 | $ 1,496.00 | 0.020 |

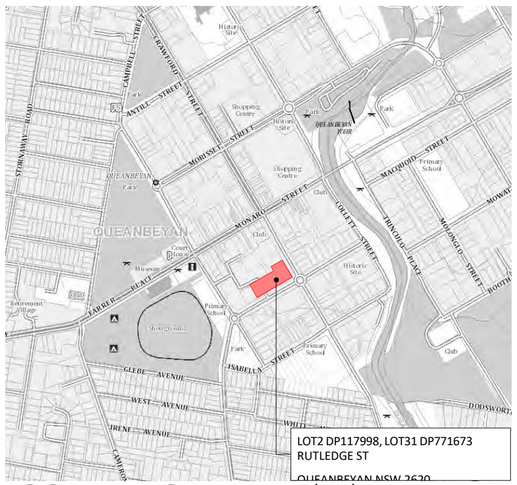
| 50,000 | 60,000 | 70,000 | interim | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $ 286.00 | $ 328.00 | $ 286.00 | $ 289.00 | $ 3,109.00 | 0.041 |
| $ 286.00 | $ 474.00 | $ 286.00 | 289.000 | $ 3,334.00 | 0.044 |
| $ 203.00 | $ 238.00 | $ 203.00 | 203.000 | $ 1,819.00 | 0.024 |
| $ 229.00 | $ 338.00 | $ 229.00 | 391.000 | $ 2,339.00 | 0.031 |
| $ 203.00 | $ 237.00 | $ 203.00 | 203.000 | $ 1,912.00 | 0.025 |

| 62,500 | 75,000 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| $ 248.00 | $ 330.00 | $ 1,404.00 | 0.019 |
| $ 250.00 | $ 332.00 | $ 1,887.00 | 0.025 |

| Fleet | Rego | Make | Model | Driver | LB Fee |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F03500 | [redacted] | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | [redacted] | $ 181.06 |
| F03543 | | MITSUBISHI | LANCER | | $ 125.11 |
| F03544 | | HOLDEN | COMMODORE | | $ 181.02 |
| F03545 | | TOYOTA | CAMRY | | $ 196.99 |
| F03546 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03547 | | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | | $ 159.72 |
| F03548 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03549 | | HOLDEN | EPICA | | $ 146.41 |
| F03550 | | TOYOTA | CAMRY | | $ 125.84 |
| F03562 | | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | | $ 175.69 |
| F03570 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03573 | | HOLDEN | COMMODORE | | $ 181.02 |
| F03576 | | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | | $ 175.69 |
| F03580 | | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | | $ 157.06 |
| F03584 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ - |
| F03586 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03588 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03593 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03594 | | HOLDEN | COMMODORE | | $ 181.02 |
| F03595 | | TOYOTA | COROLLA | | $ 125.11 |
| F03602 | | TOYOTA | CAMRY | | $ 138.42 |
| F03603 | | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | | $ 181.06 |
| F03604 | | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | | $ 226.11 |
| F03605 | | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | | $ 181.06 |
| F03609 | | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | | $ 181.06 |
| F03611 | | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | | $ 181.06 |
| F03612 | | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | | $ 174.97 |
| F03615 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 202.31 |
| F03616 | | HOLDEN | CAPTIVA | | $ 174.97 |
| F03618 | | MITSUBISHI | OUTLANDER | | $ 175.69 |
| F03620 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03621 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03622 | | SUBARU | LIBERTY | | $ 210.30 |
| F03624 | | TOYOTA | RAV 4 | | $ 186.34 |
| F03632 | | HYUNDAI | I40 | | $ 160.62 |
| F03633 | | HYUNDAI | IX35 | | $ 147.14 |
| F03634 | | TOYOTA | CAMRY | | $ 186.34 |
| F03913 | | SUBARU | FORESTER | | $ 170.37 |
| F03929 | | TOYOTA | CAMRY | | $ 138.42 |
| F04200 | | ISUZU | DMAX 2WD | | $ 157.06 |
| F04540 | | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | | $ 157.06 |
| F04541 | | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | | $ 157.06 |
| F04571 | | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | | $ 157.06 |
| F04574 | | TOYOTA | HILUX | | $ 178.35 |
| F04587 | | TOYOTA | HILUX | | $ 178.35 |
| F04591 | | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | | $ 157.06 |
| F04597 | | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | | $ 157.06 |
| F04623 | | ISUZU | DMAX 4WD | | $ 157.06 |

| Model | % |
|---|---|
| CAMRY HYBRID | 50% |
| CAMRY ALTISE | 40% |
| CAMRY ATARA SL | 40% |
| CAPTIVA 5 | 45% |
| CAPTIVA 7 | 45% |
| COMMODORE | 40% |
| EPICA | 40% |
| I40 | 45% |
| IX35 | 40% |
| DMAX 2WD | 50% |
| DMAX 4WD | 60% |
| LANCER | 40% |
| OUTLANDER | 40% |
| FORESTER | 50% |
| LIBERTY | 50% |
| COROLLA | 40% |
| HILUX | 60% |
| RAV 4 | 45% |






# ISSUE FOR DA (D)

# FOR INFORMATION

# RUTLEDGE STREET APARTMENTS

DRAWING SCHEDULE - DA ISSUE

LOT2 DP117998, LOT31 DP771673 OUEANBEYAN NSW 2620




# SHOP TOP HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

| No | DRAWING TITLE |
|---|---|
| 00 | COVER SHEET - DRAWING SCHEDULE |
| 01 | EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN |
| 02 | SITE ANALYSIS - LOCAL & WIDER CONTEXT |
| 03 | SITE ANALYSIS - PRECINCT CONTEXT |
| 04 | PLANNING CONTROLS - SETBACKS & BUILDING SEPARATION |
| 05 | PLANNING CONTROLS - SETBACKS & BUILDING SEPARATION |
| 06 | PLANNING CONTROLS - SETBACKS & BUILDING SEPARATION |
| 07 | PLANNING CONTROLS - BUILDING ENVELOPE SECTIONS |
| 08 | PLANNING CONTROLS - BUILDING ENVELOPE PERSPECTIVES |
| 09 | SITE PLAN - GROUND |
| 10 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 1 |
| 11 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 2 |
| 12 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 3 |
| 13 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 4 |
| 14 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 5 |
| 15 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 6 |
| 16 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 7 |
| 17 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 8 |
| 18 | SITE PLAN - LEVEL 9 |
| 19 | SITE PLAN - ROOF |
| 20 | STREET ELEVATIONS |
| 21 | SITE SECTIONS |
| 22 | PROJECT STATISTICS |
| 23 | FLOOR PLAN - BASEMENT LEVEL -2 |
| 24 | FLOOR PLAN - BASEMENT LEVEL -1 |
| 25 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - GROUND |
| 26 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 1 |
| 27 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 2 |
| 28 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 3 |
| 29 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 4 |
| 30 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 5 |
| 31 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 6 |
| 32 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 7 |
| 33 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 8 |
| 34 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - LEVEL 9 |
| 35 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING W - ROOF |
| 36 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - GROUND |
| 37 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 1 |
| 38 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 2 |
| 39 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 3 |
| 40 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 4 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 41 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 5 |
| 42 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 6 |
| 43 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 7 |
| 44 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 8 |
| 45 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - LEVEL 9 |
| 46 | FLOOR PLAN - BUILDING E - ROOF |
| 47 | FLOOR PLANS - ADAPTABLE UNITS |
| 48 | FLOOR PLANS - ADAPTABLE UNITS |
| 49 | ELEVATION - A. NORTH-EAST |
| 50 | ELEVATION - B. SOUTH-EAST |
| 51 | ELEVATION - C. SOUTH-WEST |
| 52 | ELEVATION - D. NORTH-WEST |

Author name: J. Bowker Do

Date of submission: Tuesday, 25 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Hasnt taken into fairness in revenue increase sources, actual unimproved land value and affordability and pressure on homeowners.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Revenue in on and the other is Has council looked at it wasteful spending.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Is this increase in line with CPI OR pay rise or local , state and federal Government budgeting forecast?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Not yet. Found out by chance

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Is it genuine community consultation?

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The current proposed increase is not in line with state of economy, job availability , pay rise, CPI.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Not sufficient. Has council looked at wasteful and unnecessary spending?

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Rate increase should never cause hardship to people. It should be reasonable and in line with CPI or pay growth.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Not sure

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Insufficient, not enough details of past spending and future projections, no lesson learnt analysis or insight

Author name: J. Squiggle

Date of submission: Saturday, 15 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Looks like the rate rise is a fore gone conclusion. I have read some of the voluminous documentation giving QPRC's justification. The amount of it initially amused me. What would be the cost of its' production ? But the sad reality is that IPART would be rubber stamping QPRC's request, having their hands full with 5 other councils in their system, not to mention the other "services" it provides. With 146 employees it's' hard to believe that the documentation provided (including a report from consultants Morrison & Low) could be fully evaluated in the time provided. Is the process flawed ?

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: j. trueman

Date of submission: Wednesday, 19 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
There are times when I think receivership would put them out of their misery.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. Council has presented a case for a substantial increase in rates but its documentation clearly shows that this will do nothing to resolve the underlying problem. According to Council there is an unresolvable, structural operating deficit which will grow in perpetuity. Council predicts that the deficit will always increase faster than any plausible cap on rate increases, so this application is going to be only the first of an indefinite number of applications for a special rate variation. But their underlying financial statements don't support this. The fault lies in their forecasting process and policy decisions they have taken. I tried to point this out to them in a 15 page response to their SRV consultation. They have chosen not to include that response in their 302-page Engagement Report document so I will attach a copy to this submission. The file is called QPRC-J[redacted]-Trueman-Copy-of-Submission-to-QPRC-on-22-Dec-2022.pdf The gist of my response was that Council have been misled into thinking their financial situation is worse than it is because their Long Term Plan document is seriously deficient. It is merely last year's actuals, this year's budget, and a projection of this year's budgeted into the indefinite future at a constant rate of growth. It thus incorporates a built-in aassumption that nothing can ever be changed. Their financial position is not, however, anywhere near as good as it could be. They have made a number of huge mistakes. I set out a series of steps I think they should be taking to addrees those issues, before they should even begin to think of applying for an SRV. My response was in the context of the original version of their Public Consultation. This version included an option "Do nothing until we go bankrupt" and it was that alternative which I was specifically addressing. At some date prior to 17 December, Council withdrew its SRV consultation documents and replaced them with others. In mid January they changed them again. This will be a source of great confusion for anyone assessing their application.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not consistently. For the first weeks of the consultation period they canvassed four alternatives. 1. Don't apply for an SRV. Don't make changes to ongoing operations. Continue until bankruptcy. 2. Apply for a 12% SRV. Make very heavy cuts to services. 3. Apply for an 18% SRV. Make heavy cuts to services. 4. Apply for a 28% SRV. Make no cuts to services. The service areas to be cut were broadly identified as 'those which Council might consider non-core'. For the middle part of the consultation period, from sometime before 17 December to sometime before 14 January (those being dates on which I had reason to look at the Council website) they offered these three alternatives 1. Don't apply for an SRV. Don't make changes to ongoing operations. Continue until bankruptcy. 2. As 1 but seek a $40m loan to delay the bankruptcy. 3. Apply for a 28% SRV. Make no cuts to services. For the final weeks of the consultation period the alternatives on offer were 1. Apply for a 12% SRV. Make very heavy cuts to services. 2. Apply for an 18% SRV. Make heavy cuts to services. 3. Apply for a 28% SRV. Make no cuts to services. Alternative 2 of this final set is the proposal they are putting to you.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The cumulative effect on rates was communicated. The concomitant effect on services has yet to be determined. The Minutes of the Council meeting of 8 Feb 2023 indicate that Council was to pick an option from the final list of three and Staff would afterwards take the list of broadly delineated service areas to be considered for cuts, or abolition, under the chosen option, and would develop specific proposals. I imagine they are doing this as we speak.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Yes Most ratepayers would have been aware that an application for a special rate variation was being prepared, that alternatives would be on offer and that they could make their views known. But most ratepayers would not have been aware of the changes to the list of alternatives, mid-consultation. These were not advertised. The answers given by respondents to the survey questions show strong variation over time. This will be because they were facing different sets of alternatives. The clearest example, from the Engagement Report document, is that many rejected Option 2 because it requires an additional loan. But this was the Mid-Dec to Mid-Jan Option 2, not the Option 2 that Council are putting forward to IPART.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council had originally determined to make their decision on Feb 1, which would have given them no time at all to consider the feedback. They postponed to Feb 8 but there is no evidence in the public domain that they used the extra week to do anything other than collate the responses. The collation was done very superficially. It might best to take it three parts. 1. A survey asked whether each of a list of activities, businesses, assets or asset classes were of personal importance to the respondent. Most said 'roads' were important, fewer said 'bridges' were important. What can we conclude? If respondents have answered the question

truthfully and as it was put, most respondents make personal use of at least one local road but fewer respondents ever journey beyond the closest creek. Quite probably, most respondents will have taken the questions to mean "Do you, personally, think Council should be offering this function/service or maintaining this asset/asset class?" Most have responded that Council should be maintaining roads. Fewer are so sure that Council should be maintaining bridges. Read in this way, the collated results for each item are indicative of the number of respondents who think Council should be providing the item. However, what would be the connection between that and whether Council should in fact provide the item? It is very indirect, for otherwise we could legitimately conclude that the cemetery function (which 72 respondents said is very important personally to them) should be closed before the public toilet function (which was ranked very important by 111). While the responses to this part of the survey have been collated, and the summaries were presented to Council when they made their decision. It is to be hoped they were not swayed by what they were given. Likewise, we can only hope they will not be used naively or uncritically when Council staff are deciding what specific cuts will be made. 2. The collation includes a count of respondents supporting Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3 but without allowance for change to the set of options. Scenario 1 from the original set is not in the final set. Responses in favour of Scenario 1 have been treated as if the respondent did not express a preference for any option. Option 1 received 172 favourable responses. They are for the 'no SRV' option if submitted during the middle weeks of the survey and for the '12% SRV' option if submitted during the final weeks. Option 2 received 68 favourable responses. These include 'no-SRV and take out a loan'. Option 3 received 184 favourable responses. How many of those date to the weeks when the only other options on offer were bankruptcy? The raw data are usefu but counts derived from the collation are not. 3. The collation is not complete. Responses are missing. At the very least the three responses said to have been received by mail have not been included in the 302-page Community Engagement Report. My own response might be one of these, but since I also sent it as an attachment to an email I cannot see why its snail-mailness would be grounds for exclusion. The only trace is item 190 on page 23 of the Engagement Report, where I said I could see many opportunities for change and improvement without resorting to a rate rise (implicitly, far too many to fit in the survey response box) and I would be writing by snail mail with my response.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The impact, especially on low-income households, under prevailing economic conditions is likely to be extreme. I would consider such an impact unreasonable given that there is no need for this SRV in the first place. Council has not looked seriously at the alternatives that are open to it. Instead it has determined, by a series of external reviews, that there is nothing it can do. It has resigned itself to never addressing any of its abundant operational shortcomings or to making any attempt, beyond what was originally done, to create a QPR council appropriate to the QPR LGA. It still thinks of itself as a City Council onto which an unwanted rural area has been foisted. Until that mindset changes it will not succeed. Its proposal for spreading the impact of the proposed rate rise is to apportion it in accordance with the current rates structure. This would be fair if council services were also apportioned in accordance with the current rates structure, but they are not. Services are strongly localised in Queanbeyan and its immediate vicinity. Queanbeyan is located on the very western edge of the LGA immediately adjacent to the ACT. It is not easily assessed from many rural areas within the LGA. (I myself have passed through it but I have never had cause to stop.) Some services are provided in some of the smaller towns, but if we are considering an increase in general rates for the purpose of stabilising the general rate budget we should be considering where the general rate is being spent. Rural areas that receive no only, say, one pass of the road grader each year, and don't access Council facilities in Queanbeyan because they are an unreasonable distance away, will gain little or nothing from the proposed SRV. Queanbeyan and the surrounding urban suburbs stand to gain more. Against this, residents regardless of location stand to lose proportionally more if the services they personally rely on are proportionally reduced by more than other services are reduced. I don't see how a rate increase can be shared fairly and reasonably without considering where the service cuts will fall. One thing we can be certain of, however, is that an allocation of the increase using the current rates structure would not be fair.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Council has developed some some local measures based on averaged incomes. I distrust them, since averages hide variation. If the impact is to be moderated by variation in local averaged incomes, poorer households in richer areas will be put at a significant disadvantage.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Council's policy document is chiefly drivel. The population of the QPRC LGA is some 60,000. Council currently knows of 62 hardship cases. What that says to me is that no matter what the verbiage in the policy statement is meant to mean, in practice there are many more hardship cases than Council has recognised. I don't have any faith in Council's ability to handle hardship cases arising from the rates increase.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Some of the documents were exhibited for some of the period of the public consultation. Other documents may have been exhibited earlier in some other context. All appear to have been approved and adopted by Council before the application to IPART was made. The following may be of particular relevance in your determinations 1. The long term plan (LTFP.PDF) was

exhibited only until mid-December and after mid-January. In the interim it was replaced by an alternative, much shorter document (but of the same name) focussed on promoting Council's Option 3 (the highest percentage rate variation). 2. The service statement document (20.-Service-Statements.PDF) was exhibited only before mid-Dec and after mid-Jan. 3. The organisational service review (18.-Morrison-Low-Organisational-Ser.PDF) was exhibited during January. 4. The Community Strategic Plan of 2042 (Community-Strategic-Plan-Extracts.PDF), which may date from 2022 and glowingly spruiks Council's vision for its city (i.e., Queanbeyan, not the rest), was not at any time a document within the SRV consultation. 5. Council's consultation website page, from mid-January onwards, showed 12 documents. Of these: Four were of a general nature (a 3-page explainer, a sample rates notice, a Q&A broadsheet, a sheet headed 'Some rate myths). Two were documents of substance (the Service Statements document , the Long Term Financial Plan which had been reposted in its original configuration) Two were documents of little substance (the Organisational Service Review, and the document that has come to you as Community-Engagement-Materials---6a.-Draft-Delivery-Program--exhibi.PDF ). Four were rate impact tables: one table for each option the consultation had finally settled on, and one table showing all three together.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
IPART asks Council for specifics. They have provided only platitudes. This will be because they don't have an "approach to improving productivity in operations and asset management". Nor have they got much they can show due to mismanagement and poor decisions in past years. This isn't necessarily the fault of the current Councillors, who may be doing their best to turn the floundering ship around. However, I am very concerned that they may not have the technical financial skills to do so. Further, they appear not to have a level of authority, within the organisation, sufficient to rein in the processes over which they nominally exercise control. Evidence of productivity and efficiency? As they have said so clearly and in so many ways throughout the documents, Council is fiddling at the edges. It does not have the skill set it would need to address the bigger picture.

**To: Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council**
**Subject: Special Rate Variation**
Date: 20 December 2022

On 5/12/22 at about 19:40 I filled in your online survey re the Rates Proposals and Long Term Financial Plan. I said in my responses that I'd look at the documents and send further comments by snail mail. Here are those comments.

**1. The Long Term Plan (LTP) is not a plan.** A plan would set out some aims, goals or objectives, some strategies for attaining the desired outcomes and some measures of progress towards them. The LTP says nothing about what Council wants to achieve, it offers no strategies for getting there and only addresses a symptom, vis. a persistent deficit in the General Rates account. A plan would address the cause or causes of the deficit.

The proposed fixes all assume that Council must continue to do what it is currently doing, and do it in the way it has always been done. That is, the LTP is based on a false assumption that change is not possible. There is no vision here or any sense of a future. It's all a reaction to what is painted as an intractable and purely financial problem.

**2. The LTP is not long term.** It covers a ten-year interval (medium term?) but on inspection the estimates can be seen as
i) a restatement of the current year (2023) budget,
ii) projections, for the same activities, for two years (2024, 2025), and
iii) a linear extrapolation to a time horizon arbitrarily set at 10 years.

Thus, there is a lot less to the LTP than meets the eye. It would be better described as a two-year projection of the 2023 budget padded out to ten years on an assumption that nothing can ever change.

**3. The assumptions underlying the extrapolation** ensure that the deficit will increase indefinitely. Financial ruin is thus assured.

The average of the deficits for years 1-10 is $24m pa. But so what? The average for years 1-20 would be $34m pa and for years 1-50 would be $60m pa. Council does not currently face a $24m-sized problem, or anything like it. It faces a $15m problem in 2023, probably a $10m problem in 2024, and possibly a $21m problem in 2025. But only within the completely static and unchanging world that is the model.

**4. The LTP fails to mention risk and uncertainty.** It is a mere a set of point estimates.
In order for it to be at all useful for decision making it ought to at the least give confidence intervals around the key estimates.

For example, the projected deficit in 2024, under the base case scenario, is $10m. Is that $9-11m, $1-20m, $9-20m or $1-11m? The best actions are different in each case. The LTP is entirely useless even as a guide to financial outcomes.

**5. The 'LTP says the deficit is "Structural" but it does not justify this claim.**
Only one structural problem is identified, that the State Government is not fully funding some activities it expects the Council to do. All Councils in NSW have this problem. It cannot continue in perpetuity so one of two things must inevitably happen. Either
i) all councils will go bankrupt, or
ii) the rules will be changed.

QPRC should act as if the rules will be changed. To do otherwise would be to preempt a future State government decision to do away with councils.
Financial failure from this cause alone, however, is not an immediate problem. It would be several decades away.

Any other structural problems are the Council's responsibility. The LTP says that problems which might lead to a long term financial deficit were identified in 2016 and were addressed in 2017, and that external reviews
i) established affordable expenditure levels for services, asset maintenance, renewal and upgrades
ii) established affordable pricing paths for general rates, water and sewer charges.

It is apparent that those plans, insofar as they relate to the General Rates account, were inadequate. It is also apparent that the inadequacy has now been known for several years.

**6. So why do the structural deficits persist?** Why have the underlying causes not been dealt with before today?

The LTP does not say in so many words, but nevertheless manages to make very clear, that QPRC does not have the appropriate financial planning and decision making skills for an organisation of its complexity and size.

It should get such skills, fast.

No organisation should ever need FOUR external financial reviews (GDH, PAA, Kategic, ML) in five years. No organisation should ever employ an outside consultant to project a budget two years forward and extend it for eight more, or to catalog the financial consequences of stopping some current activities while leaving others unchanged. These should be basic attributes that the internal system can serve to managers on demand.

Why does **this** Council not have an internal capacity to manage its own finances?

**7. The LTP is focussed completely on doing the same old things the same old way.**
This must have been the Brief as given to consultants ML, because the LTP is based on a premise that the underlying operational structural issues will never be addressed.

There is one small exception. An accompanying document *Amended_DP_Financial_summary.pdf* reports that savings of $300k pa were identified in the review and have been included in all scenarios. But $300k, in the context of a budget with annual expenditures $142m, is almost trivial.

**8. Within that restricted context,** opportunities for effective action are very limited.
The approach taken in the LTP is to categorise Council activities as being either core or non-core, then to consider the financial consequences (but not other consequences) of discontinuing the non-core activities.

The categorisation has been done
i) by criteria that are not disclosed,
ii) by a person or persons not named,, and
iii) at a mix of whole-service and whole-program levels.

None of these features engenders trust in the results. As to the first and second, without knowing what the criteria are, how they were applied, or by whom, we cannot be at all sure that they align with community expectations. To my knowledge there was no public discussion amongst ratepayers or in the wider community as to what constitutes a core or a non-core activity.

As to the third, the document *QPRC_Service_Statements.pdf* (SSD for short) arranges Council's activities under 39 heads (39 Service Statements (SS)), said to cover 25 Council Services and to contain 115 Programs. It's not entirely clear which SS belong with which services, and only 113 programs are listed, but for present purposes that doesn't matter. It is apparent that every activity that is identified as being non-core is at program level or above.

There is a flaw in this approach. It should rarely if ever be the case that an entire program is non-core. If it was, why would Council have gone into it in the first place? Take, as an example, the swimming pools. A facility in which kids can splash about on a Saturday afternoon might (or might not) not be seen as non-core and dispensable, but one which facilitates the teaching of water safety can hardly be said to be insignificant. Or take libraries. I might not care too much if I can't borrow a novel, and bookshop owners might be delighted if I can't. But SS #28, Emergency Support and Action, a core activity according to the published categorisation, specifically mentions the libraries as facilities with which they are likely to interact.

Core vs non-core, to the extent it has any meaning at all, resides at organisational levels below the level of program.

**9. While the LTP treats some programs** as if entirely non-core, it also, crucially, treats every other program as if it is essential in its entirety.

This is a mistake. No program or Service Statement area can be so essential and be operating so close to its maximum theoretical operating efficiency that to withdraw from or even to cut back on some small part of its current activities would collapse the entire organisation. We can be very confident that every service function and every program contains a mix of activities, and that in a core vs non-core context some of the activities are less 'core' than others.

A genuine plan would identify core and non-core activities within each of the 25 Service areas, 39 SS areas, 115 projects and would target for action (but not necessarily for closure) any activity that scores low on core-ness and high on budget impact.

I'll come to examples later.

**10. The LTP is biased.**
The LTP
i) fails to consider obvious opportunities such as taking steps to re-align community expectations with what is practically deliverable and financially realistic, instead it is explicitly based on an assertion that Council must strive to satisfy current expectations regardless of their present relevance or Council's future circumstances,

ii) is presented in a way that appears designed to steer voters towards the highest-cost option. The headline deficit under the base case, $24m pa, has scare value. Projected deficits in the first two years are less than half that amount.

Two years gives time for changes to be made. The forward projections assume no changes are ever made. The $24m average of projected deficits is a complete furphy.

Then there's the focus on library closures, to scare a certain demographic, and swimming pool closures to scare another. Neither of these services has very much effect on the budget. They are relatively small-ticket items.

Something called a 'pensioner discount', only available in Option 3, is a third example. A demographic easily scared into voting against their own interests. The few hundred dollars in discount would soon be overtaken by the increases in rates.

(NB: I myself am a Centrelink Age Pensioner, amongst other things, but I don't recall being offered a discount. Is it available to some but not others? Why so? But why should it be offered at all? It is surely an example of a non-core activity-- at below the level of program -- that could be abolished. How about phasing it out over, say, three years, which should be long enough to not frighten the horses.)

I note that Figure 4 (p. 15) shows the deficit on the General Fund as having improved from -22% to -9% between 2018 and 2020. Percentage of what is not stated. Figure 5 (p. 16) shows the same improvement as being from -5% to -4%, by which I can conclude only that the denominator is different. However, the subsequent decline to -11% in 2021 still leaves an improvement on the -14% in 2014. Contra the LTP forward forecasts there is no sign in these figures of any long term downward trend.

Thus it all seems designed to guide an unsophisticated reader towards
i) accepting the premise that there is a giant deficit that can only be tackled by a rates increase, and
ii) looking favourably on Option 3 as the 'best' alternative.

**11. The LTP is dishonest**
While the LTP is painted as a way for Council to "improve its operating position, and live within its means" (bottom of p. 14). This is far from what it does. It is a proposal to increase the means, with an additional threat that if the increase is not very substantial Council will withdraw into itself by cutting public services.

**12. What to do?**
The Service Statements Document (SSD), with its 39 service statements (SS), provides some insight into how Council might approach its 'structural financial deficit' without the ratepayer-bullying tactics of the LTP.

The SSD is not written in sufficient detail to support an actual plan but it suffices to point the way. Managers of the individual areas and programs ought to know the detail. Action plans should be developed by and through them.

**13. The Key factors for a prioritisation framework** should be
i) to state clearly, with at least Councillor but preferably also Community input, a scale or scales on which to judge core-ness: it is not sufficient merely to assert that pools and libraries are non-core while sportsfields and climate education are core (even though they might be),
ii) to shift Community expectations when they cannot be reconciled with that scaling,
iii) to examine every activity within every project and SS against those criteria,
iv) to take action where action is warranted, priority being given to activities that have a significant negative impact on the General Rates Account.

All this should be done in-house, which is where corporate experience resides.
.
It is essential that Council address directly the structural physical causes of the perceived structural financial deficit.

Any process of evaluation is going to take time and effort. It will demand financial management skills that Council, by its past and current actions, has demonstrated it does not have.
Fix this failing and half the problem will vanish.

**14. The SSD gives clues.**
The Table below shows, for each of the 39 SS, the title of the service, the content (as a set of program numbers), the annual operating expense (AOE, in $m), and share of the deficit (in $m). AOE is useful as a measure of the financial size of the SS, although as noted the totals do not sum to the total AOE of the Council as a whole, probably due to double (or more) counting of costs transferred between SS. The share of deficit is a direct measure of the impact of the activity on the budget. However, even when that impact is negative (i.e., when an SS pays into the General Rates fund instead of taking from it) some activities within the SS are contributing to the deficit. An example would be SS # 34 Financial, contributing $590k pa because it is receiving $1230k in interest from investments but costing $3556k in AOE.

**TABLE**

| | **Service Statement** | **Contains programs** | **Operating cost p.a. $000s -- as an approximate indicator of size (note 1)** | **Use of General Rate funding $000s -- as a measure of pressure on the General Rates budget (note 2)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Culture | 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 2.8 | 1530 | 1164 |
| 2 | Performing Arts & Events | 1.2, 1.4 | 2395 | 1474 |
| 3 | Community Development | 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10 | 933 | 942 |
| 4 | Children | 2.1 | 2036 | 933 |
| 5 | Customer | 2.9 | 1107 | 862 |
| 6 | Library | 3.1, 3.2 | 2582 | 2386 |
| 7 | By-Laws | 3.3 | 630 | 38 |
| 8 | Animals | 3.4 | 722 | 522 |
| 9 | Aquatic | 4.2, 4.4 | 4403 | 2883 |
| 10 | Urban Landscapes | 4.3, 23.1, 23.2, 23.3, 23.5, 23.6 | 12403 | 9824 |
| 11 | Economic Development & Tourism | 11.1, 11.2, 11.4, 11.5, 11.6, 11.9, 11.10 | 1582 | 1630 |
| 12 | Saleyards | 11.8 | 96 | 26 |
| 13 | Certification | 11.7, 21.5 | 1976 | 548 |
| 14 | Health | 12.1 | 852 | 776 |
| 15 | Cemetery | 12.2 | 1597 | 709 |
| 16 | Development | 21.1, 21.2, 21.3, 21.6 | 5269 | 3068 |
| 17 | Natural Landscapes | 24.1, 24.2, 24.3, 24.4 | 2299 | 1813 |
| 18 | Sustainability | 25.1, 25.2, 25.3, 25,4 | 247 | 247 |
| 19 | Land Use Planning | 21.4, 26.1, 26.2, 26.3, 26.4, 26.5, 26.6, 26.7 | 2474 | 2204 |
| 20 | Transport | 31.1, 31.2, 31.3, 31.4, 31.5, 31.6, 31.7 | 30066 | 18895 |
| 21 | Water | 32.1, 32.2 | 24179 | 0 |
| 22 | Stormwater | 32.3 | 2297 | 286 |
| 23 | Sewer | 33.1, 33.2 | 18206 | 0 |
| 24 | Waste | 34.1, 34.2 | 11624 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | Facilities | 35.1, 35.2, 35.3, 46.1 | 6461 | 6427 |
| 26 | Projects & Contracts | 36.1, 36.6, 36.7 | 1276 | -986 |
| 27 | Asset Planning | 36.2 | 1538 | 1521 |
| 28 | Emergency Support & Action | 36.3 | 1538 | 1680 |
| 29 | Plant & Fleet | 36.4 | 6857 | -663 |
| 30 | RMS Contract | 36.5 | 3765 | 0 |
| 31 | Human Resources Management | 41.7, 41.8, 41.9 | 2666 | -68 |
| 32 | Technology | 42.1, 42.2, 41.3, 41.5, 41.9 | 6586 | -1030 |
| 33 | Records | 42.7 | 1065 | 0 |
| 34 | Financial | 43.2, 43.6, 43.7 | 3556 | -590 |
| 35 | Quality | 44.1, 44.3, 51.1, 51.2 | 358 | 0 |
| 36 | Risk | 45.1, 45.2, 45.3, 45.4 | 2439 | 0 |
| 37 | Communications | 51.6 | 1034 | 0 |
| 38 | Governance | 52.1, 52.2, 52.4, 52.5, 52.8 | 40 | 18 |
| 39 | Elected representatives | 52.3, 52.6, 52.7 | 542 | 157 |

Notes to the Table

1. The total annual operating expenses for these 39 activities, per the SSD, is $172m. This is $40m more than the total of all operating expenses as reported in the Long Term Plan. The chief cause would appear to be that the operating expenses of activities that charge a fee to other activities are counted more than once. (Activities 25, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 and 38 with total annual operating expenses $32.6m all say that they recover costs by way of internal transfer. Costs transferred to an activity that does not itself recover costs will be counted twice, but longer chains must occur.)

2. The total charge against the General Rates fund for these 39 activities, per the individual SS, is $57.7m. The income of the fund is $48.4m (cf. the base case financial statements at LTP p. 37). The difference, $9.3m, is probably(?) the deficit on current account when capital items and depreciation are excluded. But data by which to check this are not available.

3. Activities 26, 29, 31, 32 and 34 report that they are net contributors to the fund. The amount so contributed is $3.3m. This will be because the fund is a Rates plus General fund and this will be the general part. That, at least, is what the SS seem to be saying.

**14. continued**
While the initial management focus should be on activities (parts of programs) that call heavily on the budget, and on large and complex SS that might carry more non-core opportunities than would the smaller and simpler activities, any SS operating a less-than-optimal (for the budget) combination of activities at less than 100% financial efficiency can be tweaked to contribute to an improved bottom line.

The ML review would not have picked up any of this because, clearly, it's brief was to look at purely financial options while taking current operations as a given. That is why, for instance, the LTP says explicitly that it could not look into the program of compressed capital works. The medium to long term effects of that program may be positive because some of the costs are matched by external funding, but the short to medium term strain may be substantial.

**15. A back-of-the-envelope analysis based on the 39 SS** would say

#1 Some Culture activities are quite important and others not so much. There might be a case for treating community halls in the same way as community showgrounds, i.e., as part Council and part Local. Museums, arts and sister city could probably take a haircut. The small drain on the Rates fund could probably be slightly reduced.

#2 There doesn't appear to be any good reason why Q shouldn't be privatised.

#3 Community Development takes a trivial amount of rates money and might continue largely intact.

#4 The Aboriginal playschool does not use Rates resources. The daycare program does. If this is a business competing with other private businesses there is no reason for Council to support it long-term to the tune of $173k pa. That said, the amount involved is almost nothing.

#5 Offices fronting the public appear to cost $862k pa. Could they be simplified? Queanbeyan is closer to the bulk of the population but Braidwood is closer to the mid-point of the local government area. At least some limited presence in Braidwood, to save a ~200 km return journey to Queanbeyan, might be advisable. The cost is probably mis-stated because so much depends on the availability of buildings, and these come under some other head.

Note also a one-liner in the December Newsletter, in the description of Option 2, says money could be saved by combining the Braidwood service desk with the Braidwood library. If this is really the case and Council is as short of funds as it claims to be, why has this change not already been made? (See #25 for a similar example.)

#6 Libraries were made a key function of local governments by the Library Act of 1939, with an objective to provide educational and technical materials to people who could not access them by any other means. The situation in 2022/3 is that educational and technical materials are widely available. The primary purpose of local government libraries has become the provision of near-current fiction and biography, largely for recreational purposes. We see this in the QPRC library policy of having 70% of the collection dated to under five years. There is nothing to make that kind of collection a core function. However, a library might we have other, social and community uses.

A case might be made for keeping the Bungendore and Braidwood libraries but disbanding the Queanbeyan library. Queanbeyan is close to the ACT and could be served from there, although some kind of cross-border contribution might be required. Bungendore, Braidwood and the better part of the rural areas are not so close. One alternative might be to establish the QPRC local government area library in Braidwood, in the present council building which is sorely underutilised, and to serve a Queanbeyan branch from there. A move such as that would help to establish a Palerang aspect to the combined Queanbeyan-Palerang regional arrangements and would obviate the need for a new library building in Queanbeyan There needn't be much of a direct cost because acquisitions could be directed to Braidwood while the old stock in Queanbeyan is run down over five years. Another alternative might be for Queanbeyan-Palerang as a whole to join the much larger ACT library system on a contribution per capita basis.

#7 and #8 These are two small but essential activities constrained by NSW rules, but the SS indicate that some improvements to financial outcomes are possible. SS # 14 is of the same general nature.

#9 The operating costs of pools are $4403k pa and the cost to ratepayers $2883k. It would be churlish and counterproductive to close them and they cannot be substituted geographically. If one pool goes they must all go, unless as with libraries a case can be made that Queanbeyan could be served from the ACT, so Queanbeyan could go while the others are retained.

#10 Sportsfields surely have far less core-ness than libraries or swimming pools. Personally, I can't see any case for Council funding for any of them. But I acknowledge that others think differently. Of the other projects in this SS, some public amenities are important, most playgrounds too, but perhaps not all. CBD prettiness, in my opinion, is being overdone. The facilities are not individually expensive but in total they take $9.8m pa in ratepayer funds. Savings should be possible.

#11 There doesn't appear to be any reason why ratepayers should subsidise tourism and other private businesses. Full cost recovery, or cost plus, ought to be the objective.

#12 The saleyard is a business. There's no reason Council can't run a saleyard but it ought to make a profit not a loss.

#13 Certification has close links with #16 Development and to a lesser extent #19 Land Use Planning. The building certification business is little used. It should be grown, sold or closed. I note this SS offers us no service objectives.

#14 Health goes with Bylaws (#7) as a quality control activity. The charge on the budget is $776k pa but most of it is probably necessary.

#15 Cemeteries need to be maintained and the proposal for a schedule of fees to more or less cover the costs would seem to be appropriate.

#16 Development appears to be a dog's breakfast. Even though the fees are capped by NSW there are surely savings here.

#17 The Natural Landscape projects expend $2299k pa and take $1813k pa from the budget. There are probably opportunities to reduce that call.

#18 Sustainability is largely about education. It costs very little.

#19 Land Use Planning . The SS says very little and the box "Why is it funded this way?" only repeats that information. It would appear that there are benefits to landowners but in all other aspects this SD is obscure. There's no indication that, from a ratepayer viewpoint, any of it is value for money.

#20 Transport, by which is chiefly meant road maintenance, is a big one. $30m+ pa in operating expenses, of which almost $19m pa is charged against the General & Rates account. Any savings in this SS would likely be enough to completely wipe out the deficit. The LTP treats it as a core activity and sacrosanct, but is it really?

There would be a case for saying an ability to travel within the LGA, from any place to any other place, by way of the 1412 km of roads under Council control, is a core function. Far less justifiable is the benchmark that such travel will always be at 100 kph. Under current conditions, with saturated roads full of potholes that can't be repaired, the benchmark is a physical impossibility. Community expectations need to be matched to what is realistic.

The huge expense of road repairs could be alleviated if there was less damage in the first place. The chief causes of damage are weight and speed. By how much could the road maintenance budget be reduced through changes such as
i) putting a speed limit of, say, 80 kph on all Council roads until funds are made available, from NSW or federally, for repairs/restoration
ii) putting lower speed limits on heavy vehicles, particularly on narrow roads (most are too narrow, the edges take a tremendous bashing) and on sections prone to collapse?
Or iii), as an alternative to ii), could a toll or impost be placed on vehicles over, say 3 tonne gross, to pay for the damage they do? The technology for recording where they go is available.

It is incorrect to say road maintenance is always a core activity. Some is, but much isn't. If community expectations matched the financial and practical realities a lot of deficit might be saved.

#21 Water has its own budget but it shouldn't be exempt from measures to bring costs into line with income. Cross-subsidisation may be forgiven if it is short term and seen to be in response to a clear, unforeseen and unforeseeable situation. It could be sold that way for one year at most.

#22 Stormwater makes only a small call on General Rates. Might a moderate tweak to its costs see that call fall to zero?

#23 Sewer goes with Water and the same considerations apply. Water plus Sewer together have AOE $42.4m pa, which makes them bigger than Transport at $30m. But the three together consume more than 50% of the entire operating budget.

#24 Waste has its own budget but is less than 1/3 the size of Water plus Sewer. It too could cross subsidise in the very short term, while things get sorted out, but it would have to be by reducing expenses not by increasing fees.

#25 Facility running costs, apparently, are $6.4m pa. This sounds a lot. Maybe Council has too many facilities? I take it that facilities includes the Council depots? A one-liner in the December Newsletter, in the description of Option 1, says money could be saved by closing the Braidwood and Bungendore depots. If this is really the case, which I somehow doubt, why has it not already been done? Or is this another scare tactic to 'guide' voters towards option 3?

#26 This SS makes a net positive contribution to the fund of almost $1m pa. That does not mean all subfunctions are already at their leanest or that some aren't less 'core' than others.

#27 This internal function is costing ratepayers >$1.5m pa. Is that a lot for what it does?

#28 Has only one employee (or perhaps full-time equivalent). An absolutely essential role but it would seem to consist largely of co-ordination. Does it have to cost $1.7m pa or would an extra landline somewhere bring the cost down?

#29 A back-room (or back-depot?) function returning $663k pa by internal recovery. The operating expenses, though, are nearly $7m pa. There ought to be plenty of scope for timing variations in this SS, to assist in smoothing the cash flow.

#30 Like #21, 23, 24 in that externally funded. Makes a small profit, unlike Council businesses #4 and #12. Probably not a lot that could be changed in the contracts because NSW has all the buying power, but there could be cost savings at an operations level.

#31 A necessary internal function currently costing $2.7m pa. Is that reasonable? Probably yes. Is it the best that could be done? Probably no.

#32 Expenses of $6.6m. Does that include hardware?

#33 Another necessary function. The reasonableness of its indirect charge to ratepayers via internal recovery would depend on its scope, but this can't be judged from the data available.

#34 This SS ought to be at the centre of the surplus/deficit web. The operating expense can't be judged from available data because (like all other functions in this section of the list) the SS gives only an outline scope.

#35 Another internal function, but relatively small.

#36 I would be guessing that the main component here is insurance premiums.

#37 Communications with whom, by whom? From an evaluation viewpoint it's the scope problem again.

#38 and #39 Likewise. There are necessary functions in here and the fund set aside for election expenses is, transparently, necessary, but the rest is as clear as mud.

**16. Some general observations are possible.** For example

While the scopes of SS #32-39 are not individually discernable, the total expenditure on internal functions (these eight plus #31 and #5) is $19.4m pa. This is huge. Even if it includes all the day-to-day record-keeping processes of the other 29 functions it is still a lot of money.

Some Council activities compete with private businesses. Others don't. Some have or should have social as well as business objectives. Council is also the custodian/manager of numerous community facilities: halls, playing fields, parks, reserves, libraries, pools, a theatre, the CBDs and so on. In the

LTP, distinctions between business and social objectives have not been made clear. Community functions are, arguably, always more core-like than commercial functions.

Council's finances are not under control and it does not have the in-house skills to manage them.

Council's public-facing activities seem very focussed on Queanbeyan.
It is not a Queanbeyan council. It is a council by and for a region that stretches from Currawang to Snowball and from Araluen to Sutton. Queanbeyan (pop., including nearby suburbs, c.37000) is the biggest town but >40% of the population live elsewhere. The geographical centre is somewhere near Palerang homestead, the old coaching inn on the road between Cooma and Goulburn.
Council's past and present focus on Queanbeyan is not appropriate.

The Council has wasted six years not addressing what it paints as a 'structural financial deficit'. But finance is only the symptom. The Queanbeyan-Palerang Region is not Queanbeyan town. It needs to be managed differently The financial reports say Council has at most two years to get this right.

**17. Jesus F..ing. Christ. UNSTABLE DOCUMENTS!**

HOW is this possible? You have changed the documents in the middle of the period for consultation. How is anyone supposed to make meaningful comments when the things to be commented on aren't stable.
Or is this your strategy?

A few days ago the LTP was a 55 page document
2561f88baed662b58671ffbca052175d_Draft_Long_Term_Financial_Plan.pdf
accompanied by a 72 page document of Service Statements and several lesser documents.

Today it's a 40 page document
Long_Term_Financial_Plan_-combined.pdf_914403f56ec837c506c6562752cffd3f
with no accompanying documents. Although this new document is masquerading as a 'combined.pdf' it certainly doesn't combine the previous information.

I see that the parts that have been omitted include those that give a lie to Council's claim that the financial situation has been trending downwards, and those that reference actions Council could be taking to reduce its deficit.

I am not going to re-write my comments above. They and their page numbering are based on the set of documents you released for comment.

But comments below will be based on this new, Alternative Long Term Plan (**ALTP?**). I will try to avoid duplication in content.
The former Base case is now Scenario 1
A modified version of the base case is now Scenario 2
The former Scenario 1 has been dropped altogether
The former Scenario 2 has been dropped altogether
The former Scenario 3 is retained and is still called scenario three.

**18. I CONSIDER THESE CHANGES TO BE UTTERLY, COMPLETELY FRAUDULENT**.
They can only have been designed to hide all options except Council's preferred option.

**You have gone from seeking opinions on three options (in addition to the base case) to spruiking the option that was**
**i) the worst of the three for Ratepayers, but**
**ii) the best of the three for a Council that is lazy, incompetent, and out to grow its own empire.**

**I AM DISGUSTED**. I am going to take a break now while I calm down.

**19. The three (+ base) original options**

I was going to comment on some specifics of scenarios 1 and 2. They had their bad points but there were good ideas too. Descriptions still exist electronically, and on paper in the December Newsletter, but since Council has made clear it has NO INTENTION OF LISTENING there is perhaps no point.

In (very) brief, some of the good items (always supposing the forecast cost savings would be realised) , included pay parking in Queanbeyan, amalgamating the library and council contact desks, selling Q, closing depots (although I can't see how that saves any costs -- moving them out of town and selling the land for urban housing (not a car park) would be better financially), increasing some (not all) fees, getting economic development and tourism to pay for itself, reducing street sweeping and the CBD beautifying projects, removing the additional pensioner rebate (though I'd go further and abolish the whole thing), reducing the Queanbeyan pools to one pool (if that is what was meant), and postponing new developments in sports and aquatics (& library, etc.?) until finances improve.

The bad items included the indiscriminate removal of grant support and reducing the number of councillors. The more oversight the better, in my opinion.

**20. The new scenarios**

We are left with the Base case, the Base case plus loan, and Option 3. All assume that Council is not willing to cut its coat to suit its cloth. All imagine that no changes can or will ever be made.
**All three completely ignore the structural challenge, which is to turn a Town council into a Regional council. That is to say, they ignore the very thing Council has been putting off for six wasted years.**

Too much time has been lost. Action is needed NOW.

**21. My view**
None of the remaining/renumbered options is in the least bit useful.
I am opposed to all of them because none of them makes any attempt to address the underlying structural issues.
It's as simple as that.

**To be more specific**

New scenario 1 (the base case) imagines continuing merrily on until bankruptcy. Things won't be as bad as the look because the forward estimates have been deliberately skewed to make this option look worse than it is. But even so, financial failure would be inevitable.

New scenario 2 is laughable. Who dreamt this one up? Was it just to keep the numbering: 1, 2, 3? The proposal is to approach a bank and say "Our short term cash estimates don't look good. We are heading towards bankruptcy and are determined to do nothing about it. Our long term plan only goes to 10 years because we'll be dead by then. Please lend us $70m at 2.3% over 20 years."

The IRRESPONSIBLE alternative, Option 3, imagines that business as usual can be supported indefinitely by an open-ended financial hit to ratepayers. Piffle!
Goulburn-Mulwaree does the job for an average residential rate of $991. Queanbeyan-Palerang currently takes $1155. The proposal is to increase the $1155 to $2273 over three years. The QPRC general rate would then be **the highest of any non-metropolitan council in NSW.**

**If these averages were adjusted for the mix of high and low value properties in each LGA, the QPRC proposal would stand out even more.**

NO. This is not a 'solution'.

**22. Is there an alternative?**

I'll give you ten suggestions to start you off.

1. Get some financial/managerial skills. The current team aren't up to it.

2. Stop thinking town. You're a regional council so start thinking regional.

3. Mere 'productivity improvements' are not going to cut it in the long run. The game has changed and QPRC has got to move with it.

4. To address the immediate "crisis", institute an immediate reduction of 5% in all budgets. No exceptions. Call it an "efficiency dividend". This will shake out some of the slack. It's only to give a breathing space so only do it once.

5. See if you can't shift some of those unrealistic community expectations, especially on the big budget items.

6. Institute a thorough **internal** review of all operations. Look to project level and lower. Look also at the mix of projects. Use a core/non-core framework if you really must but scale it and make the criteria public.

7. Think deeply about a desirable structure for future operations and design a regional structure to deliver it.

8. Include capital expenditure planning in your deliberations. And get some sinking funds going. $1.8b in assets can't be handled on a year-to-year basis.

9. Implement the cost saving measures already identified in the now hidden documents

10. Make the changes to Council businesses that have already been identified.

**23. Final remarks**

Live within your means. Other councils do it. It's not impossible.

If you apply for an exemption to the rate cap, I for one will oppose it.

**"We refuse to make necessary changes, so give us more money"** is not an argument.

J[redacted] Trueman (Dr)

[redacted] Braidwood.

Author name: L. Ganzerla

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The council has been fiscally irresponsible and should be held accountable for their deplorable actions.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
NO The council has shown and proven the funds they had was irresponsibly used. Any more funds will only be wasted.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
NO. No Alternatives given that is acceptable for the community. The community has a cost of living problem dont make the problem worse. Although it was suggested money could be saved as an example ( 70 leased cars, this is a small council how is that many necessary. Take the Q building out of council costs, 90% of our community hasn't been there. The council should Not spend 70 million on a building the council has no right to build and any other ideas like that which 99% of the community has no gain for,)

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Only said 18% over 3 years, what do they even mean by that, one thing we do understand is it makes life unaffordable.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
NO as little information is put out probably most of Queanbeyan is unaware of this or their would be riots.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The council has said the community is positive which is a blatant lie. they have been sneaky about the whole process, 95% of the community is against this.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
This is ABSOLUTELY not necessary fiscal management is all that is required, This will impoverish the community,

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Where will be a minority that can pay but majority that cant afford this, even those in minority will have to get a loan to pay, in fact its happening now, NO people dont want to pay this absurd increase.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
No the council has given ABSOLUTELY no details, No doubt they will let people pay it off with interest, They dont care.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
ALL documentation has been been available from the council, So the council says, 95% of Queanbeyan and shire has not looked through it all, only taken notice of the huge expenditure, the absurd reasons and no Accountability for their actions. The community does not approve of this rate rise.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
None what so ever, Absolutely none, no reason except the council is in huge debt. As for containment strategy you probably know more than we do.

Author name: N. McCarey

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Please do not allow this increase to go ahead it will have a devastating effect on the community, the elderly and families already doing it hard.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No they have not. There has been no money issues until this theses councillors where elected.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
I dont believe they need to as the community has lost all confidence in the council. They should reduce staff and not put money in to projects that only effect 3% of the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
I dont believe they clearly communicate it to the community. There are shops closing on the Main Street as the cost of living is so high this will push the rest to close.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No, the council only gave the community a few weeks to take on board information before they submitted a request to IPART

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The councillors disregarded the communitys feed back and voted for a 18% increase. It is so disappointing the council is not community minded.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
This increase will have a devastating impact on the community particularly on the elderly. The shop owners will not be able to afford this increase. The cost of living is so high families will not be able to cope with this and the mortgages.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The council has totally disregarded the community and the community will not be able to pay for the increase. I will have to sell and move if the increase goes ahead.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
There will be no extra hardship if the increase doesnt go ahead.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I believe so.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
They where no clear enough for the average person.

Author name: P. Bright

Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I am a resident of Palerang and yet I use virtually none of the services they manage/provide. I access all my services from the ACT. I provide my own septic/sewage (and I even pay for compliance with council septic requirements), own water, own power, I pay for my own rubbish collection and also pay whenever I attend the Bungendore Tip. The only service I receive is road maintenance. The council maintained road is approximately 1km off of the federally maintained Federal Hwy. I do not use any of the Bungendore or Braidwood community facilities such as pool, library, etc. because I am closer to the ACT facilities. This situation is a result of the merger of councils which is historical, however if my rates are to increase by the the amounts sought I will pay a lot more for the nothing I already receive. There is only so much of this that people will take before reasonable people start avoiding costs, dumping rubbish etc.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: S. McCarey

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The absurdity of this council and mayors proposal beggars belief!

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No - this has come out of nowhere - years of reasonable management and now outrageous increases in charges

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not sufficient- Absurd cost saving measures that are completely unacceptable.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
They only advertised until submission to IPART on their website and then they sent a council newsletter inclusion article. Most of the community was surprised. This 70% rate rise option is completely a surprise to the community - how is it possible that our service cost have risen by so much unless by incompetence

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No!

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Avoidance

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Completely unreasonable and disproportionate increase impact

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
None - many elderly and new home owners will likely be unable to cope with such an increase

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
None!

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Only within council meetings

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
All of the strategies have been only based on catastrophic failure if the financial situation as mismanaged by the council

Author name: O. Benda

Date of submission: Thursday, 4 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The calculator provided by QPRC indicates that our general rates, on our farmland property near Braidwood, will increase by 89% in the first year, this will be an increase $1,212 in dollar terms, followed by 18% in each of the following 2 years. Our property is most likely sitting somewhere around the median in terms of the size and unimproved value for this part of the LGA. Therefore, I extrapolate to other farmland properties within the Braidwood region and conclude that this part of the LGA is affected similarly, some impacted less but others impacted even more. This impact is completely unreasonable, well in excess of any measure of consumer or producer price index, and well in excess of most residents income increase. Whilst QPRC have a hardship policy in place, this can only assist in short term imbalance between ratepayers income and expenses. QPRC are of course proposing a permanent increase in rates, hence their hardship process will not be of any assistance in the medium or long term. The only possible outcome in the medium or long term for some landowners will be to sell their farmland which may have been in the family for many generations. Many, in fact most, of the farm holdings in the neighbourhood are not large enough to generate an income that will support the landowner and their family. Anecdotally, many landholders are required to supplement their income by part-time or full-time employment. Employment opportunities around Braidwood are generally limited to low paying retail jobs. The significant increase in rates over the next 3 years may force some landholders off their land.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
QPCR have clearly not considered the Braidwoods community capacity to pay such an increase in general rates. Braidwood and rural east areas of LGA are mentioned in QPRCs Assessment of Capacity to Pay report that forms part of their submission. The report acknowledges that this part of the LGA has a high proportion of retirees and low household income. For many retirees, self-funded or otherwise, income is generally fixed with little scope to increase income to cover such a significant impost. ABS population data supports this assessment. Whilst the LGA as a whole is one of the least disadvantaged areas of NSW as measured by the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SIEFA), 86th percentile on the SEIFA score, the LGA is very heterogeneous with regards to SEIFA. Some parts of the LGA which are in close proximity to the ACT are in fact on the 98th percentile. However, Braidwood area has one of the lowest SEIFA index values in the LGA, 41st percentile. There can be no doubt that the financial impact of QPRC proposal will be severe on many Braidwood area residents.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Hardship assistance by QPRC can only be effective in the short term, as was the case during the 2020/21 bushfires and Covid. QPRC are proposing a permanent impost for which there can be no assistance other than very short term, and it is the medium and long term impact that will be forcing landholders into more debt and/or off their family landholdings.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 1 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I strenuously object to the proposed special rate variation for QPRC. It: falls most heavily on rural ratepayers; and primarily funds benefits and services for Queanbeyan residents and expansion of Queanbeyan, with whom Palerang was forcibly amalgamated over the protests of Palerang residents. In 2017, Palerang Council was forcibly amalgamated with QPRC, over the objections of Palerang residents. If an amalgamation was necessary for Palerang, it should have been with Goulburn-Mulwaree, which has similar environment and residents, rather than with a large city affected by ACT wage rates, growth and expectations. I argued that to the NSW Government at the time. At the time the NSW Government claimed we in Palerang would get economies and reductions from the amalgamation. Instead, we are to get much higher real rates in order to fund Queanbeyan. This is dishonest and grossly unfair. Council rates increases need to be restricted to the annual CPI, and no more.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Council officials have boxed councillors in with alternatives framed to make living within council's means "impossible". Time for fewer officials and council restricting itself to its fundamental purpose.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Dug in their heels.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The proposed increase applies to the general rates charge. For rural residents that is the bulk of our rates, since we have to provide our own water, sewage, and storm water facilities. We do pay waste program rates, despite not having waste collection and being required to pay a tip fee for any waste we take to council waste transfer facilities. So, the net increase will fall most heavily on rural ratepayers. The vast bulk of expenditure is in Queanbeyan, trying to be a mini-ACT, housing spillover residents from Canberras public service growth and with expectations related to high public service salaries and conditions. As individuals, we are all forced to live within our incomes, despite increases in inflation. That same principle should apply to council. Instead, ratepayers already suffering with falling real incomes due to rapid inflation are to have those real incomes reduced even further by a council wanting to claim a much large slice of residents incomes. I am retired and, like many others in this area, am self-funded, without the benefit of a growing government salary. This council rates proposal is a proposal that I pay a lot more for benefits which go to other people. Since the large increase becomes the new base for the future, the massive increase will be with us for the rest of our lives. Council rates increases need to be restricted to the annual CPI, and no more.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Appears to be non-existent, at least for those of us who are self-funded without access to commonwealth or state public service salaries.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Totally inadequate, requiring rate payers to be judged by council officials who want the money to pay for themselves. There should be no special variation and no need for ratepayers to go "cap in hand to the master" to beg some reduction from an unjust tax.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Unconvincing.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 1 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The increases are all a disgrace. The economy is terrible, people are losing their homes, have lost jobs, and in the main find it difficult to make ends meet. The proposal is a disgrace, the resources they have are beyond their means, and they continue to fund, and give away money only to say they don't have enough, give me more? If this was a business, they would adapt to their income, or go bankrupt. Why shouldn't council go through a truthful exercise to reduce costs, and live within their means. Or be forced to go bankrupt, and lose their jobs. I suspect if there was real incentive, they would be able to rise to the challenge. Yet they never are, never do, and just continue to expand, waste, focus more self rather than the community they are supposed to support within the means they have!

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. The common thread between all the council applications clearly demonstrates they cannot live within their means.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. While there are variations to their self justification, it clearly shows that there is still a long way to go. When will Governments learn to live within their means? At one point their application talks about reducing services, which is fine, yet in the same application it talks about grants. Again, at what point will they learn to live within means. Taxing more to give more away is an outrageous response.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
I just happened to be searching their Website on another matter, and happened to stumble across the planned rise. I've spoken to a few of my neighbours who have also confirmed they are unaware. I suspect there was something written somewhere that was designed to go under the radar as evidence communication had been had.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I and others were unaware, so their strategy is unsuccessful!

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
All they have done is provided evidence of an inability to work within a budget, and are unable to deliver a sustainable future. We need lower, more cost effective government. Not self justifying increases especially when people are losing jobs, have lost jobs, and will never regain what they lost. Perhaps rather then fueling inflation, all governments should be forced cut back. Injecting any type of increase above the peg is inflating the problem, and justifying never ending increases that have been caused by their own expenditure.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
People are losing their houses, losing their land, losing their incomes. Any of their self indulged increases are well beyond acceptable, and again, continue exacerbate the issues. How is a raise of any scale they are proposing seen as acceptable by anyone who has to earn a living, put food on the table. When I go shopping, I buy what I can afford, and reduce based on what I have earnt. Council should learn to do the same.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Capacity is low, willingness is not there. Providing services people don't want, or need at a point people are literally losing everything is an outrageous position to be in .

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Removing my financial capacity and certainty only to become reliant on council is outrageous.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Who knows. Council is here to serve, within their means. Whether they have or haven't is a distraction from the issue.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Self indulgent figures that sees increased investment is beyond normality. Live within means.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 2 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
The council has mismanaged finds for some time. The councillor's have given themselves a pay rise in spite of the financial position the claim to be in. Staff are also leaving the council (finance area) at a rate of knots. It is clear to all this council needs better management not just gouge funds from rate payers so they can continue to mismanage funds

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
There isn't any clear evidence of this

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The council communicated how much is will cost In terms of a cup of coffee per week. The used tiny font and tried to hit the full cost that householders will be expected to pay each year

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I don't believe so. The council does bare minimum and provides complex and unclear messages.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
None. Consultation was lip service and it was a done deal regardless of what people what

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Given the hardships that people are facing it is totally unreasonable. The people of this area are working class and don't have capacity to prop up councils mismanagement. Especially the regional area where they aren't getting services needed

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I don't think they have thought about cost of living or how this will effect people

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
There wasn't a clear process that would be easy to navigate or meet

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Don't know

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 2 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
They need to look at their expenditure before passing on to the public!

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not that Im aware of,

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
18% per year is unthinkable in the current financial setting.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
There hasnt been and they believe they can do what they want.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
This is a rate rise which unsustainable by the rate payers! They will force the public to not pay their rates and then fall into financial difficulty.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Im willing to help but not at 18% per year for the next three years!!! 18%in total over three years would still be too much but acceptable.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Its not enough! And will force hardship on the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Im. Not sure about this.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The services havent changed!! I still have the same amount of bins and I recycle a lot more!! Where is the extra money going?

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 2 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The cost of living is too high as it is. This increase is exorbitant and will cause severe financial hardship to most of the council region. There has to be alternatives for revenue that wont cause families to loose their homes or have to choose between food and rates.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No it has not. Council has not been transparent.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
I have not seen any alternatives.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
I have not seen this, so, no

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I Jeanne not seen any action

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The cost of living is too high as it is. This increase is exorbitant and will cause severe financial hardship to most of the council region. There has to be alternatives for revenue that wont cause families to loose their homes or have to choose between food and rates.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The council needs to seriously consider that an 18% increase is not going to be financially feasible or sustainable.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Its not enough!

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Not that Im aware

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I have not seen the response

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 2 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
This council seems to get more corrupt as the years go on.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes, start with taking away council and representative incomes. If they have got us in such a hole that a struggling town needs to be sent to shit creek. We are in a world of trouble.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
To punish a struggling community with the same level of stupidity as their mismanagement has caused to the financial situation of the town.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Not reasonable, at all. The town is already struggling and this is putting lower income owners is jeopardy of losing their homes because of councils mismanagement.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
It's not, less than 5% of the community would have the capacity to cover this. This council wants to kill the town, for a botanical garden?

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Not good enough, they haven't done accurate readings on capacity and lifestyle impacts that this will cause. This is going to devalue properties and ruin families.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The first thing council will do is give themselves another double digit salary increase, 22 percent last year for standard members and 33 percent for the mayor. Fleecing the struggling community again.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I appreciate that QPRC are faced with a difficult situation, and I know the staff are working hard to try to achieve the best outcomes for the council area, however as noted it feels unfair to have such a large rate rise for us in this area when we have no QPRC provided services or facilities within around 50kms of where we live, and so we dont use any of them other than the annual/biannual grading of our unsealed road. Given that the council is suggesting that roads become a state government rather than council issue, it does make us question the value that we are getting from our rates, particularly if large rate rises are approved in the format being proposed. I would prefer to see some consideration of distances and access to council services and facilities to be factored in to the rate rises, allowing for a tiered approach where localities such as Currawang and others that have no council amenities receive a lower rate rise in comparison with those in closer proximity to council facilities and services, or rates rebates be introduced as an alternative option for those in localities like Currawang, with very limited access to council amenities.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes in a general sense, but no in so far as it pertains to our situation in Currawang where we are not provided with any council funded facilities or regular services other than an annual/biannual grading of our unsealed road. Our locality, Currawang doesnt even appear in the QPRC 2022-32 Financial Plan so there doesnt appear to be any plan whatsoever to provide any new services or facilities for our area, and we live around 50km from the nearest QPRC facility or space, and hence dont use them. Given no planned increase in services, it is not established why a different revenue path is required for us in Currawang.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
QPRC put out 3 options for rate rises for public consultation. QPRC has advised that services are likely to be significantly decreased without rate rises. As already advised, we dont have any facilities or regular services provided here other than the annual/biannual grading of our unsealed road. We are happy to support reasonable increases in rates in line with inflation or a little more, but feel it is more appropriate for a decrease in QPRC services and movement to a user pays model moreso for facilities such as pools, theatres, parks and other recreational facilities, based on use or proximity to such facilities. As previously stated, we are around 50kms from the nearest QPRC managed facility or public space, and so we dont use any of them as a result of that distance.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes the council communicated the full % increase, but Im not sure that I have seen the total increase in $ terms communicated.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Yes, however allowing more time for submissions would have been good.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I understand that QPRC are faced with a difficult situation, however I believe they should have or still be looking at alternative models for the increases which include tiered rate rises based around proximity to facilities or services, rather than a blanket increase to all constituents, regardless of whether they access or get access to any services or facilities.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It seems unreasonable for this size of rate increase for us in a locality that receives no facilities or regular services other than an annual/biannual grading of our unsealed road.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I think it is reasonable for QPRC to expect constituents to have for the services they access and use, however for us in Currawang we dont tend to access or use any of these facilities or services, and council largely forget that we are even a part of the council area as evidenced by the complete omission of Currawang in the QPRC 2022-32 Financial Plan.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
QPRC seems to suggest the possibility of payment plans and recommendations for seeking financial advice, however neither of these things address the key issue for us here which is that we receive little value in terms of services for the rates we are already paying, let alone a 64% increase over the next 3 years.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I assume so, but I dont recall receiving a letter or notification about this from council.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
QPRC has done this, but none of it seems to relate directly to services or facilities that affect us directly in Currawang.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Not at all I only saw a link posted by a resident of Facebook. No consultation at all in Collector. The council already does nothing for collector except collect waste, the roads are full of pot holes and George street floods due a half completed drain which is essentially ditch that is eroding at an alarming rate,

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I think its disgusting. We already see no value for our current rates.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Everyone is already struggling from interest rate rises and inflation. This is irresponsible.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The council has demonstrated No consideration what so ever

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Not that I have seen anywhere 1 where is a letter?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Again Ive not been consulted and apparently this is only open for 2 more days - disgusting

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Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The council gave a significant pay rise to themselves once elected. The council has not been clear on where the funds have gone just simply blamed the previous council members. The transparency has not been clear and appears to be hopeful on the public not researching or investing enough time to ask the question. The council does not appear to care or factor what this will do to the average household within this community

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
In my opinion no, I believe they are using the fact that a large portion of this community is trusting to what the council says and will not question any actions. I believe they have not looked at additional ways to improve the finances and are using community funds as an easy way out. The problem with this is that this town and region has a large portion of low socioeconmic households and will not be in the position to afford this increase.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not to my knowledge, previous community consultation was minimal and not publicly announced, so unless you went searching for information, it was extremely hard as a general citizen to have any knowledge about the situation

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No, the dollar terms used were showing figures that were already lower than my current rates. This then fooled several community members into thinking that this variation would not have a significant impact on their household budgets.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No, I have elderly parents in town who do not use email or social media. There was nothing used via snail mail except for a few notes in the newsletter. The elderly were not considered in this consultation process. Similarly, if you hadn't gone searching for information, you did not know what was going on. It felt very back door in the way consultation went about

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I have only ever received stock standard scripted responses, even when requesting to be contacted to further discuss. I have gone to a council meeting only to be told the SV rates are not to be discussed at this meeting. How am I, a general public member supposed to know this?

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
This is a massive increase, my household is a medium income household and we will struggle to add this into our budget. With other pressures on cost of living, this is another pressure we cannot afford. This community has a wide range of low socio-economic household and elderly. If my medium income household will struggle, what about the less off members of this community. The councils debt will increase because households will not pay these rates, they simply cannot afford. This town is not in the position to afford these increased pressures

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I don't believe there has been any consideration. It has been assumed that the community has more in their household budgets then we do. The minority that are quite well off just assume the rest of us can afford. It's not fair, it has been considered, it's simply just adding a pressure we cannot cope with

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The proposal was to give a discount to pensioners, payment plans etc. These do not help this situation, it just ads pressure to households having another payment plan. This discount to pensioners was minimal compared to the total amount to be paid from the rate increase

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I am not sure

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation

period. Please comment on the council's response here.
It seemed very much in the interest of those on the council in creating an image. It didn't seem like they had considered the needs of the community or further explained the how/why to these services

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
They may have advertised on their website however when this will severely adversely affect rate payers we should have been personally sent all details relating to the proposal

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No See previous

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
As a ratepayer I find it interesting that council can send me rate notices but nothing in relation to proposed rate increases

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Interest rate increases by the RBA has already put an unprecedented level of financial stress on home owners Any increase to rates at this time will have a horrendous financial impact on ratepayers

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Based on feedback from ratepayers Ive seen there are a lot of distressed ratepayers who are worried about how theyll be able to pay the proposed increases I would say council has given no consideration to the communitys capacity and willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
I cannot comment as Ive not seen this plan

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Maybe at Councils premises however no consideration has been given to ratepayers who live away from Queanbeyan

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I cannot comment

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Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Noting Queanbeyan is a well known low socioeconomic area I do not agree all ratepayers can afford these changes in conjunction with interest rate increases. A lot of Queanbeyan residents are first homebuyers who the interest rate increases will hit hardest. Rate increases to this degree will make it harder to sell a house in Queanbeyan with buyers preferring to buy in the ACT with lower rates. Also a lot of Queanbeyan residents are members of body corporates which when coupled with high rates will cause financial stress for many households.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes. The council's bad management of our hard earned money

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Other varieties of rate rise. No non rate increase alternative proposed.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Yes

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council has not considered the feedback at all

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Noting Queanbeyan is a well known low socioeconomic area I do not agree all ratepayers can afford these changes in conjunction with interest rate increases. A lot of Queanbeyan residents are first homebuyers who the interest rate increases will hit hardest. Rate increases to this degree will make it harder to sell a house in Queanbeyan with buyers preferring to buy in the ACT with lower rates. Also a lot of Queanbeyan residents are members of body corporates which when coupled with high rates will cause financial stress for many households.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Council has not adequately considered this.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Not clearly

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Not sure

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Noting Queanbeyan is a well known low socioeconomic area I do not agree all ratepayers can afford these changes in conjunction with interest rate increases. A lot of Queanbeyan residents are first homebuyers who the interest rate increases will hit hardest. Rate increases to this degree will make it harder to sell a house in Queanbeyan with buyers preferring to buy in the ACT with lower rates. Also a lot of Queanbeyan residents are members of body corporates which when coupled with high rates will cause financial stress for many households.

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Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I live 25 km out of Queanbeyan down a dirt road. I am not connected to town water/sewer and I do not have a refuse collection service. I don't use the pool or the library but I shop locally although the number of local businesses closing means I also shop 'over the border'. Yet I am being asked to pay much more for very little. I want safe rural roads. I object to QPRC trying to pass the responsibility to the ratepayers to resolve a problem largely of their own making. I also think IPART needs to review its methodology, which I understand they are doing. Also, Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants to local government need to be restored to 1% of federal tax revenue and the practice of cost shifting by the state government needs to stop. I note that NSW has 128 councils and only 17 felt the need to apply for SRV's, so either the others couldn't be bothered to do the paperwork, or they are better at managing their finances. Official documentation also shows that QPRC is equal 7th highest out of the 128 NSW councils for population growth in the 2020/21 reporting period, which is further adding to our financial woes and yet development continues with yet another subdivision and a high rise in the CBD. At the time of submitting this response, I am aware of a formal complaint lodged with QPRC relating to the Ellerton Drive Extension, the loan, developer contributions and the impost to the ratepayers. The complainant is requesting clarity regarding responsibility for the repayment of the loan and what benefits, if any, the developers received. This loan is thought to have contributed to the overall financial requirement for the SRV, so I think IPART needs to seek further information from QPRC regarding this matter. In summary: QPRC should look to its own operations before expecting the ratepayers and the community to bear the burden of unreasonable rate increases. QPRC should review its user charges to ensure the best return possible is being received There should be a full and thorough forensic audit of all QPRC operations. QPRC should not accept any further grant funding which required matching funding. No new major capital projects should be undertaken. QPRC should concentrate on core business and cease all discretionary spending. It should get back to basics. Only then should a rate increase be imposed, much less than what is currently being proposed by QPRC.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
This is how the council described the need for a SRV - in other words, a different revenue path for council's General Fund. 'After a four-year rate freeze following the merger in 2016, the uncertainty of the pandemic and natural disasters in 2020 and 2021, and significant changes to the economic environment in the last six months Council must adopt a rate rise to become financially sustainable. Without a rate rise Council will continue to go backwards financially or be forced to significantly cut services to make annual savings of more than $20 million each year. These reductions would impact our community in the form of closing pools, selling off our community and arts venues, adoption of paid parking in the Queanbeyan CBD or increasing a wide range of service fees including childcare and saleyards.' This was presented to the public as the only way forward, with three different rate increase options, with two of the options including reduced services. The way this was presented amounted to a scare campaign - 'council needs you to pay much higher rates or we have to cut services to find savings'. The purpose - that council at that time had a 21.8 million dollar deficit and needed to return to being financially sustainable as a statement means very little to the average community member. Put in plain language - 'council finds themselves in financial crisis and wants the ratepayers to fund their way out of it'.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not sufficiently. Sometime after the 2022-32 Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) was adopted by Council in July 2022, council subsequently engaged Morrison Low to undertake an independent financial assessment of Council, including an organisational review to identify financial improvements that could improve value for ratepayers and minimise the SRV that council had already decided they needed. Council also said (in their LTFP 2022-2032) that in 2017 they 'began implementing financial improvements with a focus on investment in asset renewal, reducing asset maintenance costs, controlling the organisational structure and implementing workforce structural savings over time' but how did things go so horribly wrong in the following years? Council continually refers to the state government forced merger in 2016 as the genesis for the current problems - that and the conditional four year rate freeze, the recent COVID pandemic and unprecedented weather conditions but in the years following the forced merger the Administrator and council embarked on major projects which required significant borrowings. So the combined debt of 40 million dollars at the time of the merger has now blown out to more than 270 million dollars, including the expected borrowing for the overdue upgrade of the sewerage treatment plant. The QPRC 2022 - 2032 LTFP further states: The Council must maintain its borrowing capacity to receive funding to complete current projects, and to have sufficient cash to match capital grants for future required infrastructure projects, including the urgent renewal of the Queanbeyan Sewerage Treatment Plant. The Council must maintain a minimum unrestricted current ratio of 1.5 x (the OLG benchmark) during the 10 year planning period. The base case (no SRV) scenario that does not respond to the revenue shortfall is not a financial option, and will leave the Council unable to pay its current liabilities or fund future service provision. Under the base case, Council would not be able to make loan repayments to service its current financial commitments and projects already commenced. This is the 'real' reason QPRC wants such an exorbitant SRV; it does not have the funds required to meet its financial commitments and it wants to continue to be eligible for the lower interest TCorp government loans.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Not efficiently, no. The details of the rate increase were provided in a simple '3 Page Explainer' on the QPRC website and included in a newsletter mail-out based on a single rating category. However, the QPRC advises they have more than 20 rating categories so the average ratepayer needed to work out for themselves exactly how much they would have to pay. Some more detailed examples were available via the council website on an excel spreadsheet, but those examples only provided average examples for 4 categories: residential, business, farmland and mining. You also had to dig out a rates notice to then add the base rate and property value to get your 'general rate' and try and match that to the examples provided to see the cost impact over time or do the math yourself. Some of this further information was not available until after community meetings had been held, so if you had questions you needed to contact the council. Also, quite a bit later, the VG's new land valuations were released and the council then provided a 'look up' tool on their website to allow ratepayers to check their rates based on the new valuation. The tool did not work for a lot of people, causing much frustration. To add further frustration for ratepayers, land values sky-rocketed during the COVID craziness, in my case jumping from 486,000 to 799,000 dollars. This added a further increase over the three year period.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
QPRC used various engagement methods such as their website, face to face community meetings, news, radio and mail-outs. However, the timing of this engagement - from late November in the run up to Christmas was not ideal. Queanbeyan has a population of almost 65,000 people with more than 28,000 ratepayers and yet by their own calculations in their submission, there was only a total of 350 people at all the community meetings and a total of 1,116 responses to their online survey. I myself attended more than one meeting and also submitted a response for the online survey. I think the poor response is due to a number of factors. 1. The timing of the engagement and the fact that the community meetings were not clearly articulated as being held to discuss the proposed SRV. A lot of the media coverage was also after the community meetings. In late November / early December people were attending Christmas parties, picking up school reports and shopping for Christmas presents - they were not interested or didn't have the time to attend the face to face community meetings. Far more people engaged via the QPRC website and also on public forums expressing their opposition. However, when it came to completing the survey, I think many people would have been put off by the time required to complete it. The survey was not simply a choice of the three options; instead respondents were required to select which council provided services they considered most to least important. This skewed approach is nothing more than a scare campaign, but it clearly didn't work as the majority of respondents who took the time to complete the survey did not support any of the proposed options, instead calling for the rate peg increase only. Council stated: It should be noted that the purpose of the community consultation was not to act as a referendum to choose the level of special rate variation, but to determine the importance of the services that Council provides and This summary is provided to assist Councillors in understanding community views. So it is astounding that after all the feedback, councillors voted for Scenario 2, the least popular option. 2. Public apathy - I think this played a big part in the poor response and worked to the council's advantage. Australians are not as interested in politics at any level as some overseas countries are and we are literally paying the price for that. The entire SRV process looks to be simply a 'box ticking' exercise, as most of the SRVs have already been approved. Hopefully the IPART review into it's own methodology and processes will address this.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council largely ignored community feedback and chose the least favoured option for the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Its worth noting that some of the same conditions experienced by council in the last few years such as the pandemic and natural disasters also impacted the QPRC community through job losses, deaths and property damage/destruction. The QPRC community have already had to 'tighten their belts' and dip into their 'rainy day' savings and now the council is asking us to cover their debts because they didn't have the foresight to plan ahead. We are currently experiencing cost of living pressures flowing on from the pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine and have just had more than ten mortgage rate rises in a row. A recent Channel 9 news story April 28 2023 noted that Queanbeyan was 8th on a list of the top ten locations in the country of people searching online for cost of living relief, so the pain is real!

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I know from attending community meetings that businesses and landlords are concerned about the impact of passing the rate rises on to customer/tennants. QPRC is made up of a number of different areas - Queanbeyan itself has a lot of lower income residents, the newer suburbs of Jerrabombera and Googong are mostly better off but most likely chose these areas because land prices were lower than across the border in Canberra, and the towns of Bungendore and Braidwood are different again with a large rural population surrounding them. The state government forced merger smashed together populations that are very different in many ways, not just economically, so its difficult to assess the community's capacity and willingness to pay. What would QPRC use as a basis for this - the fact that not many people responded to the survey or engaged in other ways or the fact that the majority of people who did respond were not in favour of the SRV? I saw no evidence that QPRC have considered the

community's capacity and willingness to pay other than the availability of the hardship provision. Time will tell.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
See above.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes this box has been ticked by QPRC.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
As stated earlier, this council has a history of overspending, waste and financial mismanagement that went on for years following the State Government forced merger. This history needs to be included to understand why this SRV was submitted. Previous councils were well aware of the rate freeze following the merger and the limits that placed on rates revenue. The Administrator and the previous council embarked on major projects which required significant borrowings. The LG area is growing too fast - services and infrastructure are not keeping up with demand, but QPRC continue to approve new subdivisions and developments. The current council is almost entirely new - and yet one of the first things they did was vote themselves and the Mayor a substantial payrise - not something that was well received by the community. It might have been better - as they say - to get some runs on the board first! Then comes the news that we the ratepayers will need to provide the funds to pull them out of this financial crisis, whilst they continue to chase the developer dollar when over development is one of the reasons we have a crisis. QPRC need to reduce spending and increase income through user fees, but instead they propose to reduce services and increase rates. The lower income groups that will be impacted the most are also likely to be the most common users of council services. This would likely include the majority of renters in the community who don't directly contribute to rates revenue. Raising rates should not be the first consideration in addressing the situation. QPRC cannot expect the community to be the only ones doing the belt tightening to fix the problems left by previous administrations. On the first page of the SRV 3 Page Explainer on the QPRC website, council states: As part of the process to correct our budget we have been through an independent organisational review. We have significantly reduced our spending in the last two budgets and remained at lower staffing levels than other comparable councils as an emergency one-off measure, however without a rate rise we will reach a $21.8 million deficit this financial year. However, the independent organisational review was conducted in late 2022, so I am confused by the above statement. Is council already making progress on the Morrison Low Organisational Service Review, or have they reduced spending some other way? The same document on the QPRC website, the SRV 3 Page Explainer also has a graph of the General Fund Income and Expenses for 2022 - 23 and it shows that employee costs almost accounts for all of the rates income - so its good that council has been able to keep staffing levels lower than comparable councils! Appendix A of the Morrison Low report the Organisational Service Review, finalised in December 2022, contains many recommendations for review and savings made by council staff and councillors. Review of leased vehicles. Item 65 indicates that 70 staff have leased vehicles. Is this number of vehicles reasonable? What are these vehicles used for? Are the vehicles available for personal use outside of working hours? Could not a reduced number of pool vehicles be available for official use? What is the FBT cost involved in the use of these vehicles? Review of routine overtime. There were suggestions that some areas of council operations work regular overtime. There was a suggestion that some staff rely on the overtime payments but this is not a justification for it. A review of work practices should be undertaken and overtime should be tightly managed. Re-use of existing furniture for the new headquarters building. This seems to be a no-brainer, particularly when there will be excess furniture from the Bungendore Office. With the compulsory acquisition of the Bungendore Office by the NSW Government, consider the establishment of a shopfront operation in an existing building, such as the post office, instead of a stand-alone building. Undertake a thorough review of job structures and staffing requirements. While the merger conditions prevented this from happening immediately, the time is long overdue for this to occur. It is disturbing to see that the Council continues to advertise vacancies while at the same time telling the community of their lack of adequate finances. It is common practice in the public sector to impose a staffing freeze to make savings. QPRC should not accept or apply for any further grant funding which requires matching funding. In particular, QPRC should cancel the Monaro Street upgrade project and divert the funds to rural roads where dangerous conditions necessitate urgent work. Local children travel these rural roads daily for school, sport and social events and the locals will tell you the most important thing to them is safe rural roads. QPRC should stop current and future unaffordable capital projects. Not doing so would only lead to more debt and increased annual costs in asset maintenance. The only exception of course is the long overdue Sewerage Treatment Plant which should have been a priority over other major projects. QPRC support of cultural activities through grants and subsidies is not core business and given the dire financial circumstances QPRC is in these activities should be stopped and/or deferred.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Most of the questions here are regarding procedures, and whether QPRC have undertaken them or not. While necessary, the real questions should surely be around why we are all having to deal with council's inability to do their job in a fair and equitable way. Simply, those not receiving services should not have to pay for them. A tiered system is not revolutionary, and could easily be deployed in LGAs to better reflect service received. Let's be clear here, QPRC have undertaken a massive spend on rebuilding their Queanbeyan council offices. In doing so they are turning the property strip from the oval to the river into a green belt for them to work in, and for city residents to enjoy the amenities of. That's why they need to up the rates by the ridiculous figure. Currawang residents should be offered a rebate, not this extraordinary and unfair increase. The attached graph illustrates, by QPRC's own reckonings, of why that should be the case.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No, not for Currawang residents. We are catagorically unaware of any need for a rate rise, because no additional services, amenities or maintenances have been proposed for Currawang, and we do not receive any as it is. The word "Currawang" does not appear in the QPRC 2022-32 financial plan. That plan pertains to Queanbeyan, Braidwood, Bungendore, and Captain's Flat, far from Currawang. The council has not established a need to change our rate fee, and there is no purpose of a different revenue path proven, as there are no greater costs incurred by QPRC in providing the residents of Currawang with the current nothing, apart from the already established occasional road grading after heavy rains.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Council asserts that services will be significantly reduced if a rate rise is not implemented. Currawang residents are perplexed as to how our services could be less than they already are, feeling we receive almost nothing for our current rate fees. An alternative would be for Currawang residents receiving a tiered/stepped fee structure to offset their distance from the nearest council amenity. It is unfair that country people who use next-to-no services should be funding the improvements to take place in distant town centres. That has not been canvassed by QPRC.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The council advised that they would be applying for a percentage special rate variation of 18% per year for three years, but, NO, the council has not advised us of a total dollar increase for the average ratepayer by rating category.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
The consultation period was short, with a short response window provided. I'm unaware of any variety in engagement methods by QPRC. To my knowledge QPRC didn't offer to talk with the neglected Currawang residents about their across-the-board need for cash. A local meeting might have been useful to alert QPRC staff of the lack of services we currently endure.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council provided a multi-point paragraph explaining why they cannot cut staff or wages, but only "comments noted" for the " general disagreement and dissatisfaction with the three SRV scenarios". I feel as though QPRC pays lip service to the 50 families of ratepayers it never visits in the Currawang corner of their boundaries.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
I can't find consideration of impact of any rate rise to our community. As rural residents, we already have reduced capacity to afford a rate increase as we already pay twice for many standard amenities, e.g., on top of paying for council rates, we also pay mandatory expenses like weed control, Local Land Services fees, and have to provide our own water and sewerage. We pay more for fuel just to get home. In Currawang we have gravel roads, no street lighting, no footpaths, no sporting fields, no swimming pool, no concert hall, no library, no bowling club, no bin pickup... Many Currawang residents are part-time workers, people retired on a disability pension, or retirees. It is therefore unreasonable to think that any of us would experience an increase in our wage over the next 3 years to counteract a 64% rate increase (let alone the current increased costs of living spurt).

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Currawang is a forgotten minority when it comes to QPRC, as evidenced by the word "Currawang" not being present in its own financial plan. The council may have considered town residents who are typically younger, have less distance to travel, access more services and amenities, and have more opportunities to earn higher wages.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
It appears that QPRC would make payment plans available to people who encounter hardship from this rate increase. Payment plans do not make something more affordable. We don't need payment plans - we need value, and as it stands, we do not receive value for our rates - so why would we pay more?

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
If they were, they were never displayed anywhere near where I live in Currawang, and it doesn't appear to be the case that QPRC have tried every hard to ensure all ratepayers knew of their existence online or otherwise nor what was or was not adopted/accepted by the council.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Council has provided a long list of mostly administrative actions that, frankly, should have been better practice long before needing to find funds, e.g. reduced Christmas party budget... seriously? Only in a process like this could a council boast it has reduced book buying for the library by 50%.

# QPRC breakdown of rates

In 2021, [redacted] from Currawang requested QPRC provide a breakdown of our rates.

The council provided the information in the left two columns. The right two columns illustrate what that might look like, and what Currawang residents currently receive.

| Percentage of your rates: | Funds this: | For my $1300pa this equates to: | What we actually receive |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16% | Recreation, Culture and Beautification | $210 | $0 |
| 7% | Growth and Development | $91 | $0 |
| 4% | Environment and Health | $52 | $0 |
| 28% | Roads, Bridges, Footpaths | $364 | $364 (questionable: there are no bridges or footpaths here, and my road is not paved) |
| 38% | Water and Sewer | $494 | $0 |
| 7% | Organisational Costs | $91 | $91 (presumably) |

From these figures, Currawang residents should receive a discount of $847 off their usual rates, not an increase designed to better the lot of those elsewhere at our expense.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 4 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
1.QPRC (hereafter referred to as Council) surveyed the residents and gave 3 options for rates increases, ie small medium and large. Council didnt give residents the option of NO special variation. Unfair. 2. The response from residents was overwhelmingly in favour of NO special variation but Council ignored this option and applied anyway. 3. Council is taking the easy option of requesting significant rate rises over the more responsible option of living within its means, like the residents are doing in these tough financial times. Council continues to spend funds on activities and programs which could easily be cut and/or delayed. 4. There are 3 areas where my family interact with Council. The swimming pool in Queanbeyan where we pay for the use of the pool, Council gets a tick. Weed spraying on the rural roads. Council has given up on this activity. Council gets a X. Roads in rural areas. Its been trying times BUT Council has performed poorly. They are rated a Fail. Council needs to cut back on the airy fairy activities and concentrate on core business and give rate payers much better value for money. 5.I cant afford a rate increase as proposed by Council. I have a limited fixed income with no prospects of increasing my income. I survive within my budget. (A pity Council dont). When Queanbeyan City Council were forced to amalgamate with Palerang Council, Rate Harmonisation was introduced. My QUARTERLY rates went from $440 to $770. Now they want to bump the rates up again by over 50% in 3 years. Its not sustainable for me and I assume many other ratepayers on fixed incomes. I will not be eligible for and Council rate assistance. As you are aware, interest rates are heading north and inflation is above desired levels. It seems to me that Council wants to improve its own financial situation at the expense of ratepayers like me. IPART can stop them from doing this. Please take action to stop or at least limit Councils money grab from residents. As a point of clarification, I dont use Councils garbage or sewer system.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Refer to my comments below.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not really. They only offered 3 levels of rate rise to ratepayers. They didnt offer the no rate rise option with cuts to services.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
All very rushed and over Xmas.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
They ignored the community/ratepayer response.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It will adversely affect my financial well-being.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
They have done general assessments based probably on Census data. What about the impact on individuals like me. They have not assessed the impact on me.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
I wont be included in the hardship provisions but I will be financially strangled.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I dont know. Thats all a bit technical dont you think.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The previous Council spent like drunken sailors and sold assets for below market value. We also has a forced amalgamation which resulted in 2 previously financially stable LGAs becoming 1 broke LGA. Thankyou Premier Baird.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 4 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Dear Sir/Madam, Firstly, the information stream and process for commenting on this proposal is confusing. I suspect you will not get many responses proportional to the gravity of the issue. This should not diminish the importance of this issue to rate payers, especially those in similar circumstances to me. I am a rate payer that lives in Currawang which is about 60 km from any centre within the QPRC jurisdiction. I have paid rates for two decades with little to no access to services enjoyed by most other rate payers in the shire. Apart from administration, I receive two services; Occasional road grading Weed inspection The only other service I need provided by Council is waste management. For this I pay; an annual fee of $307. a weekly fee of $31 for taking my waste to my local transfer station. Total = $1,919.00 On top of other fees of $2,059.00, I pay annually about $4,000.00 (This does not include time or fuel involved in transporting waste to the transfer station). I have never complained about the wildly disproportionate fee to service ratio. Nor have I complained that most of the shire population receive the benefits of a wide range of services and facilities that my neighbours and I do not. I am complaining in the most vehement terms that the already high rates and low services associated with my property are about to increase significantly. My proposal is that any adjustment to the rates paid throughout the shire should rationally see a reduction in the rates that apply to my property and other properties like it, ie so far from any centre in the shire as to render services and facilities irrelevant, and not provided. Let those that reasonably have access to the services and facilities pay for them. I feel very strongly about this issue and implore Council to apply costs for services and facilities throughout the shire rationally and fairly. Regards, [redacted]
PS I have copied state and federal members in to this email because of the seriousness of the issue.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 4 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The Scenario 2 rate rise will have a devastating effect on our farm business, which operates on a very low budget as do many family farms. Low commodity prices, drought and the effects of climate change on agricultural practices mean we make a modest living and we prefer to concentrate on animal welfare, protecting soil health, and improving biodiversity rather than making big profits. As mentioned above, our family believes that QPRC has brought this crisis upon itself due to extravagant projects which were not requested by ratepayers. QPRC previously had a Council building which was demolished (rather than extended or renovated) to make way for a shiny, expensive tower block costing $74M and that figure has now blown out by another $6M. Why should ratepayers have to bear the cost of QPRC's poor financial management and Edifice Complex? If we had been properly consulted on whether we wanted a new council office at the cost of high rates and possible loss of services, there is no way that the community would have supported the plan. There was also tremendous resistance from the community to the development of the so-called bypass (Ellerton Drive Extension) because of environmental damage and huge expense. Forced amalgamation has worsened the situation for those of us living in the Palerang area of the LGA, which is made up of villages, farms and rural residential blocks. QPRC is very Queanbeyan-centric. Calls for a de-merger are growing. It is important for IPART to understand that QPRC is selling off important civic assets in our town of Bungendore, in the Palerang area, to the Department of Education. QPRC has received $10M compensation from the DoE and this is helping to reduce their deficit. But we are losing our swimming pool, former Palerang Council Chambers (less than 20 years old) and Community Centre, as well as a large chunk of our only town park and part of our common to the DoE. This plan was imposed on our town by Council and the DoE without consultation and the community is not happy. QPRC has vague plans to replace these assets but no ability to pay for them at this stage.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes, but I don't agree with the reasoning behind the new revenue path.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
The 3 rate-rise scenarios are the only alternatives offered to the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I am sure Council has fulfilled its own requirements regarding community consultation but my experience over the years is that those requirements are inadequate and just paying lip service to the concept of consultation and engagement.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council claims to have reviewed more than 1,100 submissions from the community and has chosen Scenario 2 as a result. I made a submission to Council explaining that Scenarios 2 and 3 would have a seriously bad impact on our farm business.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The impact of the proposed special variation will be very unreasonable for many ratepayers, especially given the increasing cost of living and inflation.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Even though there were over 1,100 submissions regarding the proposal, it is my impression that only a very small percentage of ratepayers have engaged with council on the issue.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The hardship plan is unlikely to be of any help to farmers like ourselves who are not pensioners, are not facing a land re-evaluation, were not seriously affected by the pandemic or bushfire, and are currently not drought-declared.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I believe that QPRC fulfilled this requirement.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I have not had time to read the full application (obviously!) so my comment is a general one. My observation is that QPRC has not contained costs over the past few years and has indeed done the opposite. There have been extravagant developments such as the new Council offices and Ellerton Drive, which Council could not afford.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 4 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The merging of the Queanbeyan and Palerang councils in 2016 was supposed to reduce costs with efficiencies achieved through shared services. This has not been achieved and a deficit has been maintained since the amalgamation. While the current Council inherited a deficit, there has been further debt accumulation and "for the first time in 2022-23 the adopted budget included an unfunded cash deficit". (Attachment - LTFP). Of concern, reports in the media indicated that Council granted themselves maximum pay increases, in effect from July 2022. One councillor was cited as disagreeing with the increase and noting that the money would be better spent on improvements to services. This does not indicate good decision making by a Council faced with an ongoing deficit. It is difficult as a ratepayer to have confidence in the ability of Council to effectively manage the available resources when the main option presented to ratepayers seems consistently to be for ratepayers to bear the cost.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Council has indicated in the Delivery Program that there is a deficit and they will need to draw on reserves to fund the deficit. However, they also refer to 'substantial investment in new and renewed community infrastructure'. It does not make sense to invest in new infrastructure unless the development will result in a guaranteed future revenue stream that can fully fund the investment. For example, allocation of funding for the Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct (QCCP) seems unnecessary in light of the current deficit - the benefit of this work has not been conveyed to ratepayers. Are there guaranteed revenue streams (e.g. charging rent to government and/or commercial tenants) that can fully fund this investment or is there a possibility that the building (or parts of) will remain empty, as with other buildings in Queanbeyan?

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Council has indicated that Morrison Low was engaged to undertake an independent financial assessment and organisational review. The review was used to inform the SRV application however I don't believe it was made available as part of the community consultation (it has been provided as 'Other attachment - 18'). The application notes that the review identified a number of efficiency savings that Council has already begun to implement. However, ratepayers have not been given the opportunity to assess the level to which Council has canvassed alternatives to the rate rise (i.e. what efficiency savings have been implemented and what other recommendations were made that could be implemented?).

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The full cumulative percentage increase was provided however in dollar terms, this was only provided, in a simple to understand way, for each year. I do not believe the total cumulative increase, expressed in dollar terms, was provided in a simple to understand way.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Community consultation was limited to choosing from 3 SRV scenarios. Ratepayers were not asked whether the SRV in any form was acceptable, merely given the choice to reduce or maintain services. The 3 top themes in the open responses from the consultation included 'General disagreement and dissatisfaction with the three SRV scenarios' and that 'Council should reduce staff and councillor costs'. Council has moved forward with Option 2 'Reduce services' and among people I have spoken with, there seems to be a general feeling that this was always the option that would be put forward.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Council has previously applied the full percentage increases available to it. Increasing rates and fees has been part of the financial plan since the merging of the Queanbeyan and Palerang councils in 2016 (as referred to in the Background of Attachment - LTFP). An 18% increase each year is significantly higher than any potential salary increases that can be negotiated either as individuals or through collective bargaining. Current cost of living pressures (including substantial interest rate rises) will make it difficult for some people to meet the increased cost. This is not a short-term increase - the cumulative increase of 64% is not reasonable and will be a permanent increase in cost if implemented.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The assessment of the capacity of the community to pay includes a measure of rates outstanding. This is a crude measure that does not consider other cost of living pressures. I expect many people view paying their rates as something they have to do but they may need to make difficult decisions regarding other expenses which may reduce their overall standard of living. The

trends in cost of living analysis uses data for 2020-21 and shows there has been a significant decrease in discretionary spending. Non-discretionary spending on essentials (e.g. food and housing) has increased. The current cost of living is higher than in 2020-21 and with sustained increases in interest rates, mortgage repayments have substantially increased for many people. Increasing rates will further decrease the money available for discretionary spending and non-discretionary spending will further increase. As noted previously, the open responses to the consultation indicated 'General disagreement and dissatisfaction with the three SRV scenarios'. I am not sure how Council has responded to this lack of willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Yes. However, in order to demonstrate hardship, ratepayers may be required to provide supporting documentation such as financial and/or medical records. This is likely to deter people from seeking assistance.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The current QPRC consists of 11 councillors elected in 2021 - eight are new, Councilors Steve TASKOVSKI, Michele BISCOTTI and Kenrick WINCHESTER previously served on the QPRC. Cr BISCOTTI and WINCHESTER both served on the immediate previous QPRC (Cr BISCOTTI was acting mayor in mid 2021) and therefore certainly were aware of the financial position of this council. Given the background financial situation of QPRC it seems QPRC would have been constraint in all new spending however both BISCOTTI and WINCHESTER were councilors when tenders were called for in 2021 - and accepted - for a $74 million precinct which includes the brand new multi storey QPRC office neither BISCOTTI or WINCHESTER appears to have opposed this spending. In 2022 (in the current QPRC) both BISCOTTI and WINCHESTER are recipients of a 22% and 33% pay rise respectively - voted in by the councilors and above and beyond the minimum pay increase possible, WINCESTER is on record as defending this increase. Currently QPRC is considering a significant and costly development of a new water pipeline from Googong to Bungendore. Previous studies have shown Bungendore has sufficient water supply for the town. The extra water is only necessary for several large scale residential developers to make money from large plots of land adjacent to Bungendore. If the pipe line is created it will be expensive to build and QPRC will become responsible for ongoing mainantence and incur more ongoing cost liability. There is little to indicate previous spending constraint by the current experienced QPRC councilors. WINCHESTER was voted in as Mayor in January 2022 and with 8 councilors lacking any local body experience it is logical to believe that they will look to the guidance and experience of those such as WINCHESTER, BISCOTTI and TASKOVSKI. I submit that it is not in the best interests of QPRC rate payers or IPART to provide a significant increase in funds to a council with a background that indicates that it cannot be assured that those in charge will use such an increase in the most effective manner. It would be more preferable for similar rate rises to those already instituted to be applied for the foreseeable future. QPRC has indicated that it can likely operate until at least 2026 before they experience a negative cash flow (QPRC Annual-Report-2020-21). QPRC therefore have several years grace to manage this situation and perhaps they may prove to be good financial managers (with what they have) and slow down or stop the decline. If not however appointment of an independent administrator either then or sometime in the intervening period would be welcome given that all decisions financial and operational would then involve external and independent scrutiny and more importantly independent approval. It is reasonable to believe that this option has potential to be more effective financially along with an associated inherent potential to be welcomed by rate payers in lieu of many financial decisions made by QPRC under the opaque auspices of commercial in confidence.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not Fully The council has not fully canvassed all potential options relevant to such a significant proposed rate rise. Given the length of QPRC awareness of an evolving financial issue and lack of (or ineffective) action to address it until it has became a significant impost on ratepayers, and the significant negative impact on community services any of the scenarios posed by QPRC holds, it appears entirely pertinent to have included appointment of an independent administrator as a viable alternative. The community survey conducted by the council provides indication in the results that this alternative would be considered if not welcomed by QPRC residents, at least any rate rise of significance could be assessed and canvassed by an entirely independent entity and if required then the resultant funds would at least also be used under independent scrutiny.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Variety yes, appropriate probably not. The council definitely used a variety of engagement strategies including your voice council website, QPRC news, QPRC Facebook page, various local media, and a number of face to face activities including community meetings and community association and resident meetings in the period 15 November 31 January. The question is how appropriate was their engagement? I submit that appropriateness can be determined by the success of the strategy and it is patently clear that the QPRC strategy utilised did not engender a level of community engagement necessary to determine community views in any meaningful way. For example, the 15 face to face meetings held across QPRC localtities reportedly attracted only 330 attendees in total while the total of community submissions from all this community engagement amounted to just 1,116. This response is not even close to being a useful representative sample of the QPRC community given that there are slightly more than 28,000 rateable properties in QPRC area, or using QPRC stats, there are approximately 5,658 people per councilor. With 11 councillors, the total number of people the council is responsible for is therefore around 62,238 Theme 4 Staff, Councillor Costs and Numbers community engagement report. For unknown reasons the council failed to utilise a simple

method of ensuring at least all the QPRC ratepayers - the primary affected persons - had been effectively engaged. By providing a personal copy of the survey with their annual rate notice, at the very least each ratepayer would have been fully aware of the survey and the issues.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The council responses to feedback - provided as themes from the survey submissions - are generalised or non specific and fail to adequately allay community concerns EG: Theme 1: Submissions expressed their general disagreement and dissatisfaction with the three SRVscenarios, the Long Term Financial Plan or the Delivery Program. Council response: Comments noted Theme 2 Council services are valued or should increase. Council response: Feedback noted. Council seeks to provide services that are valued by the community and will be considering all this feedback when conducting service reviews to identify any savings and areas for improvement. Theme 28 Submissions suggested the previous council has some responsibility. Council response (in part) The previous council had begun some of the steps towards financial sustainability, including rehabilitating infrastructure, increasing user charges, cutting operating expenses and conducting service reviews.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Theme 7 from the response to survey results was: Submissions suggested that the community cannot afford the proposed rate rise. QPRC councillor John PRESTON is quoted as stating: Ratepayers are already finding it difficult to see value for money in the rates they pay, and it will be even tougher for them to see value for money following the magnitude of rate rises forced upon this council, https://the-riotact.com/cumulative-rates-rise-of-97-per-cent-or-go-without-services-qprcs-financial-scenarios-laid-bare/617804 The proposed rate increase of a cumulative 64 percent is significantly beyond the current national inflation rate which in itself is seen as significantly high. Current socio economic factors in the community has made it hard for many to pay normal bills and it is likely that this large increase in rates will cause financial hardship, a rise in rates defaults and associated costs to QPRC in recovery services while adversely affecting potential business/investing in the region.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
QPRC appear to have given lip service to willingness to pay, QPRC comments appear to indicate they have already decided on the end result. In the QPRC responses to the community survey submissions it was noted that Submissions expressed their general disagreement and dissatisfaction with the three SRVscenarios, the Long Term Financial Plan or the Delivery Program The QPRC response was Comments noted In regards to capacity to pay the QPRC submission on this aspect is flawed as it is based on historic data Census etc extrapolated to indicate a future ability of ratepayers to earn, and pay (rates,) and the associates past implied socio economic circumstances to specific localities future makeup. This fails to account for the evolving range of factors including wage increases which are stagnant at the moment, inflation which is significantly higher (7%) than the RBA target level of around 3%, and rapidly rising interest rates. Many new home buyers (in QPRCs alleged wealthy areas IE: Googong, Jerrabombera, Bungendore) likely have mortgages which will revert from around 1 -2% fixed interest rate to around 6 -7% this year, and elsewhere the rental market often more prevelant in less wealthy areas (IE parts of Queanbeyan) will likely see any rate rise passed on to tenants who already suffer from extremely high rental prices.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
No specific comment, nothing special is noted in their submission most debt related issues are fairly common practice currently or are already general practice elsewhere.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
QPRC blames historic merger finance issues, inability to raise rates until 2020 and natural disaster/emergency incidents (Fire, Flood and COVID) for its inability to get on top of previous financial issues and exacerbation of the same. While QPRC submissions attempt to justify current operations and spending, QPRC have had several years to curtail spending. All the recent large scale incidents Fires, Floods and COVID attract State and Federal government support as well as potential insurance payouts QPRC got funds for this if it wasnt deemed enough perhaps they need to improve their political lobbying capability. QPRC have found themselves in deficit despite allegedly having implemented belt tightening measures since 2017. Conversely it is difficult to envisage that QPRC have constrained spending appropriately - especially given their long term awareness of the financial issues - with QPRC developing a new office building in 2021/22 ($74 million), voting in (top of the range) salary increases for Councilors and the Mayor in 2022, and currently planning for a significant development water pipeline from Googong to Bungendore whose only benefit is not to current residents but to developers to start their (currently on hold) plans to develop large scale land holdings into residential development.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
As a sole parent, funding my son at university I am already unable to maintain scheduled payments for my rates. Single income households are not accounted for and unreasonably disadvantaged. My car repairs due to road conditions have increased. The wildlife on the roads is exacerbated by the lack of management of verge weeds and undergrowth. No facilities have been improved or are indeed scheduled to be improved. The council is busily approving subdivision of land that should amply account for their percoved shortfall. No plans are in place to manage increased road traffic.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
The council has not

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
I have not seen any canvassing. In fact I was unaware we could make a submission until a neighbour shared on our local Facebook page.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
I only aware of the proposed percentage increase

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Absolutely not. Especially for those of us on regional areas.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I can't comment as I have not seen any communication from council. Other than my rates notice.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It is utterly unreasonable to expect ratepayers to pay for poor financial decisions the council have made. There have been no local improvements to warrant this raise especially for those of us who live in rural settings with poor roads and no verge management. The is in contravention of the cost of living and rate rises households are also struggling with.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
There has been no consideration of the capacity. Especially those of us who receive no services. No water, sewage, waste, or storm water management. The roads are not maintained. The weeds are not managed. The vegetation at the roadside not managed.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
There has been no commitment from council.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I don't know

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I have seen nothing

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes, the council has shown that it needs to get the money from somewhere as it has been left with too much debt

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No, the rate rise has always been their only option.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes, but the council also used scare mongering to get people to vote a certain way. We in Braidwood area were told that in the first two scenarios all services in Braidwood would be cut to save funding, if scenario 3 was picked then we would keep services. Since scenario 2 has been chosen they have now backflipped and stated that Braidwood would not lose its services as previously stated.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Yes, I believe so.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I don't think council cared too much about the communities response. We are a council that was amalgamated into a city plus country council. This is obviously not working. The Queanbeyan (city) side of the council has extremely different needs than the Palerang (country) side. All of these needs are not being addressed and the rate rises in the country side are going to be extortionate which nothing in return.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The impact is going to be huge. My rates are going to double in price and the only thing that council does for my property is collect bins. We are on septic, we have no kerb or guttering, our roads are not maintained. We get a red and yellow bin collection and that is all. We need to drive elsewhere with our green waste, we do not get a council clean up and council do not respond when requests are placed to fix our roads. We get absolutely nothing in return with this rates rise and as a young family with only one person working full time, we cannot afford to pay 100% more a year. I say 100% because the council is using the new land values for this rate rise which is a 90% increase on the current values plus the rate rise itself.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I don't feel that there has been any consideration. Our town is a town with lots of elderly and small income families. That's what people live rurally because it's what you can afford. To have our rates equal to those of big city's is not sustainable to the vast majority who live here.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The hoops to jump around to be able to be considered for this are impossible.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
N/a

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I believe they have done this.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
There is ample evidence that council has simply not been transparent nor truthful with the community (ratepayers) over many years. Council has not been honest in admitting to the community major reasons for the current financial situation. Poor past performance must not be rewarded. If so, the community will be burdened with a continuation of the existing problems. This situation brings into question the experience and capability of senior management and councillors over the years as well as the honesty of their communications with ratepayers. There is a compelling case for the appointment of an administrator to address these issues without fear or favour.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Definitely not. The extract (provided in attachment) is from QPRCs SRV Three Page Explainer. The four (4) reasons given to the ratepayers do not establish the need for a different revenue path: 1) Four-year rate freeze is not a rate freeze. Rates have been increased in line with IPARTs rate peg. In any event QPRC advised ratepayers in November 2019 that rates will only be increasing in line with the rate peg set by IPART (see extract provided). 2) Uncertainty of the pandemic yes the Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the entire world and impacts were compared with the Spanish Flu (1918); 100 years ago. It is a rare event which does NOT justify an ongoing increase in rates every year in perpetuity; as proposed by QPRC. 3) Natural disasters in 2020 and 2021 Again these are rare (not regular) events which do NOT justify an ongoing increase in rates every year in perpetuity; as proposed by QPRC. The impact of both items 2) & 3) should be considered as isolated events over an appropriate duration and not used to justify ongoing rate rises (continuing beyond the three year SRV period). 4) Significant changes to the economic environment in the last six months Records show that QPRCs preparations for the proposed rate increase commenced well before the last 6 months. And so it does not explain or justify the need for the proposed rate increases. QPRC HAS FAILED TO MENTION THE REAL REASONS WHY QPRC IS SEEKING A SUBSTANTIAL, UNPRECENDENTED INCREASE IN RATES (GF). Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Only in a very strategically targeted way to achieve a premeditated outcome. Three alternatives (scenarios) were presented by QPRC: Scenario 1 this scenario was clearly aimed at shocking ratepayers; scaring them into supporting another of the three scenarios. Closing pools, sportsgrounds, libraries etc. Removing community grants, additional pensioner rebates etc. Reducing basic council services mowing, maintenance, street sweeping etc. Scenario 3 this scenario effectively doubled (97% increase) the rate rise (GF). Such an increase (doubling) would never be acceptable. Scenario 2 by the process of elimination, the premeditated outcome. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No. QPRC did not give the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer. The communication has not been clear. For an issue of this importance surely the community deserved to receive a letter from QPRC with clear advice on this matter. Instead, the notification was lost in the standard QPRC newsletter flyer which is delivered unaddressed; no different from junk mail. The extract (provided in the attachment) is from the QPRC Three Page Explainer downloaded from QPRCs SRV website page. Whilst the cumulative percentage is shown at the bottom, the total is not given in dollar terms. The gradual increase in dollar terms over years one to three could easily be misunderstood as the usual rate peg annual adjustment that ratepayers are used to. Had the totals been given in dollar terms (in this case $818) then the message given to ratepayers would have been very different. The QPRC Online Rate Calculator has an error which understates the amount of the proposed rate increases for every QPRC property and for all scenarios. So every ratepayer who used this calculator has been given false information on the amount of the rate increase. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
The submission to IPART would give the impression of adequate community engagement meetings, media interviews and social media. However, the reality is fundamentally different from that presented by QPRC to IPART. The effectiveness of the engagement can only be judged by those who the council was seeking to engage with (in this case the QPRC ratepayers/community). From the ratepayers perspective the engagement process was ineffective; indeed fundamentally flawed. Firstly the process was held over the end of school year, Christmas, New Year and school holiday period. No explanation is required as to why this is the worst possible period to attempt community consultation. As a result there was very limited community (ratepayer) awareness of the issue. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the

proposed special variation.
I have not seen any action taken by QPRC in response to feedback from the community. The so called consultation period ended on Tuesday 31 January 2023. The proposed rate raise was voted on at the QPRC council meeting on the following Wednesday 8 February 2023; just one week after submissions from ratepayers closed. The submission to IPART states that the community feedback was collated into two documents and was the subject of two council workshops. So how much time did the councillors have to consider the community feedback before voting on the rate rise just one week after feedback closed ? Allowing time for collation of the community responses, the two council workshops (internal workshops I presume before releasing the documents to councillors) I would argue that the councillors had insufficient time to read and give adequate consideration before voting on 8 February 2023. When you view the discussion on this item by council before the vote at the meeting on 8 February you will see that the community feedback has been largely ignored by council.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
There are significant numbers of low-income households, pensioners and families from migrant backgrounds in the QPRC community. Large increases implemented over the next three years but which are proposed to be maintained forever (with the possibility of further SRVs in future) will cause additional financial hardship on top of existing financial pressures; increasing mortgage repayments (and rents) and significant ongoing escalation in the cost of living (CPI currently around 7% but much more on essential family expenditure items). QPRC is not only proposing significant and unprecedented increases in rates (GF) but also increases in water and sewerage charges at the same time. The combined additional annual costs will well exceed $1,000 (and increasing over time) which will cause severe hardship to many families across the QPRC community. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
QPRC has failed to give appropriate and reasonable consideration of the communitys capacity to pay the proposed increased rates. QPRCs submission to IPART includes a Capacity to Pay report dated January 2023. In relation to renters (nearly one-third of the QPRC population) the report states that renters may experience an indirect increase/DECREASE dependent on their lease agreement or landlords decision. In making such a statement QPRC is not only being arrogantly dismissive of renters (nearly one-third of QPRCs community) but is demonstrating just how out of touch with reality QPRC is. To suggest that when a landlord receives ongoing annual cost increases of $1,000 or more that the landlord might DECREASE the rent is absurd. Not only is this proposition an insult to the intelligence of the entire Queanbeyan-Palerang community; those who are renting would be incensed by this treatment from QPRC. Please note that councillors granted themselves pay increases ranging from 22 to 33 % last year before raising the prospect of proposed rate increases with the community. In dollar terms this is an annual increase of $21,790 for the Mayor and $4,564 for councillors. The total extra annual cost to ratepayers is $67,430. Putting that figure in perspective, QPRC has reported that there are a total of 62 financial hardship arrangements. So the pay increase voted to themselves last year would more than pay for the increased financial hardship to each and every one of those 62 ratepayers. That might help to understand the lack of genuine empathy from QPRC towards the question of the communitys capacity to pay. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
QPRCs plan is unacceptable in that it covers only part of the community and is partly based on a report which is fundamentally deficient (the QPRC Capacity to Pay report) . The QPRC submission to IPART includes a copy of QPRCs Hardship & Financial Assistance Policy. However this policy applies only to ratepayers. Rental properties are specifically excluded from the QPRCs hardship policy. According to the 2021 Census 26.9% of residences are fully owned, 41.5% have a mortgage giving a total of 68.4%. The vast majority of the remaining 31.6% are rental properties which are specifically excluded from QPRCs hardship policy. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
QPRC advised that there would be an Extraordinary meeting on 1 February 2023 but that meeting was cancelled by QPRC (evidence provided in attachment). The discussion and vote on the SRV was then held at the ordinary meeting on 8 February 2023. For those residents who attended the meeting the video facilities were not working for the first part of the meeting including the discussion and the vote on the SRV. And so ratepayers were not able to hear or see the discussion on this matter of great importance and impact to them. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
There is some reference to savings on streetlighting and various other small cost reductions. However the submission to IPART is silent on the poor planning and management (especially of Capex program) which has wasted a significant amount of ratepayers rate contributions over many years. Just before taking the vote on the proposed SRV the Mayor stated We as a

council would need to reduce expenses by $5.5 million each year. A figure which I believe is genuinely achievable. If that is the case why werent such measures taken long before now to improve the councils financial position. Likewise one of the councillors noted that an independent review of council operations should have happened long ago. Further detail provided in the attached pdf document ("QPRC SRV IPART 5 May 2023")

**CRITERION 1** – Has the need for, and purpose of, a different revenue path for QPRC's General Fund been clearly articulated ? (with evidence of QPRC meeting community needs)

***Q1 (Criterion 1)*** *– Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General Fund ?*

Definitely not. The extract (provided in attachment) is from QPRC's SRV "Three Page Explainer". The four (4) reasons given to the ratepayers do not establish the need for "*a different revenue path*":

1) "*Four-year rate freeze*" is not a rate freeze. Rates have been increased in line with IPART's '*rate peg'*. In any event QPRC advised ratepayers in November 2019 that rates will only be increasing in line with the rate peg set by IPART (see extract provided).
2) "*Uncertainty of the pandemic*" – yes the Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the entire world and impacts were compared with the Spanish Flu (1918); 100 years ago. It is a rare event which does NOT justify an ongoing increase in rates every year in perpetuity; as proposed by QPRC.
3) "*Natural disasters in 2020 and 2021*" – Again these are rare (not regular) events which do NOT justify an ongoing increase in rates every year in perpetuity; as proposed by QPRC. The impact of both items 2) & 3) should be considered as isolated events over an appropriate duration and not used to justify ongoing rate rises (continuing beyond the three year SRV period).
4) "*Significant changes to the economic environment in the last six months*" – Records show that QPRC's preparations for the proposed rate increase commenced well before "*the last 6 months*". And so it does not explain or justify the need for the proposed rate increases.

Extract below from QPRC SRV "Three Page Explainer"

## Why do we need a **rate rise?**

After a four-year rate freeze following the merger in 2016, the uncertainty of the pandemic and natural disasters in 2020 and 2021, and significant changes to the economic environment in the last six months Council must adopt a rate rise to become financially sustainable.

Extract below from QPRC Merger Report 2016-2019 (Adopted unanimously by QPRC at Council meeting on 27 November 2019). Ratepayers were advised that Council's rate income will remain in line with the IPART rate peg.

The next big challenge for the organisation is the rates harmonisation process which will be implemented from the 2020-21 financial year. Merged councils were not allowed to harmonise rates before the 2020-21 financial year. The process will see rates be distributed across the local government area based on land valuation and access to services. Depending on these factors, some rates may increase, while others will decrease, however Council's overall rate income will remain in line with the rate peg set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

Some of the key projects progressed during the first three years of the merger include:

- Nerriga Road sealing
- Ellerton Drive extension, approved under Administration after guidance from independent panel, public hearings and reviews
- Old Cooma Road duplication

QPRC 4

**QPRC Merger Report 2016-19**

In the recent QPRC documentation to IPART, QPRC has stated that the current financial pressures existed at both councils prior to the merger in 2016. If so, then why were the ratepayers given the above advice in late 2019 in the QPRC Merger report ? QPRC has not been honest with its ratepayers.

The entire QPRC 'community engagement' process and QPRC's submission to IPART has totally ignored mention of the real need for and reasons why QPRC is seeking a substantial, unprecedented increase in revenue (GF) from ratepayers. Those reasons include:

- Failure to prioritise Capex expenditure based on a sound asset management plan.
- Major expenditure on assets which were either not necessary, not supported by a sound business case, not well scoped, funded through significant borrowings not consistent with advice to ratepayers, premature timing of projects and other shortcomings. A current example is the QPRC office building presently under construction the cost of which is continuing to escalate (QPRC has recently advised of an additional $6.1 million of variations approved by QPRC which will be funded by an extension to current loans. It is disturbing to read QPRC's advice that;
  - one of these extra costs was the high voltage substation. If such a key item of expenditure was not included in the initial project cost then serious questions need to be asked.
  - That the additional $6.1 million approved in QPRC's message to ratepayers "*which in current times is a good result*").

  Other examples include the EDE parkway (>$86M requiring QPRC initial funding of $36M (42% of capital cost) as well as adding to ongoing Opex costs, ongoing costs of servicing the loan as well as the accumulating burden of depreciation of an increased asset base). The project was not a priority for QPRC ratepayers but despite much opposition to its construction QPRC proceeded with that major commitment. Again community feedback at the time to QPRC was ignored.

- Lack of rigour in the decision making process regarding major asset investment decisions. There is no evidence of accountability for decisions between senior QPRC senior management and councillors.
- Lack of an independent review of council operations. This matter was discussed at the council meeting on 8 February 2023; noting that it should have been done long ago. Again no action was taken.

The "Long Term Financial Plan" presented by QPRC is not a plan transparent to ratepayers (the community). It is nothing more than financial modelling based on a series of assumptions.

It should be noted that there is ample evidence that QPRC has not been telling ratepayers the truth. In November 2019 QPRC issued a report on the QPRC Merger 2016-2019. In that report Council was explicitly clear on the matter of rates income; stating in the Executive Summary that:

Council's overall rate income will remain in line with the rate peg set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

In that same report (page 47) QPRC provided a summary of the Long Term Financial Plan (out to 2027-2028). That plan had been developed after consideration of three scenarios. The report noted that under Scenario 3 (at that time) a Special Rate Variation (SRV) of only five (5)% had been considered by council but had been rejected and so the then so called Scenario 2 (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH the current Scenario 2) was adopted by council. This report was adopted by council on 27 November 2019. There are many examples of major discrepancies in information from QPRC to its ratepayers.

Why were ratepayers advised by QPRC in late 2019 that rates would remain in line with the IPART 'Rate Peg' but, only 3 years later in 2022, ratepayers were told that rates will need to double (97% increase under Scenario 3) to maintain existing services ?

In response to criticism from ratepayers about the decision to build new council offices Mayor Winchester's response as reported in the ABC article was that it was a 'commitment made before his tenure' (Thursday 9 February 2023 Queanbeyan-Palerang residents 'filthy' about proposed rates rise amounting to extra $800 per year - ABC News). However council minutes record that Mayor Winchester had voted for the project as a councillor.

In its submission to IPART council has also blamed a growing population and the associated new developments/sub-divisions (eg Tralee ("South" Jerrabomberra). If the demands of a growing population are causing additional extraordinary financial pressures then the developer charges need to be addressed to solve that problem.

***Q2 (Criterion 1)*** *– Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise ?*

Only in a very strategically targeted way to achieve a premeditated outcome. Three alternatives ('scenarios') were presented by QPRC:

- Scenario 1 – this scenario was clearly aimed at shocking ratepayers; scaring them into supporting another of the three scenarios. Closing pools, sportsgrounds, libraries etc. Removing community grants, additional pensioner rebates etc. Reducing basic council services – mowing, maintenance, street sweeping etc.
- Scenario 3 – this scenario effectively doubled (97% increase) the rate rise (GF). Such an increase (doubling) would never be acceptable.
- Scenario 2 – by the process of elimination, the premeditated outcome.

**CRITERION 2** – Is the community aware of the need and extent of the rate rise ?

***Q1 (Criterion 2)*** *– Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms ? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category ?*

No. QPRC did not give the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer. The communication has not been clear.

For an issue of this importance surely the community deserved to receive a letter from QPRC with clear advice on this matter. Instead, the notification was lost in the standard QPRC newsletter 'flyer' which is delivered unaddressed; no different from junk mail.

The extract below is from the "QPRC Three Page Explainer" downloaded from QPRC's SRV website page. Scenario #2 shown here but the format for the other two scenarios is the same. Whilst the cumulative percentage is shown at the bottom, the total is not given in dollar terms. The gradual increase in dollar terms over years one to three could easily be misunderstood as the usual "rate peg" annual adjustment that ratepayers are used to. Had the totals been given in dollar terms (in this case $818) then the message given to ratepayers would have been very different.




On 12 January 2023 QPRC released an 'Online Rates Calculator'. For the first few days the calculator did not work so I had to contact QPRC to get this information. When I did receive the information from QPRC the calculation was wrong. The total rate increase for Scenario 2 as advised by QPRC through the online calculator was $973. Whereas using the percentages quoted by QPRC and used in QPRC's submission to IPART my rate (GF) increase would be $1093 (an extra $120).

**From:** Your Voice QPRC <notifications@engagementhq.com>
**Sent:** Thursday, 12 January 2023 2:55 PM

Hi there,

Thanks for being part of our Your Voice engagement website.

We began consulting on our proposed rate rise in November 2022 and we have received a lot of feedback.

Now that the NSW Valuer General has released new land values, we have launched an online rate calculator to help rate payers better understand the effect of the proposed increases to rates on their property.

The calculator is a great way to see how property value can affect your rate - and how a large increase in property value does not necessarily equal a large increase in your rates bill. Where some property values increased substantially more than others – their share of the total rate will increase.

The rate calculator uses new land values determined by the NSW Valuer General to show an indicative general rate for your property under each of the rate variation scenarios Council is considering.

The extract below from the QPRC "Online Rate Calculator" (Thursday 4 May 2023) still contains the same error. This error understates the amount of the proposed rate increases for every QPRC property and for all scenarios. So every ratepayer who used this calculator has been given false information on the amount of the rate increase.

| Current Year Rates | 23-24 General Rate | 24-25 General Rate | 25-26 General Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| $1,700 | $1,920 | $2,265 | $2,673 |

ABC news article accessed Wednesday 2 May 2023.

As you can see from this example QPRC ratepayers were not given a clear message through QPRC's 'engagement' with the community via the media. Had the article said either 97% (Scenario 3) or 64% (Scenario 2) then articles such as this would have received more reading and attention from the community.



***Q2 (Criterion 2)** – Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness ?*

The submission to IPART would give the impression of adequate community engagement meetings, media interviews and social media. However, the reality is fundamentally different from that presented by QPRC to IPART. The effectiveness of the "engagement" can only be judged by those who the council was seeking to engage with (in this case the QPRC ratepayers/community). From the ratepayer's perspective the engagement process was ineffective; indeed fundamentally flawed.

Firstly the process was held over the end of school year, Christmas, New Year and school holiday period. No explanation is required as to why this is the worst possible period to attempt community consultation. As a result there was very limited community (ratepayer) awareness of the issue.

In the case of my "community meeting" (Jerrabomberra – population of 9,601 based on 2021 census) the meeting was attended by only 8 people of the 9,601 population. The reason for this apparent lack of interest is simple – the meeting was advertised as a *'great opportunity to meet QPRC's "new" CEO'* (see attachment). There was no mention of proposed rate rises; none whatsoever. I did not receive any invitation from QPRC to that meeting. Nor did I receive any follow up or notes from that meeting. When you take away the QPRC CEO & usual JRA executive from the total of eight (8) attendees the number of ordinary ratepayers at the meeting would be negligible. QPRC's claim in its submission to IPART to have carried out effective, genuine engagement is simply not true. This example is one of many.

Invitation from Jerrabomberra Resident's Association (JRA) - see below.

Good morning JRA member

The next meeting of the JRA will be this Wednesday 16th November 7.30pm
Jerrabomberra Community Centre.
Our special guest will be QPRC CEO Rebecca Ryan.

This is a great opportunity to meet QPRC's "new" CEO.

We hope you can make it.

Regards

***Q3 (Criterion 2)** – Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.*

I have not seen any action taken by QPRC in response to feedback from the community. The so called "consultation" period ended on Tuesday 31 January 2023. The proposed rate raise was voted on at the QPRC council meeting on the following Wednesday 8 February 2023; just one week after submissions from ratepayers closed. The submission to IPART states that the community feedback was collated into two documents and was the subject of two council workshops. So how much time did the councillors have to consider the community feedback before voting on the rate rise just one week after feedback closed ? Allowing time for collation of the community responses, the two council workshops (internal

workshops I presume before releasing the documents to councillors) I would argue that the councillors had insufficient time to read and give adequate consideration before voting on 8 February 2023.

When you view the discussion on this item by council before the vote at the meeting on 8 February you will see that the community feedback has been largely ignored by council.

**CRITERION 3** – Is the impact on ratepayers reasonable ? Consideration of ratepayer's capacity to pay increased rates.

***Q1 (Criterion 3)*** *– Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.*

There are significant numbers of low-income households, pensioners and families from migrant backgrounds in the QPRC community. Large increases implemented over the next three years but which are proposed to be maintained forever (with the possibility of further SRVs in future) will cause additional financial hardship on top of existing financial pressures; increasing mortgage repayments (and rents) and significant ongoing escalation in the cost of living (CPI currently around 7% but much more on essential family expenditure items). QPRC is not only proposing significant and unprecedented increases in rates (GF) but also increases in water and sewerage charges at the same time. The combined additional annual costs will well exceed $1,000 (and increasing over time) which will cause severe hardship to many families across the QPRC community.

In QPRC's "Three Page Explainer" QPRC average rates for 2020-21 are quoted as $1,155 and rates for other councils are given including the following statement.

The average residential rate in similar NSW council areas is **$1170.**

Likewise the QPRC "Capacity to Pay" report notes that QPRC's rates are in line with other similar councils. So at present QPRC average rates are 'similar' to 'similar NSW council areas'. But if the proposed rate rises are granted there will be a significant disparity between QPRC and many 'similar NSW council areas'. That begs the question as to why QPRC has got into this financial situation [see response to Criterion #1 (Q1)].

***Q2 (Criterion 3)*** *– Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.*

QPRC has failed to give appropriate and reasonable consideration of the community's capacity to pay the proposed increased rates.

QPRC's submission to IPART includes a "Capacity to Pay" report dated January 2023. In relation to renters (nearly one-third of the QPRC population) the report states that "*renters may experience an indirect increase/decrease dependent on their lease agreement or landlord's decision*". In making such a statement QPRC is not only being arrogantly dismissive of renters (nearly one-third of QPRC's

community) but is demonstrating just how out of touch with reality QPRC is. To suggest that when a landlord receives ongoing annual cost increases of $1,000 or more that the landlord might decrease the rent is absurd. Not only is this proposition an insult to the intelligence of the entire Queanbeyan-Palerang community; those who are renting would be incensed by this treatment from QPRC.

As expected, the January 2023 "Capacity to Pay" report has a section on "Trends in Cost of Living". Nowhere in that section is any mention of the biggest impacts on cost of living (the significant costs of meeting mortgage repayments since interest rates started increasing last year and the current high levels of inflation). The analysis is entirely based on changes in data over a 5 year period 2015/16 to 2020/21 without recognising (not even mentioning) contemporary substantial changes. The report cannot claim to have assessed the community's capacity to pay when it has totally ignored the current real financial pressures.

The overall content of the report is questionable. When a report includes statements (based on a table of data and considered analysis?) such as – 'QPRC's mining rates are 92% lower' it brings into question whether the authors are genuinely addressing the question of the community's capacity to pay or focused on another agenda.

So QPRC's considerations are based on a report that appears to present quite a complex analysis of socio-economic data but fails to address the key current issues that really matter (such as the current real cost of living pressures) and suggests that landlords might decrease rents in response to rate increases! What nonsense! The report then concludes that "*the QPRC community has the capacity to pay*" (p28 of a 32 page report. 7th para). Based on its content, that report has little credibility and should be dismissed.

Please note that councillors granted themselves pay increases ranging from 22 to 33 % last year before raising the prospect of proposed rate increases with the community. In dollar terms this is an annual increase of $21,790 for the Mayor and $4,564 for councillors. The total extra annual cost to ratepayers is $67,430. Putting that figure in perspective, QPRC has reported that there are a total of 62 financial hardship arrangements. So the pay increase voted to themselves last year would more than pay for the increased financial hardship to each and every one of those 62 ratepayers. That might help to understand the lack of genuine empathy from QPRC towards the question of the community's capacity to pay.

***Q3 (Criterion 3)** – In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.*

QPRC's plan is unacceptable in that it covers only part of the community and is partly based on a report which is fundamentally deficient (the "QPRC Capacity to Pay" report) . The QPRC submission to IPART includes a copy of QPRC's "Hardship & Financial Assistance Policy". However this policy applies only to ratepayers. Rental properties are specifically excluded from the QPRC's hardship policy. According to the 2021 Census 26.9% of residences are fully owned, 41.5% have a mortgage giving a total of 68.4%. The vast majority of the remaining 31.6% are rental properties which are specifically excluded from QPRC's hardship policy.

**CRITERION 4** – relevant IP&R documents must be exhibited, approved and adopted by council before council applies to IPART for a special variation. It is expected that council will hold an extraordinary meeting to adopt the IP&R documents.

***Q1 (Criterion 4)*** *– Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation ?*

QPRC advised that there would be an 'Extraordinary meeting' on 1 February 2023 but that meeting was cancelled by QPRC (evidence provided in attachment). The discussion and vote on the SRV was then held at the ordinary meeting on 8 February 2023. For those residents who attended the meeting the video facilities were not working for the first part of the meeting including the discussion and the vote on the SRV. And so ratepayers were not able to hear or see the discussion on this matter of great importance and impact to them.

Council holds two regular meetings each month, o
month. Meetings are held in the Queanbeyan chan

**2023 meeting dates**

- January 18
- February 1 - Extraordinary meeting (cancelled)
- February 8 and 22

The detail in the minutes of meeting for this SRV item were far less than for many items of far lesser importance. It does not record the considerable community discontent. In fact, if anything, the minutes give the impression that the community was engaged and are supportive. That is not the case.

**9. REPORTS TO COUNCIL - ITEMS FOR DETERMINATION**

**9.1 Financial Sustainability Options and Special Rate Variation**

023/23 **RESOLVED (Wilson/Preston)**

That Council:

1. Accept the Community Engagement Report and noting the considerable feedback and participation at meetings thank the community for their involvement.
2. Adopt the draft revised Long Term Financial Plan, as exhibited.
3. Adopt the amendments to the 2022-26 Delivery Program, as exhibited.
4. Lodge an application with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a Special Variation as outlined in Scenario 2 in the Long Term Financial Plan, for a permanent rate increase of 18% each year for 3 years, inclusive of the rate peg. This amounts to a cumulative rates increase of 64.3%.
5. Conduct a review of the rating structure in 2023-24.

For: Crs Biscotti, Livermore, Preston, Taskovski, Webster, Willis, Wilson and Winchester
Against: Crs Burton, Grundy and Macdonald

**CRITERION 5** – IP& R documents must explain and quantify productivity improvements and cost containment strategies in past years and plans to realise over the special variation period.

***Q1 (Criterion 5)*** *– In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.*

There is some reference to savings on streetlighting and various other small cost reductions. However the submission to IPART is silent on the poor planning and management (especially of Capex program) which has wasted a significant amount of ratepayer's rate contributions over many years.

Just before taking the vote on the proposed SRV the Mayor stated "*We as a council would need to reduce expenses by $5.5 million each year. A figure which I believe is genuinely achievable*". If that is the case why weren't such measures taken long before now to improve the council's financial position. Likewise one of the councillors noted that an independent review of council operations should have happened long ago.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

One major issue that I could not find in the QPRC submission to IPART is the impact of the merger of Queanbeyan and Palerang in 2016. When you compare the asset register of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment (IPPE) the two councils were fundamentally and substantially different. Whilst this statement is obvious the financial impacts and appropriate actions have not been properly considered. If proper consideration of the key issues was given then a significant part of the present and, more importantly, ongoing financial challenges could be addressed without the need for a significant and perpetual SRV.

To highlight what should be obvious:

Palerang Council – more than 75% of the asset base was for roads (incl. bulk earthworks) and bridges (both at fair value and carrying value). The sewerage network was less than 5% of the asset base. Likewise the water supply and drainage were both less than 5% (All three combined less than 15%).

Queanbeyan Council – roads & bridges only 13%. The sewerage network was 24%, water supply 16% & stormwater 17% (all three combined 57%).

There are also some significant items in terms of accumulated depreciation.

In terms of depreciation and provision for asset renewals there are some standout items:

- Queanbeyan sewerage network (upgrade work is in planning/design phase and has been mentioned in QPRC's submission to IPART)
- Roads, bridges, footpaths – represent about half of the QPRC (combined) asset register value and the biggest single contributor to depreciation. The major concern which is apparent now, but set to become an even bigger financial burden, is that the standard of road pavement construction in the QPRC region, particularly on some projects, means that the asset life will be much less than assumed in the asset management plan. This results in an under-estimation of depreciation and hence increased financial demands in future. I urge council to pay more

attention to the engineering design, planning and supervision of projects. It will result in a reduced demand on financial resources in the long term.

Poor past performance must not be rewarded. If so we are likely to see a continuation of the existing problems.

This situation brings into question the experience and capability of senior management and councillors over the years as well as the honesty of their communications with ratepayers. There is a strong and compelling case for the appointment of an administrator to sort out these issues without fear or favour.

QPRC Special Rate Variation – IPART submission (ADDENDUM)

QPRC December 2022 Newsletter – cover page (see below).

1) Surely the most significant issue at the time (the proposed rate rise) should have been on the cover page. Instead a series of low key items took precedence on the cover page.
2) It is highly likely that this flyer would have gone straight into the recycling bin with mundane items on the cover page. In any case I doubt whether the QPRC frequent newsletter flyer is widely opened or read. **Had the council sent a formal addressed letter on the proposed rate rises in the mail the ratepayers would have read it** and been aware.
3) This is the first communication that most residents would have received. "*Learn more about the proposed rate rise*" is written as if we all knew about a usual sort of "rate rise" (rather than a Special Rate Variation); and hence would not have attracted the attention that it deserved.



QPRC news

Official Newsletter of Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

QPRC

December 2022

Learn more about the proposed **QPRC rate rise**

## Australia Day

Australia Day Ceremonies will be held on 26 January in Braidwood, Bungendore, Captains Flat and Queanbeyan.

At each of these events Citizen, Young Citizen, and Event of the year will be awarded.

- Learn more and find your nearest event at **bit.ly/QPRC-ausday**

## Roads update

Like all the other councils in our region, the whole local government area is completely saturated. This means that road surfaces are breaking up. It also means that short-term repairs don't last long because the next rain event either causes further damage or breaks up the temporary repair.

We understand how frustrating this is for the community, and our roads crews are working hard to get on top of the problems. It's not a quick fix and it's a continuous job at the moment - but our crews are doing everything they can to keep our roads together.

- Report road damage via Snap Send Solve, **bit.ly/QPRC-rf-rap** or calling **1300 735 025**

## Moore Park skate bowl

The mural in the Moore Park skate bowl was completed with the help of local young people and artists Mike Shankster and Arina Apostolova.

The artwork was developed by Mike, Arina and a group of young people who learned about different art styles in a series of workshops beginning in September.

The finished work adds bold colours to the park. Our community team plan to run more workshops and events at the space in the coming months.

## Have your say

Garden Organics are currently accepted at the former landfills at Majors Creek and Araluen. Environmental protection and regulatory requirements mean that the existing facilities must be closed.

We are now seeking input from the community on a suitable green waste service for the area.

- Have your say until 23 December at **bit.ly/QPRC-mcagw**

## Crawford Street upgrade

In late October works began to install traffic signals at the intersection of Crawford and Antill Streets in Queanbeyan.

Antill Street is temporarily closed to the west of Crawford Street with detours in place. This first stage of the project is expected to be complete in January 2023. The second stage involves work at the Crawford/Erin/Campbell Street intersection and is expected to start in February. The intersection upgrades are funded under the Australian Government Black Spot Program.

## Children's Music Play

We recently received funding for a children's Music Play Program at the Queanbeyan Library.

The 45-minute sessions use music, movement, play and percussion to engage with children aged 3-5 years. The program has been widely popular with weekly sessions run by Music for Canberra at the Queanbeyan Library.

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Have your say at **yourvoice.qprc.nsw.gov.au**

*This newsletter was printed and expected to be delivered in early-December.*

The need for a rate rise ? <u>This same text (see below) was used consistently.</u>




All but one of the four reasons given above by QPRC to ratepayers are 'one-off' special events and so cannot be used to justify rate rises which QPRC proposes to apply each and every year into the future.

The fourth reason has been called a 'rate freeze' by QPRC but it is really annual rate increases in accordance with the IPART 'rate peg'; not a rate freeze. In any case QPRC issued a "Long Term Financial Plan" (supported by council at their meeting on 27 November 2019) at the end of 2019 which had annual rate increases averaging 3.77% but WITHOUT any 'Special Rate Variation'. If the so called merger 'rate freeze' was a reason for the rate increase why was any form of 'Special Rate Variation' excluded from the Long Term Financial Plan adopted at the end of 2019 (three years after the merger) ?

A copy of the summarised 'Long Term Financial Plan' (27 November 2019) is provided on the following page (page 46 from QPRC Merger Report 2016-2019).

**QPRC LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (November 2019)**

**N.B.**

**1) NO Special Rate Variation**

**2) rate increases average 3.77% per annum**

**3) Endorsed by QPRC at meeting 27 November 2019**

## QPRC Merger Report 2016-19

**Financial Forecasts**
In 2018 Council adopted its Long Term Financial Plan 2018-28. The draft LTFP was placed on public exhibition and proposed three potential scenarios which were:

**Base Case Scenario (1):**
- Delivery Program
- Consumer Price Indexation
- Debt and Capital Plan
- Land Sales

**Scenario 2 (preferred)**
Base Case Scenario plus
- Dividend (Queanbeyan Water and Sewer Funds)
- 100% Asset Renewals
- Improve Unrestricted Cash levels to $2 million.
- Additional Merger Funding and revised User Charges
- Meet all Financial Principle Ratios

**Scenario 3**
- Scenario 2 plus Special Rate Variation 5%.

| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OPERATIONAL** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Total Rates and Annual Charges** | 69,640 | 71,376 | 73,156 | 76,300 | 79,510 | 82,826 | 86,253 | 89,794 | 93,423 | 97,172 | 81,945 |
| **User Charges and Fees** | 28,686 | 35,507 | 36,391 | 37,268 | 38,831 | 40,446 | 42,117 | 43,843 | 45,627 | 47,458 | 39,617 |
| **Other income** | 6,891 | 5,871 | 5,938 | 8,176 | 7,606 | 7,720 | 7,900 | 7,989 | 8,292 | 8,665 | 7,505 |
| **Grants and Contributions - Operating Purposes** | 11,156 | 11,308 | 11,500 | 11,759 | 12,023 | 12,294 | 12,570 | 12,853 | 13,142 | 13,438 | 12,204 |
| Total Income from Continuing Operations | 117,376 | 126,551 | 128,988 | 136,155 | 140,637 | 145,969 | 151,538 | 157,194 | 163,202 | 169,467 | 175,997 |
| **Services – operational expenditure** | 42,957 | 53,464 | 50,891 | 64,785 | 66,408 | 64,460 | 66,016 | 67,671 | 69,367 | 71,107 | 60,491 |
| **Asset Maintenance** | 46,493 | 36,412 | 38,991 | 24,600 | 25,301 | 29,635 | 30,527 | 31,384 | 32,265 | 33,169 | 34,099 |
| **Debt expenses** | 2,412 | 4,508 | 5,074 | 11,016 | 9,109 | 8,709 | 8,343 | 7,963 | 7,569 | 7,158 | 7,186 |
| **Depreciation** | 21,014 | 23,991 | 27,095 | 30,469 | 31,472 | 33,302 | 34,477 | 35,598 | 36,755 | 37,946 | 31,212 |
| Total Expenses from Continuing Operations | 112,876 | 118,375 | 122,051 | 131,581 | 133,017 | 136,851 | 140,123 | 143,394 | 146,738 | 150,181 | 153,714 |
| **Net Operating Result before Grants and Contributions - Capital Purposes** | 4,500 | 8,176 | 6,937 | 4,574 | 7,620 | 9,119 | 11,415 | 13,799 | 16,465 | 19,285 | 10,189 |
| **CAPITAL** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Grants and Contributions - Contributed Assets** | 19,644 | 20,076 | 20,517 | 14,407 | 14,767 | 15,136 | 15,515 | 15,903 | 16,300 | 16,708 | 16,897 |
| **Grants and Contributions - Capital Purposes** | 68,323 | 57,178 | 57,928 | 3,945 | 4,016 | 34,088 | 4,162 | 4,237 | 4,313 | 4,390 | 24,258 |
| **Borrowings (Debt)** | 50,400 | 33,900 | 105,400 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21,970 |
| **Depreciation (non-cash)** | 21,014 | 23,991 | 27,095 | 30,469 | 31,472 | 33,302 | 34,477 | 35,598 | 36,755 | 37,946 | 31,212 |
| **Asset renewals** | 65,561 | 74,969 | 74,300 | 31,469 | 31,472 | 33,302 | 34,477 | 35,598 | 36,755 | 37,946 | 45,585 |
| **Asset enhancements** | 100,059 | 82,972 | 132,006 | 59,407 | 14,767 | 45,136 | 20,515 | 15,903 | 16,300 | 16,708 | 50,377 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Net Reserve Movement | **(6,239)** | **(22,796)** | **4,634** | **(12,055)** | **4,016** | **4,088** | **(838)** | **4,237** | **4,313** | **4,390** | **(1,625)** |

Following the public exhibition phase, Council adopted the Long Term Financial Plan based on Scenario 2 which is summarised in the table above:

QPRC



Information from QPRC on the SRV states consistently that water, sewerage etc charges will not be affected by this change (see below). However this statement is not informing ratepayers transparently of the full picture. Water, sewerage etc charges are separately also in the process of being reviewed (increased) by QPRC. It should be noted that the water charges, for example, although supplied from ACT's Icon Water are considerably higher than for the ACT. The reason is that QPRC applies a surcharge to harvest a profit from water charges which goes into council's General Fund revenue. So QPRC is not being transparent nor honest with ratepayers when it states that water etc charges will not be affected; those charges are part of council's revenue (GF), they are not set on a "user pay" basis and they are currently being increased. Therefore there is another 'de facto" increase to ratepayer's "rates" in the form of increased water charges which will flow into the GF revenue.

We have explored three rate rise scenarios and their impacts on Council services over the next three years. The proposed rate rise will affect the general rate charge. Waste, sewerage, stormwater, and water access charges will not be affected by this change.

Where we are

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
QPRC has a long history of financial mismanagement, however is is now at it's worst. Poor decisions and management have lead to a decision that ratepayers must pay pick up the pieces. At this time, during high inflation, high interest rates (with further increases predicted), food costs are the highest we've seen for a long time, we simply cannot afford an increase such as this on top of already high rate prices. Council have indicated the community is made up if high income earners, what do they call 'high'? High is not enough to make ends meet now. Rates are calculated on the value of a home/land, etc. Although prices have increased, ratepayers do not have access to that cash, it's tied up in their property, so where does the extra money come from to pay the doubling of our rates. Council have not been honest or transparent in this process, instead releasing small snippets of information to the community that will support their case. This has lead to a major lack of understanding in the general community. On top of this, the feedback process has been convoluted and difficult, resulting in many people simply being unable to contribute and likely to not have their say at all, in the absence of alternative methods to which they have access. A rate rise of this magnitude on top of a substantial increase in valuations on which rates are calculated is simply unfair and unjust, and at a time of record high prices will lead to people losing their homes. It is sad, but true. You cannot let this pass, if you do, you will be condemning the residents of QPRC to the highest rates in the state, in a area that is not deserving of that title. We do not have the services now to justify the rates already being charged. Please do not let this pass.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
I don't believe so. This council has shown a long list of financial mismanagement issues, none of the government councillors are qualified to manage funding such as this. The lack of qualifications leads to a very narrow minded view that a rates variation is the only way forward. I as a resident and ratepayer, have certainly not been engaged to participate in any discussions for alternative funding.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
I do not believe they have done this adequately.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Definitely not. Council have NOT been transparent in disclosing the extent of the increase. Council have only communicated there will be an 18% rate rise for three consecutive years. They have not adequately informed residents of the following: 1. It is compounded effect, 18% in year 1, then 18% on the increased rates in year 2 and again in year 33. 2. Council do not refer to this as a 56% increase due to the backlash over a rate rise that high, they are hiding behind three smaller rises that sound more palatable to ratepayers. They are very careful how they manage the information to make it sound better than it really is. 3. They have increased our valuations this year which increases our rates before the SV increase. The effect of this is a doubling of rates.. My valuation has increased by 64.5% this year. If I now calculate my new rates including the SV, it is an increase of 122% - this is simply not fair! Once again, council are neglecting to tell ratepayers of this. The increase in valuation should be enough without the SV. 4. The calculations on their website are based on the valuations before any increase. The increase in valuations have not been factored in, therefore the indicative rates amount is not accurate, it is substantially less that reality. 5. I have spoken to many people and most (90&+) are unaware of the calculation methods and the effect on their rates.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No, I have been actively looking for engagement methods to have my say, however they are poorly advertised, if at all. The lack of community awareness is astounding for something such as this. QPRC have likely attempted to meet a minimum standard of community engagement in order to get this through without fuss.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I believe the limited feedback from the community has outlined how unhappy this community is about this issue, however Council simply maintain there is no other option, rather than find an alternative option. The have spend many millions of dollars on a new office which is completely unnecessary and overly expensive. This is not the right time.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Not accurate. The council have used averages to outline the increase to rates, the average rates are $2,176 for Queanbeyan Urban, an increate of 63.10%. Averages are not a true indication of the council. My rates alone are $3200 prior to the increase, likely to increase to over $5,200. However this is prior to the valuation increase. My rates alone are likely to be around $7000 after all increases. This is simply not affordable. The QPRC also includes Jerrabomberra which has a very large number of

very high value properties. This average is significantly understated. An increase such as this is simply not payable by residents. I can't afford it.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
They have not considered 'willingness' to pay, council are of the mindset that ratepayers, MUST pay, it's not a choice we have, therefore their answer is, if you don't wan to pay the rates, move somewhere else. Someone else who buys the property will pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The hardship provision is simply not relevant to anyone living in Jerrabomberra, is is based on drought, bushfire and covid movement restrictions. In a residential area, drought and bushfire do not affect the earning capacity of residents, therefore no-one will qualify. Covid is all by irrelevant in the community now, there are no movement restrictions. The hardship provisions will simply not apply to many residents at all.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I can only assume so. As stated earlier, the engagement has been minimal because QPRC know this is will not be tolerated by the residents. Without that engagement, we as residents are largely unaware of those details. QPRC have noted that the residents said " beautiful natural environment, local people and spirit, and location and convenience are the characteristics they most love about Queanbeyan-Palerang". A raterise such as this, puts this into jeopardy.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Inadequate. This council and the current councillors have shown a history of financial mismanagement. The submission simply contains a lot of 'buzz' words with little to no substance. Council have not presented any specific details, these are all motherhood statements that mean nothing to most residents. They are simply covering their reasoning behind confusing statements. They have at no point told ratepayers specifically what measures have been considered/actioned. Once again, the current councillors are not qualified to determine where best to save funds.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
As a resident of Currawang, it feels unjust to face such a substantial increase in rates when our area does not have access to any council-provided services or facilities within approximately 50 kilometers of our location. The only service we currently receive is the annual or biannual grading of our unsealed road. The proposal does not take into consideration the broad resident-base of the QPRC, which comprises city-dwellers as well as rural property owners. The current proposal seems to have been written with only city-dwellers (in particular, Queanbeyan residents) in consideration, with an expectation that rural residents would pay rate increases for those city services they dont use. A solution that is fairer for all QPRC residents taking into consideration their varied locations and lifestyles would be much better, for example: Same increase in rates, with some reduction in city services and increase in rural services. Different rates for city-dwellers (eg Queanbeyan residents) compared with rural residents, where all residents only pay rates that are true to the services they actually use.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
While QPRC has made it clear that they require a different source of revenue, in our specific situation in Currawang, the answer is no. My reasons are below. As a small rural community with no nearby town centre within QPRC, our area lacks council-funded facilities and regular services, except for occasional road grading. We are located approximately 50km away from the nearest QPRC facility or space, which we do not use. Considering the lack of planned service improvements, it is unclear why a different revenue path would be necessary for Currawang. Furthermore, our locality is not even included in the QPRC 2022-32 Financial Plan, indicating no intention to provide new services or facilities for our community. On the contrary, the only council-funded service that we received aside from road-grading our tip pass for household waste disposal was taken away from Currawang residents recently. We are now required to pay to take domestic waste to the tip with no reduction to our rates to compensate. This has left Currawang residents in a bitter state, feeling as though we are being asked to pay more while having services taken away, and funding services we do not benefit from.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Yes, we received a letter in which the QPRC presented three options for rate hikes for the public's consideration, in which they stated that without such increases, there will be a significant reduction in services. However, the letter neglected to address the fact that the QPRC is a large area comprised of residents who live in different conditions, with a large number of rurally-dispersed residents and rural properties as well as city-dwellers in Queanbeyan, for instance. The entire proposal seemed very city-centric, without fair solutions to residents in rural regions of QPRC. While we are open to reasonable rate hikes in line with inflation, we believe that QPRC services should be reduced and a user pays system should be introduced for recreational facilities such as pools and entertainment centres, based on proximity or usage. Our location is around 50km from the nearest QPRC-managed facility or public space, and we do not utilize any of them due to this distance. Increasing the rates of rural residents to cover city services is they dont use is inequitable.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes, they communicated what the percentage increase was expected to be. I dont recall seeing the exact dollar figure communicated through letters or email, as yet.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
To my recollection, we only received one letter, which did not provide any clear invitations for community feedback, information sessions or other consultation options. Not much information or instruction has been given to residents about how they can submit an objection or feedback.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
As far as I'm aware, residents haven't been given an opportunity to provide feedback, and as such council has not released any response to feedback or amendments to their proposal.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It is unreasonable to expect all residents of QPRC to be subject to such as large increase in rates, to fund primarily city-based services. Rural residents such as Currawang residents do not use these city services, because of distance. To justify an increase of rates there needs to be some service provided, but no additional service has been promised in our region of Currawang, and in fact, the only service we ever seem to receive is occasional road-grading.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.

It is fair to expect residents of QPRC to pay for services they use, but the problem with the proposal is that it is asking many residents (those in rural regions, such as Currawang) to pay for services that others benefit from. It is not possible for a council area of this size and variance in lifestyle (eg rural, city) to expect all residents to express willingness to pay, considering that the council services are mainly city-oriented. Rather, the rates model needs to reflect a fairer system in which residents only pay for the services that they realistically use. To say it bluntly, I am not willing to fund a stranger in Queanbeyan to go to the theatre, while receiving no services ourselves, which is essentially what this proposed rates model is asking rural residents to do. Technically we are in the same council region, but it is a very large region, and therefore not all QPRC residents use these services. Unless there is some improvement in services to the Currawang region, I am not willing to pay and with the cost of living and inflation continually increasing to be honest I do no really have the capacity to pay either.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
It appears that QPRC is missing the main point, which is that the proposed 64% increase in rates over the next 3 years is unreasonable, especially given that we already receive little value in terms of services for the rates we are currently paying. While QPRC has suggested payment plans and seeking financial advice, these options do not address the core issue at hand.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Im not in a position to comment, as I don't have any memory of receiving a letter or notification from the council regarding this.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
QPRC has provided an explanation and quantification of their past and planned productivity improvements and cost containment strategies, as required in the application. However, upon reviewing their response, it appears that none of the proposed strategies directly relate to the services or facilities that directly impact our community in Currawang. The greater issue is that the proposal does not address the needs of rural QPRC residents, and needs to be revised to provide a fairer solution for all residents.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
The council did not explain the reasons why the finances became so unsustainable so quickly. They did not provide any information as to the reasons why the financial situation was so dire.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. The council did not look at internal efficiencies or cutting costs in other areas before proposing a rate rise. They gave no options to the public for savings to be found in other ways.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The communication from council was ableist and lacking in rigour: - even though the council was aware of the change in valuations which would affect all ratepayers, the first half of their consultation repeated used old valuations to describe the impact in percentage terms and dollar terms. - because of the change in valuation, the percentage and actual dollar increases described by council were very misleading. In some areas such as braidwood the difference between their initial estimates of percentage and dollars were out by a significant margin - halfway through the consultation period, council released a calculator which showed the impact of the rate rise with the new valuations. This completely undermined the previous communications from council and utterly confused most residents. - because of this, most residents do not have a clear understanding of the actual rate rise facing them.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No, the councils communication was confusing, extremely difficult to read, and not accessible. Using the industry-standard measure (Flesch-Kincaid readability score), the average reading grade for the majority of communication was at a post graduate level. Therefore the communication material does not meet minimum standards for accessibility, and would be considered extremely difficult to read for most people. It is not acceptable for council to communicate in such complex and difficult to understand language. This is not the standard for government communication. Additionally, the council did not provide transparency or communicate respectfully with the community. The general manager responded to some private residents emails with responses to questions, but didnt deign to respond to others. Council made no effort to update their website with responses to frequently asked questions. The mayor also engaged on social media forums with extreme bias. He consistently reported and tried to remove any posts on local forums that were critical of the council. This was a deliberate effort to stifle community discussion.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council consulted with community using an extremely poorly worded survey which asked people HOW MUCH the increases should be. When they analysed the responses, they found that the majority of people were against the rate rise. They then proceeded to choose the least popular scenario (scenario 2). Why consult with community if you will ignore what they have to say?

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
In the current economic climate it is preposterous for the council to assert that there is general community willingness and ability to pay. Additionally, council will still be cutting essential services to people in the community while asking them to pay more

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Theres no evidence to show the council seriously engaged with this criteria. Theres no consideration of the impact on rental prices and the overall lack of affordability of our council compared to surrounding areas. This will have serious economic impacts on the community.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The plan is vague.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The answers in the councils submission here is appallingly lacking in detail. There is no transparency on how the council got into this situation and there is no detail in the public documents on how they plan to contain costs in the future. Its not possible to comment in more detail because there is no detail.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The amalgamation of the councils was justified by the promise of more cost effective local government. Better services for our rates. That has not happened in the area I live in. Services have been noticeably less. (We get very little anyway, so its very noticeable). Anything we get, has had to be fought for, by endless emails and phone calls. I do not support paying higher rates for a local council that provides me with so little.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
The council has canvassed the closure of services as an alternative. The council has not canvassed how the money collected could be better utilised. How council could be more effective/efficient. Nor how the increase in rates will or will not address discrepancies in services provided across the area

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes. Although it has not been made clear how variations in land value will impact rate payers

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
As a person living in a regional area, I have no easy access to anything other than the newsletter or local paper

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The council has gone with the majority preferred choice from a very select group of choices that included no alternative actions than the rate increase

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Times are tough. Wages are stagnant, inflation is high, and all cost are going up. This has been covered on the media night after night, and yet it does nothing to alter behaviour. Everyone just keeps putting their prices up. My neighbour has just commented on social media that the valuer-general has just increased her land value by 127% this year. This does not reflect any real value increase in our property prices. In fact, the land value increase now makes the land worth more than they could realistically sell their house and land for. The rate increase will reflect distorted land values which can occur in the country (not many houses are sold, great variation in market value, and short distances can create big differences ie a causeway, damaged by flooding, where council has a state government grant to fix, but it still isnt fixed three years later). This distortion of value will make the burden of the rate increase completely unfair and unacceptable..

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
To my knowledge, none

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
To make rates unaffordable and then offer variations on payment is ridiculous. Perhaps simpler to not make them unaffordable in the first place

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
No comment

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 5 May 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
1. I respectfully ask that the SV application be rejected. 2. I recommend that the QPRC General Manager and all Councillors except Burton, Grundy and Macdonald be removed from office. My original submission to council was as follows: As a long time owner-occupier in Bungendore, I wish to make the following submission pertaining to the QPRC Special Rate Variation options and Long Term Financial Plan. BLUF (Bottom Line Up Front) 1. All options are too expensive and hide the root problem 2. Ratepayer contributions are already too high and misrepresented 3. Revenue from population expansion is misrepresented 4. Council spending is excessive 1. All Options Too Expensive and Hide Problem. All three options are far too expensive. Nobody outside of QP shire will see the problem if the ratepayers simply pay more. Council needs to reduce services to the point where rate increases need only rise in accordance with CPI. If this means that the QP shire becomes a dirty un-kept region with no amenities in which nobody wants to live then that might finally draw enough attention to the problem. More GST and state revenue needs to be channelled to councils by the Federal and State governments. I strongly recommend shutting every QRPC amenity and letting the parks and roads perish until that funding necessity is addressed, which it will, following state and federal elections. Council staff numbers can be reduced proportionally with the loss of amenities and services. 2. Ratepayer Contributions Already Too High and Misrepresented. Council is dishonestly misrepresenting the current costs to ratepayers in QPRC relative to other towns by excluding large additional fixed costs for water and sewerage in their calculations. When adding those costs, the total annual bill for my property in Bungendore is already double what my similar property in Port Stephens costs. That will only get worse when these massive land rate increases are added. 3. Revenue from Expansion Misrepresented. Increasing rates in accordance with CPI should be sufficient to maintain services. Adding new ratepayers through population expansion should be a self-funding activity. Council appears to be dishonestly misrepresenting the revenue by only including the ratepayer contributions and not the developer contributions. 4. Excessive Council Spending. Council has blown the budget on unnecessary expensive works like the $74 million spent on the Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct (QCCP) hot on the heels of the Queanbeyan riverfront development. Incomes from those works will never exceed the expenditure on capital, maintenance, loan repayments and opportunity costs. This should be referred to the NSW Auditor General for investigation and follow-on action. Senior QPRC staff remuneration and tenure should be reviewed accordingly. Paying $16M in annual loan repayments when you have $213M cash in the bank does not seem like good financial management. Thank you for the public consultation and opportunity to comment.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. 1. Council has not given sufficient consideration to all cost cutting options and revenue sources. 2. Council has not given an honest account of how we found ourselves in this situation with no warning. They are clearly withholding information. 3. Council has not accepted the errors of extravagant over-expenditure on staff, ICT and facilities such as the Queanbeyan riverfront and the Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct. They have a vanity problem. 4. Council proposed no options to the community with drastic cuts to services sufficient to stay within (or even close to) the rate cap.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. 1. Council proposed no options to the community with drastic cuts to services sufficient to stay within (or even close to) the rate cap. 2. Council has inappropriately ruled out some alternatives, such as reduction of staffing that remains too high 7 years after the council amalgamation.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes, however Council was devious insofar as it cited only rate increases when comparing QPRC with other councils, without adding in the already-high charges for water and sewerage. This failure to communicate the totality of annual council charges appeared to be intentionally deceptive.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No. Although consultation in early 2023 was effective, the community was blind-sided with last-minute news of a dire situation years after the problem began. The blame for this can be attributed to the current Councillors, previous Councillors and enduring Council staff.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
1. Councillors had insufficient time to read the high number of community submissions which were overwhelmingly against the council staff recommendations. 2. With the exception of one Councillor in the meeting who evidently did read a substantial number of submissions, Council displayed an ambivalence towards the community's capacity to pay, vanity in relation to Queanbeyan-Palerang's status, a clear bias towards 100% staff retention, non-acceptance of blame for serious financial

mismanagement and avoidance of state administration at all costs. 3. Upon resolving at the meeting to submit an SV application, Council did not subsequently disclose its content to the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Council was devious insofar as it cited only rate increases when comparing QPRC with other councils, without adding in the already-high charges for water and sewerage. This failure to communicate the totality of annual council charges appeared to be intentionally deceptive.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Very little consideration given. Council has a vanity problem and they think that everyone can afford to pay for it.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
That kind of hardship support only applies to the very poor. It is of little use to the majority of the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
No. Council did not disclose its IPART submission to the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
1. Council has realised few if any productivity improvements in past years. 2. Council has completely failed to contain costs with extravagant over-expenditure on staff, ICT and facilities such as the Queanbeyan riverfront and the Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct. 3. Council's plans for productivity improvements and cost containment strategies in future years are constrained by vanity and an assumption that the rate increases are justifiable.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
QPRCs application is council incompetence at its worst. They are financially incompetent and continually punish rate payers for their excess. If they trimmed the fat on their frivolous spending the application would not be required. I live in a rural area and do not get water, rubbish removal or sewerage services, but pay more rates than urban areas. And now council wants to increase my rates 18%?! Its just wrong.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
They simply chose what they wanted with no regard to community feedback.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The rate rises are unreasonable given the current financial climate and increased cost of living. The QPRC expects struggling rate payers to foot the bill for their financial incompetence over many years. There are various identifiable cost cutting measure they could implement before raising rates.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The council do not care. It is the same as the three environmental surveys they conducted to get the answer they wanted so they could rezone certain areas for their corrupt plans. The rate payer had to foot the bill.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Again lip service. They do not care about resident hardship and will not implements any plans to address it.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Lies.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I am a single pensioner. The increase in my pension, received this pay, will all go on the rate rise. I realise the raise is necessary, but with every other bill I pay, going up as well, I will be struggling. The council made a big mistake building the huge new council premises. We did not need this expenditure. Also, most of the money raised by this council, goes to the Queanbeyan precinct, the other villages go without. Braidwood still badly needs new footpaths on the Main Street shopping area. People are having falls regularly. Way past the need for replacing !! Our council thinks it is important to beautify the main thoroughfare in Queanbeyan, when there are more important updates needed in the other villages. Amalgamation has not done us any good. Yours sincerely, [redacted].

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Rate rises are expected. A minimum of 18% per year until reaching an increase of 67% is gouging on the community. It clearly outlines how incompetent council has previously been at managing their expenditure and budget.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Council provided a brief statement basically saying they were broke, however this came after the council leaders were awarded a significant pay rise, as a resident this is a little hard to grasp. I would like further information released to everyone and not just in the form of a newsletter which nobody reads.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
we were given three scenarios/choices to be consulted on, all included a major rate rise. It would have been nice to have community consultation on where else funds could be cut. Again with a whole new council building being currently built in the centre of town and the staff payrises this is undehanded to the average rate payer shom is just being hit over and over with the cost of living.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No. If i hadn't stumbled across it in the council newsletter I would be unaware and I am a rate payer.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
They went for the middle option which was always going to be the plan. I got a thank you for my feedback generic email and nothing more was said othert than we are applying for scenario 2. I don't think this is an adequate response.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
I agree that rises in rates are necessary over the years but the amounts in which they are being raised are huge and not fair to residents. 67% over 3 years is enough to really break people who are already stretched so thin. I also don't appreciate that the scenario with the lowest and ptoentially most reasonable raise in rates effectively told resident that they would have to cut most services. We have been held to ransom I feel.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I don't think there was any consideration to if we could pay. Whilst the top end of ten may have some capacity there certainly is no willingness from anyone to see such a huge raise especially when are told this is just to maintain the level of service we have.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
So if we prove we are suffering they wont charge us interest on our new higher rates? how kind of them. Not good enough.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
The first time I have heard or seen any of these documents were in the email I recieved asking me to read their application and complete this survey. Perhaps they are on a wall somewhere in their new flashy building...

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I am happy witht the budget forecasting and plan to reach sustainability however i would like to see a focus on capping expenditure for capital works and a reduction in overspends on delayed projects. Also a cap on expenditure for items tha have a minimal community benefit. i.e. why spend on a statue or art piece and then not put up any christmas decorations at all or fix the roads. Please let have the community have a say on what we spend surplus on.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Please review councils genuine financial records, and developments that QPRC has undertaken in recent years, as well as currently. There is genuine mismanagement of funds and very little focus on what the community actually needs. In particular, please also note the financial position of Palerang Council vs Queanbeyan Council prior to the merger. Is rising rates, the ONLY option for QPRC, or is it simply the easy way to fix the financial deficit they're facing due to financial mismanagement?

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No, please see comments below...particularly around financial mismanagement and QPRC developments.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
No/very little action has been taken to reduce costs before seeking this rate rise, but in particular, council has heavily overinvested in development (such as new council chambers in Queanbeyan, despite a new office not long having been built in Bungendore, soon to be given to DOE after dismal coordination by QPRC).

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
This rate increase is far from reasonable, and not affordable for most rate payers in the community. Particularly given the below.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The impacts of Covid/the war in the Ukriane/10 months of RBA rate rises have heavily impact families and any residual savings they might have had post Covid lockdowns and inability to work. Council has not taken into consideration that their rates are already very high (particularly for the services provided to more rural parts of the community, such as Bungendore and Braidwood) and have made little/if any effort to make a reduction in costs.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
This level of rate rise, will be the direct cause of significant financial hardship. Delaying these costs, or writing off additional interest for overdue amounts...does not address the problem. It simply prolongs the issue and drags the problem out longer. The rate increase is nowhere near aligned with CPI, which means that people are relying on non-existant savings post-Covid etc. to pay bills.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Council has not carried out this component truthfully and openly. The cost of developments council has undertaken represents a signficant mismanagement of funds, and prioritising of personal agendas over actual community needs. Again, the new council building..was it required? Were there other facilities that could have been better utilised or re-used that would have meant this development wasn't needed. The cost of this building alone (not even considering other QPRC developments that have a similar arguement), has resulted in massive costs to the community that really wasn't needed.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No, the information during consultation was limited and did not explore options to reduce the Council operating expenses through other measures, staffing reductions etc/

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No, three options were presented two special variation rates increases and one with the peg rate. Alternatives were not appropriately considered.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The special variation is not reasonable and is in response to the irresponsible spending of the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council. Non-financial options, which will not put pressure on residence increasing cost of living should need to be considered. Rate increases need to be considered in the broader economic context and how this is impact the community.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Council's has not appropriately considered Australia's other cost of living pressures and the communities ability to absorb such an increase, without an obvious increase in services. The Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council has been reducing the services provided to the community and the increase does not suggest these services will be improved.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council hardship policy considered hardship to be illness, unemployment and changed financial circumstances. The process is complicated and arduous to demonstrate you meet the requirements. Consideration should be given to allowing members to pay the ped rate increase separate to the special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The Council response to productivity improvements and cost containment is unsatisfactory. There has not been a real consideration of reducing the costs of Council and instead the community is expected to cover this ongoing mismanagements. On the ground the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council has reduced there normal services such as keeping Council areas neat and tidy. There has been increased safety and snake sighting due to unkept Council areas. A reduction in these services have not been factored into the strategy and it is not clear if these services will return with the increased special variation.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
No consideration appears to have been given to the old City of Queanbeyan vs Palerang Regional Council divisions, as prior to the 2017 merger. The service provision documents focus almost exclusively on Queanbeyan City, yet QPRC encompasses both regions, and there is considerable concern that those of us in the old Palerang region will be paying for services that solely benefit those in Queanbeyan City, which is unreasonable. In the old Palerang region, the Bungendore Pool development has been cancelled, Braidwood main road has been dug up and not re-surfaced for months now, and it's taken 4 months for potholes in our roads to be fixed. As Palerang residents, we feel that it is unreasonable to pay for services which will only benefit Queanbeyan City, whilst we lose services. I note that in the QPRC merger report (attached), reasons given for enforcing the merger over Palerang's preference to remain separate include 'a merged council is likely to have improved capabilities and a more robust revenue base', which has clearly proven to not be the case, and that 'the merger could provide benefits of $51m to local communities', which it clearly has not. I would like to see proposal documents which either include the proposed service maintanance and improvement to the Palerang region, or else exclude Palerang residents from the proposed rate rise, as we have not in any way benefitted from the council merger; rather we have lost from it. QPRC is now proposing that we must pay more for that loss.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Only in that the Council does not apparently have the funds to continue to provide the current services. This is interesting given the significant investment currently underway in building new and rather dramatic council buildings.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No the Council has not, it only offered three different rate rises for consideration.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The nature and full extent of the rate rise has been communicated.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I think so.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The council has made vague allusions to cost saving measures and considerations such as paid parking, but nothing concrete. The Council's response to community feedback was to select their 'middle road' rate increase option, bearing in mind that the only options offered were three different rate increases.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The scenario adopted by the council does not include any pensioner's rebate, and will be difficult for those on low incomes to accomodate, given the rising cost of living.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The council has acknowledged the community's general disapproval of all three rate increase scenarios, along with concern over mismanagement.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The council appears to intend to offer it's standard hardship considerations, with a delay in rate rise only offered for properties used differently to how they are zoned.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
The documents were available online. I don't know if they were discussed and approved during a council meeting.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I could not find any details in the documents provided of productivity improvements (indeed, as citizens of the area we have

noticed a reduction in services) nor of cost containment strategies already realised. The council has in the last couple of years embarked on the building of a very large and flashy looking new set of council offices. One would suggest that the council has not in fact engaged in either productivity improvements or cost containment measures.

# Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
# Merger Status Report
# 2016-2017

**Ref:** SF????????

**Offices:** Council headquarters – 256 Crawford St
Bungendore Office – 10 Majara St
Braidwood Office – 144 Wallace St

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QPRC

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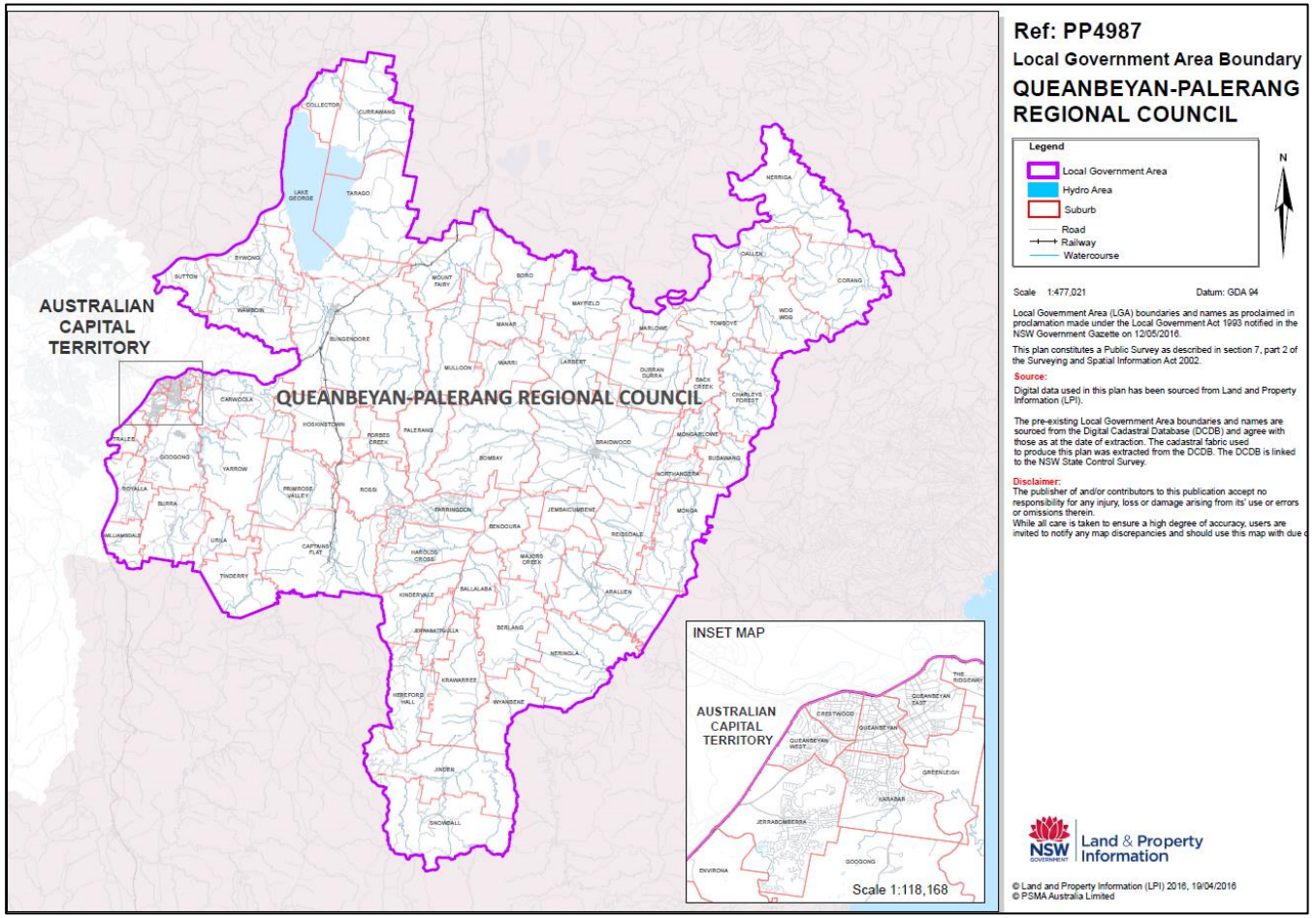
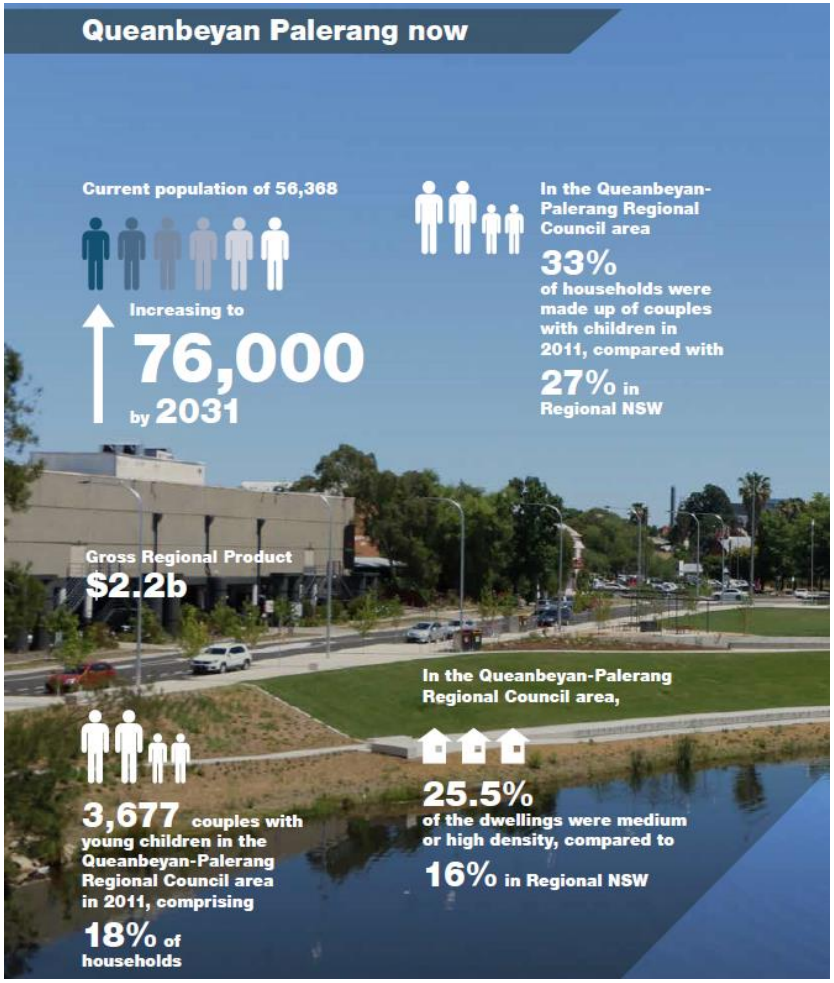
# Proclamation

Queanbeyan- Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) was proclaimed on 12 May 2016, the notice advising Mr Tim Overall as Administrator and Mr Peter Tegart as Interim General Manager and Mr Peter Bascomb as Deputy General Manager, in an undivided (ie no wards) local government area of 5319km2 with 11 councillors to be elected on 9 September 2017. All permanent award staff (around 500) of the former Queanbeyan City and Palerang Councils were transferred to the new entity. QPRC supports a population over 56000 and assets around $1.5billion. The map below (Figure 1) illustrates the LGA.




Queanbeyan Palerang now
Current population of 56,368
Increasing to
76,000
by 2031
In the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council area
33%
of households were made up of couples with children in 2011, compared with
27% in Regional NSW
Gross Regional Product
$2.2b
In the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council area,
3,677 couples with young children in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council area in 2011, comprising
18% of households
25.5%
of the dwellings were medium or high density, compared to
16% in Regional NSW


Asset base of
$1.5billion
Area of
5,319km²
Operating revenue of the new entity
$159m
The total number of dwellings in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council area increased by
1,522
between 2006 and 2011

# Merger Expectations

The former councils did not meet the 'scale and capacity' threshold identified by IPART and the Independent Local Government Review Panel (ILGRP). By merging, QPRC met the threshold gaining access to low interest TCorp loans and significant NSW Government funding for infrastructure (eg $70m Roads Package for Old Cooma Rd and MR92, and other major infrastructure projects such as EDE, QISC, QSTP); and works with the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CBRJO) on regional strategy, advocacy, joint procurement and potential shared services.

## QUEANBEYAN COUNCIL – CIP

**NOT FIT**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Area (km²) | 172 | Population | 2011 | 40,000 |
| OLG Group | 4 | | (2031) | 58,500 |
| ILGRP Group | E | Merger | 2011 | 54,850 |
| | | | (2031) | 79,050 |
| Operating revenue (2013-14) | $48.9m | TCorp assessment | | Moderate FSR Neutral Outlook |




ILGRP options (preference in bold): **Merge with Palerang Council** (yellow) or council in South East JO (shaded area).

Assessment summary:

| | |
|---|---|
| Scale and capacity | **Does not satisfy** |
| Financial criteria: | **Satisfies overall** |
| • Sustainability | Satisfies |
| • Infrastructure and service management | Satisfies |
| • Efficiency | Satisfies |

**Fit for the Future – NOT FIT**

- The council does not satisfy the scale and capacity criterion.
- The council satisfies the financial criteria overall. It satisfies the sustainability, infrastructure and service management and efficiency criteria.
- Scale and capacity is a threshold criterion which councils must satisfy to be Fit for the Future (FFTF), therefore the council is not fit.

**Scale and capacity – does not satisfy**

- The council was required to consider the ILGRP preferred option and demonstrate its proposal is as good as or better to achieve the scale and capacity objectives for the region.
- The council did not demonstrate its improvement proposal was at least as good as the ILGRP merger option. The efficiency improvements in the council's proposal can be realised under the merger option. In addition the merger option would provide significant further benefits.
- Queanbeyan's proposal is based on a Regional Services Model, which would involve the provision of back office functions for Palerang Council and a coordinating leadership role for neighbouring councils. This model generated better operating results for Queanbeyan than the merger, but limited details about how this model would work in practice and the impacts for Palerang were provided.
- A high level business case was provided for this model, but we were unable to calculate an NPV based on the information provided. We also note Palerang did not provide support for this shared services model in its proposal.
- Our analysis of the business case jointly commissioned by Palerang and Queanbeyan Councils calculates the merger could provide benefits of $51m (including a Government grant of $5m) over 20 years.
- Our analysis is consistent with the ILGRP's preferred option for Queanbeyan to merge.

**Sustainability – satisfies**

- The council satisfies the criterion for sustainability based on its forecast to meet the benchmarks for the operating performance, building and infrastructure asset renewal and own source revenue ratios by 2019-20.

**Infrastructure and service management - satisfies**

- The council satisfies the criterion for infrastructure and service management based on its forecast to meet the benchmarks for the infrastructure backlog, asset maintenance and debt service ratios by 2019-20.

**Efficiency - satisfies**

- The council satisfies the criterion for efficiency based on its forecast for a decline in real operating expenditure per capita over the period to 2019-20.

## PALERANG COUNCIL – CIP

**NOT FIT**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Area (km²) | 5,147 | Population | 2011 | 14,850 |
| OLG Group | 11 | | (2031) | 20,550 |
| ILGRP Group | E | Merger | 2011 | 54,850 |
| | | | (2031) | 79,050 |
| Operating revenue (2013-14) | $25.5m | TCorp assessment | | Moderate FSR Negative outlook |




ILGRP options (preference in bold): **Merge with Queanbeyan Council** (yellow) or council in South East JO (all shaded).

Assessment summary:

| | |
|---|---|
| Scale and capacity | **Does not satisfy** |
| Financial criteria: | **Satisfies overall** |
| • Sustainability | Satisfies |
| • Infrastructure and service management | Satisfies |
| • Efficiency | Satisfies |

**Fit for the Future – NOT FIT**

- The council does not satisfy the scale and capacity criterion.
- The council satisfies the financial criteria overall. It satisfies the sustainability, infrastructure and service management and efficiency criteria.
- Scale and capacity is a threshold criterion which councils must satisfy to be Fit for the Future (FFTF), therefore the council is not fit.

**Scale and capacity – does not satisfy**

- The council was required to consider the ILGRP preferred option and demonstrate its proposal would be at least as good at achieving the scale and capacity objectives for the region.
- The council's proposal to stand alone is not as good as the ILGRP's preferred option to merge with Queanbeyan. When compared to the merger, the council's population of 20,550 in 2031 means it is unlikely to provide services cost-effectively to the local communities and advocate credibly and partner with government.
- A merged council is likely to have improved capabilities and a more robust revenue base, greater scope to undertake new functions and projects, improved integrated planning and regional collaboration.
- Our analysis of the business case jointly commissioned by Palerang and Queanbeyan Councils calculates the merger could provide benefits to the local communities of $51m (including a Government grant of $5m) over 20 years.

**Sustainability – satisfies**

- The council satisfies the criterion for sustainability based on its forecast to meet the benchmarks for the operating performance, building and infrastructure asset renewal and own source revenue ratios by 2019-20.
- In its proposal, the council relies on the successful application for and adoption of a special variation from 2016-17 of 40.0% cumulative over 5 years (24.0% above the rate peg).

**Infrastructure and service management - satisfies**

- The council satisfies the criterion for infrastructure and service management based on its forecast to meet the benchmarks for the infrastructure backlog, asset maintenance and debt service ratios by 2019-20.

**Efficiency - satisfies**

- The council satisfies the criterion for efficiency based on a decline in real operating expenditure per capita over the period to 2019-20.

## Benefits Realisation

The NSW Government forecast estimated savings and benefits over $17m for QPRC. On the premise of an LGA with a growing population and service demands, no forced redundancies, and retention of office and depot premises in the three main towns, the Council responded with its own predictions of a $13m productivity benefit over 10 years from backoffice efficiencies and materials and contracts savings. Table 1 below compares the 'savings'.

QPRC concludes the following over 10 years, based on our LTFP horizon:

| 'Savings' | KPMG | QPRC |
|---|---|---|
| Staff: cash | 14.1 | 3.0 |
| Staff: redeployed | | 6.0 |
| Materials | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Other (cllr fee) | 0.1 | 0.9 |
| TOTAL | 17.3 | 13.0 |

| External Costs | KPMG | QPRC |
|---|---|---|
| ICT and telecoms | 2.6 | 4.2 |
| Reviews, systems | 2.9 | 2.4 |
| (Grant) | (5.0) | (5.0) |
| NETT | 0.8 | 1.6 |

Council's view is the merger benefits (rather than savings) is better represented as:

- A rate pricing path lower than that published by the councils prior to merger
- A FTE/Resident ratio at or below levels prior to merger
- A back office support/external services FTE ratio below levels prior to merger
- An FTE growth path (from WFP) at or below levels prior to merger
- Meeting FFF sustainability benchmarks

QPRC anticipates the FTE/1000 resident ratio of 7.5 will be retained or lowered in the short to medium term. That ratio is at the lower end of OLG comparative indicators. It is expected growth in services expenditure will be less than the current 1.5-2% annual population growth. We consider savings and productivity benefits will emerge from aggregating demand for some services and products through the CBRJO which includes the ACT. Any 'savings' will be reinvested into a future-focused organisation.

# Employment

In the terms of the merger, the *Local Government Act 1993* and Award, the numbers of staff and conditions of employment of staff were protected:

- 354F - No forced redundancy of non-senior staff members for 3 years after transfer. Award employees have the protection of their existing employment terms and conditions.
- S218CA - the staff numbers existing at the time of merger are to be retained in rural centres of Bungendore, Braidwood, Captains Flat and Nerriga, but does not necessarily require the same positions to be retained in those worksites. The confirmed numbers at the former Palerang Council worksites at time of merger are ~123 FTE.

Those protections effectively required the retention of offices and depots at Bungendore and Braidwood.

Following adoption of an interim structure combining the executive and management levels of the former councils in June 2016, requests for voluntary redundancies were considered in the terms of the Award and SES contracts of employment. That interim structure allowed the placement of Directors (level 2) and Managers (level 3) in an acting capacity, pending the development of a transition structure for the new organisation following the asset, financial and service reviews. The interim structure enabled service continuity under the 'operations group' overseen by the Deputy General Manager, and the assessment of systems, assets, services, financials and culture by other senior managers, reporting directly to the Interim General Manager.

The Transition Organisation Structure was adopted in January 2017. It is aligned to the strategic pillars adopted by Council to enable line of sight of the organisation activities (services, programs and assets) to the organisation structure and accounting frameworks. The interim structure comprised 10 executive and 19 managers, reducing to 5 executive and 17 managers in the Transition Structure.

The L3-6 layers of the organisation will be placed in the service and program hierarchy with the primary accountabilities for L3-L5 articulated as:

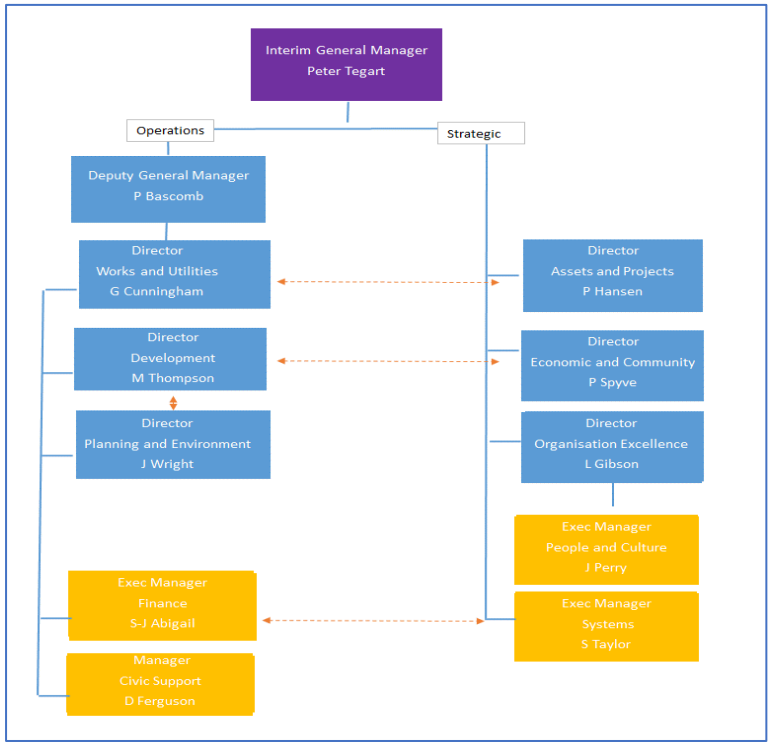
- L3 Manager: planning, policy, performance (of services)
- L4 Coordinator: systems, supervision, statutory compliance (of programs)
- L5 Team leader: coordination, customer focus, quality delivery (of activities)

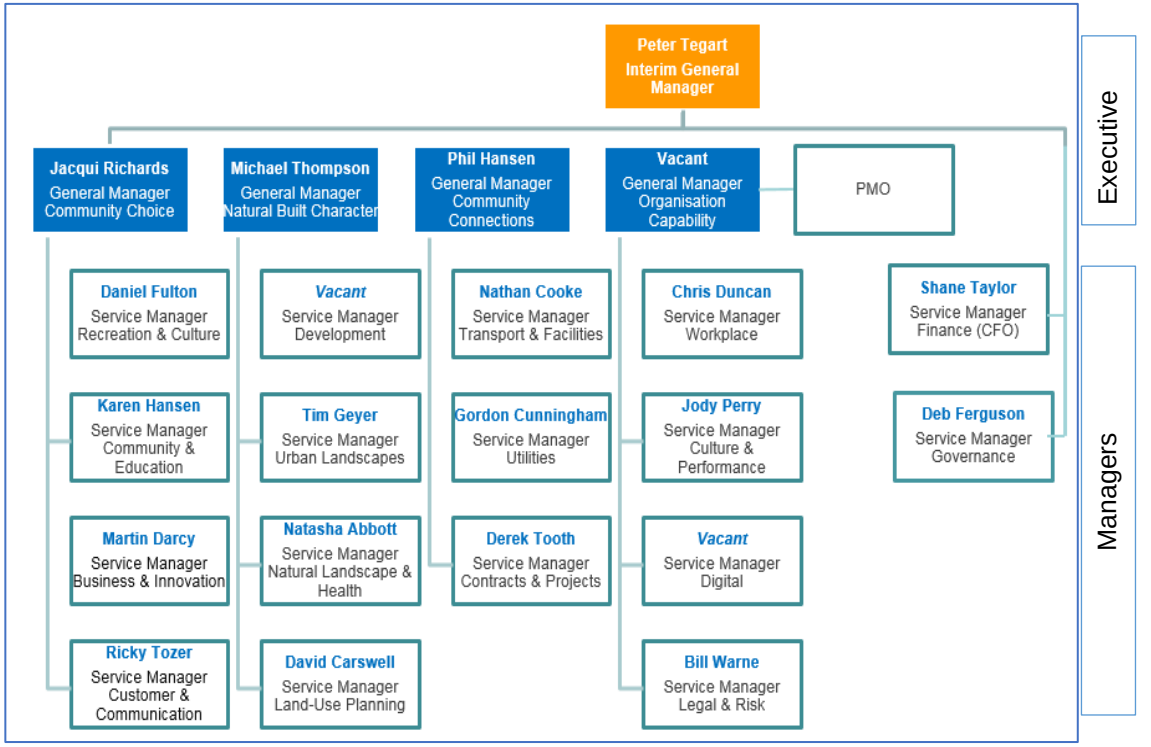
Vacancies are considered for recruitment on a business case basis, and redesign, redeployment or development options for existing staff explored.

L2 roles were externally advertised and recruited. L3-4 roles were internally advertised and placed. Employees who were substantially performing a role defined in the new structure at the date of merger, were laterally transferred in the Award bands, while other roles were available through merit selection.

At 30 June 2017, there had been a 10% turnover of staff, while 1 in 5 staff are now employed longer at QPRC than they had been at a former council.  11 voluntary separations were processed.

The Interim (June 2016) and Transition (January 2017) Structures are illustrated below at Figure 2 and 3.

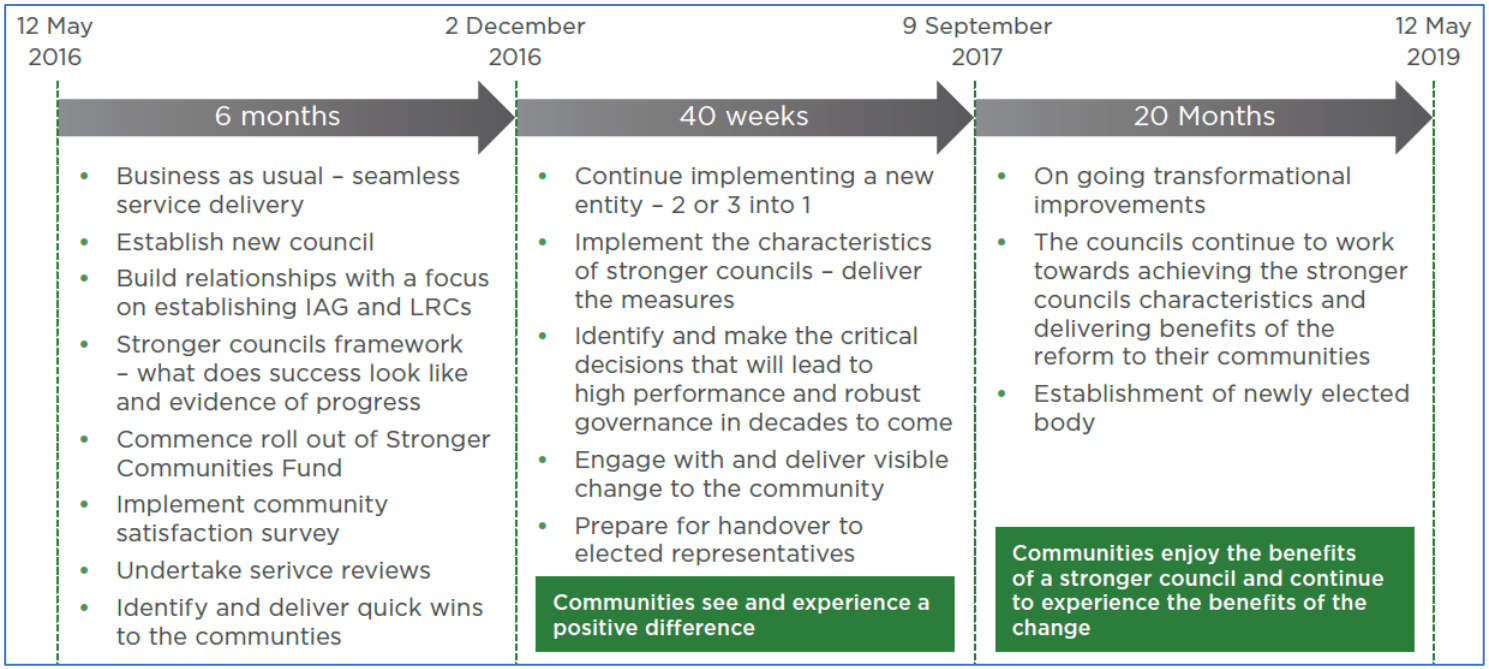


# Merger Roadmap

The merger of the former Queanbeyan City and Palerang Councils was supported by an Implementation Grant of $5m and Stronger Community Grants of $1m and $9m for community projects and infrastructure. A schedule of roadmap items (in addition to administrative tasks assigned in the Transition Plan) are summarised at Appendix 1.

The merger roadmap established by NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) outlined six key principles and 10 key result areas. Figure 4 below illustrates key merger outcomes.



The following principles were issued by DPC to provide guidance to communities and the new Councils regarding the NSW Government expectations of the implementation of the new entity. These principles also form the basis of the terms of employment and performance for senior managers. Appendix 2 summarises the progress against the key result areas.

## Principles

| Principle | Description |
|---|---|
| **Service** | Maintain seamless service delivery to communities |
| **Opportunity** | Embrace opportunities to improve services and infrastructure for communities |
| **Cohesion** | Bring together and build on the strengths of strategies, structures, staff an systems |
| **Engagement** | Inform and involve communities, staff and other partners, including industry unions, in planning and implementing change |
| **Integrity** | Ensure ethical, open and accountable governance and administration |
| **Respect** | Value the knowledge and contributions of staff, communities and other partners |

## Key Result Areas

1. Service continuity with smart service improvements
    a. There be no disruption in the provision of existing services to communities. This includes traditional services such as maintaining infrastructure, assessing development applications, protecting the environment, supporting community development and collecting waste and recycling
2. Robust governance that delivers confidence to communities
    a. Communities will be seeking confidence that the new council has robust and transparent governance systems. In the early stages of implementation, councils should have a particularly strong focus on identifying, mitigating and managing risk
3. Easy to do business with, in person and online

   a. Residents, ratepayers, businesses, suppliers and other customers will continue to be able to do business with councils without interruption. This includes the ability to access customer service centres in person – in a wider range of locations – and to do business online
4. Engaged staff who understand their roles and how they contribute to the new council
   a. A positive and service-focused organisational culture. This will include staff feeling secure in their employment, understanding their roles in the new council and being excited by the potential for development and other opportunities.
5. Involved communities who have their say
   a. Clear and consistent communication and meaningful engagement with communities will be a crucial component to a successful implementation process. Includes development of Community and Staff Engagement Plan
6. Communities can readily identify with their new council
   a. Grow a shared identity for a new council is the development of the new visual identity. This includes elements such as the logo, colour palette and other visual identifiers
7. A shared vision and direction for the whole community
   a. A succinct statement of vision and priorities will have been prepared for the new council. The statement will provide high level guidance for the early period of the new council
8. Rates maintained within existing pathways and resources used wisely to serve the entire council area
   a. Rating structures and categories in place prior to the establishment of the new council will be maintained for a period of four years. This ensures there are no changes to rate paths for the first year of the government's committed four-year rate path freeze for new councils.
9. Expected benefits which are clear, measurable and on target
   a. Communities will have a strong interest in seeing the benefits of the new council. By the end of December 2016, the Implementation Plan must include a clear statement of local benefits, with actions to achieve those benefits.
10. A newly elected council working for the whole community
   a. The Act requires the first election of a new council to be conducted by the NSW Electoral Commission in September 2017.

# Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) Support

DPC coordinated regular workshops with the Administrators, Interim GMs and PMO Leads for the purpose of setting the Premier and Minister's expectation of the new Councils, providing guidance and resources through the due diligence phase, and introducing contemporary approaches to technology, governance, community engagement and communications to ensure the new entities were future focussed. As part of its support to the newly created Councils, Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) appointed a Liaison Officer (LO) to each entity.

A comprehensive 'Implementation Action' checklist was issued by DPC at the first Administrators and General Managers workshop in May 2016. This checklist provided instruction and guidance to the numerous "due diligence" processes associated with creating the new entity. These were incorporated into the Transition Plan.

Merged councils reported to DPC weekly initially, then fortnightly, monthly and bi-monthly on status of implementation and progress against the roadmap. Forums were held bi-monthly in Sydney for Administrators and IGMs hosted by DPC, while other forums on ICT, governance and communications were hosted by DPC or OLG. DPC transferred the oversight of the merged councils' transition to OLG in July 2017.

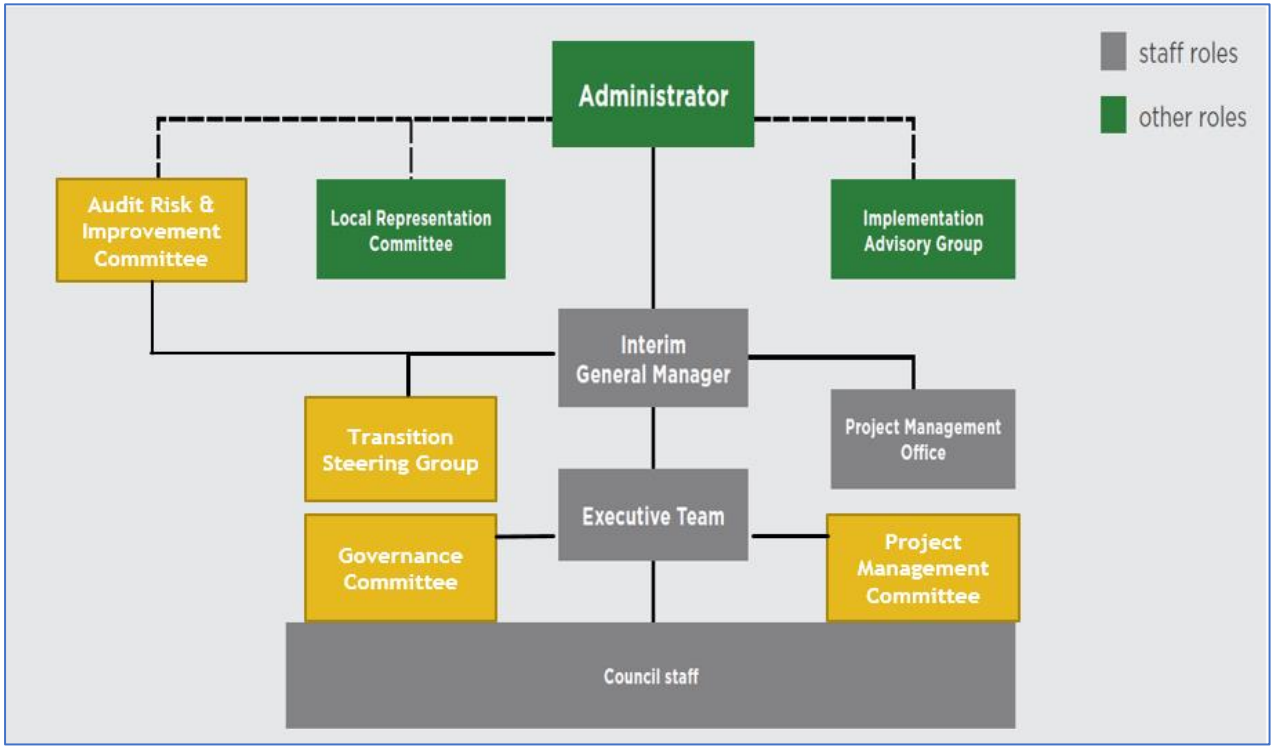






# Governance Framework

A Local Representation Committee (LRC) comprising four of each of the former councillors was established to assist the Administrator in representation on community committees and functions and provide feedback on strategies, plans and community engagement. In addition, the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) comprising three independent community members and a member of the LRC was set up to commission audits and reviews of the new council systems, risks and financials. ARIC also commissioned audits of the progress in implementation of merger actions. To assist the implementation of the merger, an advisory group (IAG) comprising two members of the LRC and the chair of ARIC received reports and monitored progress. Agendas and minutes of the decisions of the LRC, ARIC, IAG and the staff Executive were stored in councils EDRMS. Staff formed the Project Management Committee to monitor transitional and infrastructure projects. Figure 5 illustrates the relationships of committees.




The LRC members were:

- Pete Harrison – Chair
- Peter Bray AM (Deputy Chair)
- Paul Cockram
- Jamie Cregan
- Trevor Hicks
- Mark Schweikert
- Trudy Taylor
- Sue Whelan OAM

# Transition (Implementation) Plan

The Transition Plan (TP) contained administrative and legal actions mandated by DPC, and projects to review stages, plans and processes and form new approaches to services and business. The TP was adopted in October 2016 outlining a three phase (interim, transition, and transformation) approach to the merger over 3 years.




1. ***Interim*** – bringing the two former council organisations together to enable:
    a. Business as usual
    b. Extension of due diligence/stocktake program
    c. Establishment of a transition project office
    d. Development of Implementation Plan
    e. Capacity for the executive and management group to invest in the transition of people, systems, policy and process
    f. Review of finances, services, assets and technology
    g. Commence ICT installations and upgrades
2. ***Transition*** – building on the review of services, assets and technology to:
    a. Embed actions from the Implementation Plan
    b. Shape the organisation around range and mode of delivery of services and assets
    c. Potentially centralise some functions by locality
    d. Implement technology solutions
    e. Explore expansion of type and reach of services, and modes of delivery
    f. Build and renew assets in accord with merger grant and asset plans
    g. Engage in potential regional delivery of services with Joint Organisation
    h. Migration to a new salary system, staff development and personnel policies
    i. Preparation of draft Resourcing Strategy
    j. Prepare new Community Strategic Plan

3. ***Transformation***: reflect the ambitions of the new Council through:
    a. Potentially shaping the organisation around thematics of the Community Strategic Plan
    b. Piloting and embedding the innovation and technology opportunities explored during previous phases

CAMMS were engaged to draft the TP, analyse services, populate the Operational Plan (OP), incorporate performance measures identified in the Stronger Councils Framework (SCF), draft the workforce strategy, and load projects into its software (global collaboration tool). The software forms the basis of monitoring and reporting TP progress to the IAG, and will enable reports on the OP and projects.

The TP identified a number of Key Focus Areas:

- People - supporting staff in transitioning to the new organisation and adjusting to reconfigured responsibilities, reporting lines and the cultural shift associated with the dynamics of QPRC.
- Community - communication and engagement initiatives to build and maintain community trust and confidence
- Services - look internally at ways to improve efficiency to deliver its strategic outcomes at the level expected by its community
- Service efficiency and organisational performance – how the various services were delivered and the associated costs continues and will provide input to a range of service improvement strategies, including reviews of supply chain and service delivery methodologies.
- Digital transformation - aimed to seamlessly connect people, processes and technology. Digital transformation focus areas includes accessibility, mobility, data quality, and expansive service provision, engaged and satisfied customers
- Procurement - procurement practices of the two former entities are rationalised and value for money solutions are implemented. Partnering with the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CBRJO) is also expected to provide benefits as the collective buying power
- Information and Communication Technology - the standard operating environments of the two entities were quite different with regard to the hardware and software. Independent consultancy determining the desired future state, in QPRC's ICT Strategic Plan. TechnologyOne and CAMMS software has been procured as primary suppliers, with implementation scheduled over next 2 years
- Assets and Asset Management - QPRC has assets of over $1bn. QPRC's approach to Asset Management has been guided by independent assessment of its assets' condition, backlog and service levels which will inform the revisions of the asset management plans and the consolidated long term financial plan (LTFP)

Community feedback to date has been very positive and provides evidence QPRC has been successful in ensuring no the loss of momentum in existing commitments. QPRC continues to be mindful of to build community trust and confidence in its capability and commitment to deliver best practice services within its resources and in accord with adopted service levels.

A service and program framework based on current service levels was adopted, against which the organisation structure, budgets, accounting framework and staff positons have been based. The elected council will consider changes to levels of service and asset standards to take effect from 2018 based on feedback received from the community engagement undertaken in early 2017 (see section 10).

Council engaged with Service NSW to pilot a number of online transactions (tree applications) and rate payments, and participate in the ‘easy to business’ program.

Investment is scheduled in an Asset Management System (AMS) capable of automating some operational workflows including routine and planned maintenance programs, and responding to unplanned and urgent activity, Customer Action Requests, and a mobile capability for onsite performance and condition monitoring.

A Project Management Office (PMO) has been established to manage the Transition Project. The PMO is located at the rear of the Visitor Information Centre at Queanbeyan and will accommodate a number of individual staff members seconded to the project, together with multiple project teams of staff (identified supply chain stakeholders) on short term process improvement projects. Council embarked on upskilling its key staff involved in Transition projects in the Agile and Scrum methods.

DPC established a benefits capture tool to monitor cash and productivity savings. A Summary of Nett Costs and Savings is illustrated at Figure 6.

## 4. Net

| | Year 1. Fin Yr (16/17) $ '000 | Year 2. Fin Yr (17/18) $ '000 | Year 3. Fin Yr (18/19) $ '000 | Year 4. Fin Yr (19/20) $ '000 | Year 5. Fin Yr (20/21) $ '000 | Year 6. Fin Yr (21/22) $ '000 | Year 7. Fin Yr (22/23) $ '000 | Year 8. Fin Yr (23/24) $ '000 | Year 9. Fin Yr (24/25) $ '000 | Year 10. Fin Yr (25/26) $ '000 | Total Actual $ Value $ '000 | Total NPV $ Value $ '000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Costs** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ICT Costs | 1,896 | 2,977 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4,874 | 4,215 |
| Workforce Restructure Costs | 277 | 771 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,048 | 896 |
| Other Transition Costs | 1,805 | 1,635 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3,440 | 3,012 |
| **Total - Costs** | 3,978 | 5,383 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9,362 | 8,123 |
| **2. Savings** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Councillor Savings | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 900 | 565 |
| Salaries and Wages Savings | 200 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 2,900 | 1,792 |
| Material, Contract and Other Savings | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 2,450 | 1,538 |
| **Total - Savings** | 535 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 6,250 | 3,896 |
| **3. Efficiencies** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Efficiencies | 300 | - | - | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 9,565 | 6,825 |
| **Total - Efficiencies** | 300 | - | - | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 9,565 | 6,825 |
| **4. Net** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Costs | (3,978) | (5,383) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | (9,362) | (8,123) |
| Savings | 535 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 635 | 6,250 | 3,896 |
| Efficiencies | 300 | - | - | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 1,324 | 9,565 | 5,264 |
| **Total - Net [(Savings + Efficiencies) - (Costs)]** | (3,143) | (4,748) | 635 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 6,453 | 1,036 |
| **New Council Implementation Grant** | 5,000 | | | | | | | | | | 5,000 | 4,566 |
| **Net + New Council Implementation Grant** | 1,857 | (4,748) | 635 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 1,959 | 11,453 | 5,602 |
| | | | | | | | | | | TARGET | 13,000 | |
| NOTE 1: QPRC's agreed 10 year target is $13m. | | | | | | | | | | SHORTFALL $ | 1,547 | |

QPRC is expected to experience some growth in staff numbers due to additional and significant asset grants, and investment in asset renewals to reduce the backlog identified in the financial strategy, together with a population growing to 76,000 - bringing demand for expanded or additional services. That growth will be outlined in the workforce strategy. The Benefits Realisation for QPRC will be via more efficient and productive methods of service delivery, the merging of the two entities is not expected to produce significant “cash” savings.

# Community and Staff Engagement

A Community and Staff Communications and Engagement Plan was adopted by Council in July 2016 .

This plan was reviewed in early 2017 and then in mid-2017 to measure progress. The majority of activities listed in the Plan were achieved. Some of these included:

- Regular Administrator's Column in local newspapers
- Fortnightly advertising in local newspapers
- Preparation of bi-monthly community newsletter, distributed to 28,000 properties.
- Development of a weekly e-newsletter
- Continuation of social media presence
- Development of consolidated website (right)
- Community meetings at Queanbeyan, Braidwood and Bungendore (nine completed as at 1 July).
- Introduction of live streaming for Council meetings.

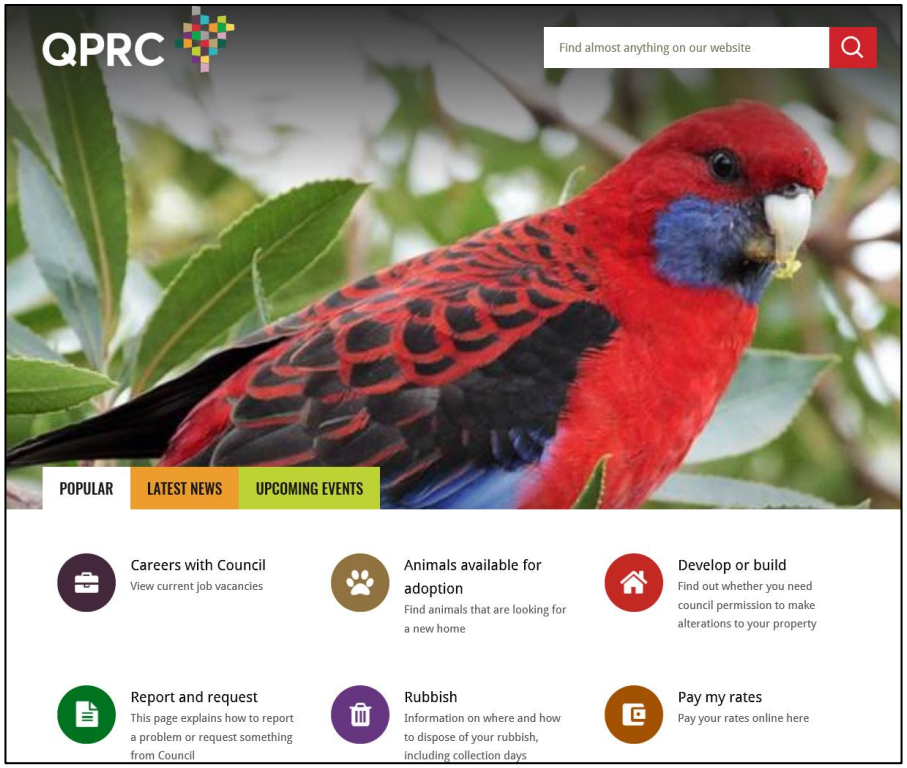
The document also looked at internal communications and ensuring staff were updated during the merger process. This included weekly staff updates from the Interim General Manager, monthly staff newsletters and quarterly staff get togethers.



A business case was developed and accepted for the implementation of the Engagement HQ online community engagement tool. Council implemented the online tool in February 2017 and it played a key role in Council's engagement for the Community Strategic Plan and a range of other documents. Between February and 30 June 2017, Council attracted more than 550 registered participants.

A new approach to community engagement was undertaken in early 2017 by consultants 'Culture Capital' to capture community views on levels of service, aspirations for the area and economic development. A community survey was conducted by JWS along with the other merged councils in July 2016, gauging community awareness of the merger and satisfaction with services. The results of that survey and the later community engagement informed a report to Council in June 2017, in turn shaping the Community Engagement Strategy.

While initially deploying a splash page with links to the former council websites, in July a single new-look QPRC website was launched (see opposite).




## Brand

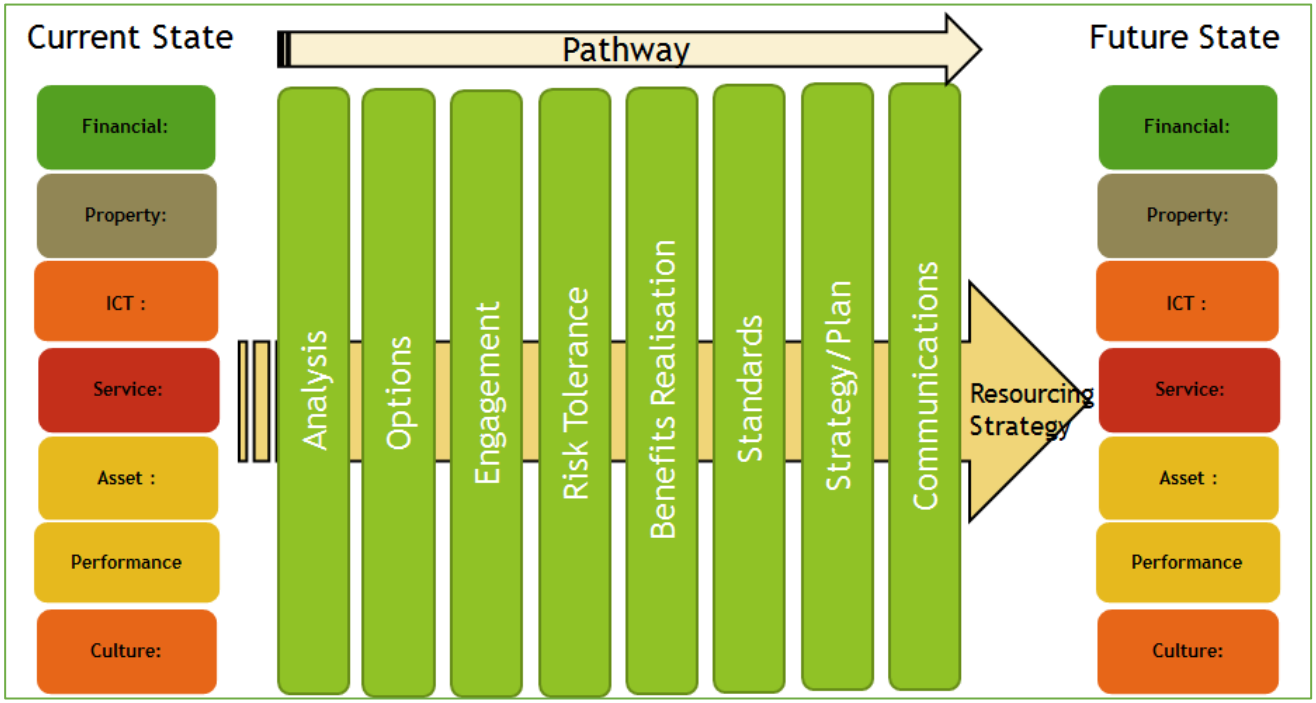
Consultants were engaged to work with the community to discern a common sense of identity and work towards a 'brand' that drew the communities of Queanbeyan-Palerang together. The result – *'one heart, many parts'* resonated with the community, with a logo that showed the colour, diversity and spread of QPR's many parts as 'tiles', organised into the geographic shape of the region (see opposite).

QPRC

# Stocktake

A stocktake or 'environmental scan' was undertaken as an analysis of council's systems of asset and financial management; the scope, scale and delivery of services; the planning and rollout of technology and workforce support; the decision-making framework; and subsequent integration into the Resourcing Strategy. Independent consultants such as Percy Allen, GHD and Noetic undertook those reviews. Key governance policies were revised and adopted. These were used to set the governance and strategic foundations for the incoming council. An initial assessment of the suite of strategies, plans and strategic resolutions of the former councils has informed QPRC which plans are due for review, as well as which actions or projects from those plans deliver best value through a quadruple bottom line (QBL) filter before consideration in the next set of Integrated Plans. The strategies, plans and policies have been aligned under the strategic directions of the new council (community, connection, character, choice and capability).

The Resourcing Strategy, based on the drivers, condition and pressures identified in the strategy reviews, and nominating the capacity and capability of the merged council, was adopted in July.



# Services

The services of the former councils were recorded and harmonised, and mapped into a Service-Program-Activity framework adopted in January 2017. They describe the new future-focussed objectives of the Services, the legislative and policy drivers; then the respective outputs, scope, deliverables and performance measures for the Programs. The framework was arranged under the strategic pillars (community, choice, character, connection and capability), describing the role of council as provider, funder, regulator, facilitator or advocate. The elected council will consider reviews of the current levels of service and subsequent financial and resourcing impacts, for potential application from FY2018.

| Prog No. | Program | Activity | Output | Description | Council's Role in delivering outputs | Scope/ Deliverable | Performance | Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22.1 | **Development Assessment** | 22.1.1 | **Development Applications** | Process and assessment of all development applications within statutory timeframe | Provider | Xx Development applications pa<br>DA turnaround report to NSW DPE annually | dwellings development applications within statutory timeframe<br>DAs lodged and assessed online via e-portal | >90%<br>>70% |
| | | 22.1.3 | **Regional Panel Applications** | Coordinate processing and assessment of applications lodged with JRPP | Regulator | | | |
| 22.2 | **Subdivision Assessment** | 22.2.1 | **Subdivision Applications** | Process and assessment of subdivision applications and engineering plans | Provider | Xx subdivision applications pa | Assessment of all subdivision applications within statutory timeframe | >85% |
| 22.3 | **Subdivision Certification** | 22.3.1 | **Subdivision Certificates** | Process and issue of subdivision certificates | Regulator | Xx certificate applications pa | requests processed and provided within XX days | >90% |
| | | 22.3.2 | **Subdivision Construction Certificates** | Process and issue of certificates | Regulator | Xx certificate applications pa | requests processed and provided within XX days | >90% |
| 22.4 | **Development Contribution Plans** | 22.4.1 | **Development Contribution Plans** | Develop, review and account for s94 contribution plans, for civic infrastructure and property | Regulator | Developer charges levied in line with contribution plans | Compliance with all legislative and Council requirements | 100% |
| | | 22.4.2 | **Section 64 Development Servicing Plans** | Develop, review and account for Section 64 Development Servicing Plans for water and sewerage infrastructure | Regulator | Developer charges levied in line with development services plans | Compliance with all legislative and Council requirements | 100% |
| | | 22.4.3 | **Local Planning Agreements** | Develop, review and account for local planning agreements | Promoter & Facilitator | Developer charges levied in line with each local planning agreement | Compliance with all legislative and Council requirements | 100% |

# Stronger Communities Fund Projects

Following the merger, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council was provided with $15m from the NSW Government. Of this, $5m was to cover merger implementation costs, while the remaining $10m was provided to fund community infrastructure projects.

Council sought expressions of interest from community groups and organisations to allocate $1m of the funding, and were assessed by an independent panel with views sought from the LRC. This saw 51 community groups across the Local Government Area receive up to $50,000 to progress a range of projects. Appendix 2 lists those grant recipients and projects.

The remaining $9m was allocated to 23 projects for community infrastructure. These projects will be undertaken over the coming three years and are summarised below:

| Project | Funding $,000 | Project | Funding $,000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Araluen section 355 committee - public facilities | 15 | Streetscape improvements, Karabar | 46 |
| Eastern Pools upgrades | 400 | Queanbeyan Park central playground | 250 |
| Town centre improvements Braidwood | 500 | Glebe Park Playground Queanbeyan | 90 |
| Town centre improvements Bungendore | 500 | Henderson Road Recreation Area | 125 |
| Rusten House Queanbeyan | 550 | Aquatic Centre paint and restore | 150 |
| Dog Park Googong | 125 | Seiffert Oval spectator entrance | 200 |
| Refurbish netball courts Karabar | 175 | Upgraded community facilities Captains Flat | 100 |
| Wet play area Queanbeyan Aquatic | 450 | Lascelles street upgrade Braidwood | 800 |
| Showground Grandstand Queanbeyan | 350 | Upgrade lighting Margaret Donohue | 200 |
| Seiffert Oval Lights Queanbeyan | 200 | Queens Bridge approach enhancement | 200 |
| Braidwood Rec Ground Stage 2 | 300 | River path incl. low level footbridge | 760 |
| Bungendore Rec Ground Stage 1 | 1,500 | | |

# Performance - Stronger Councils Framework (SCF)

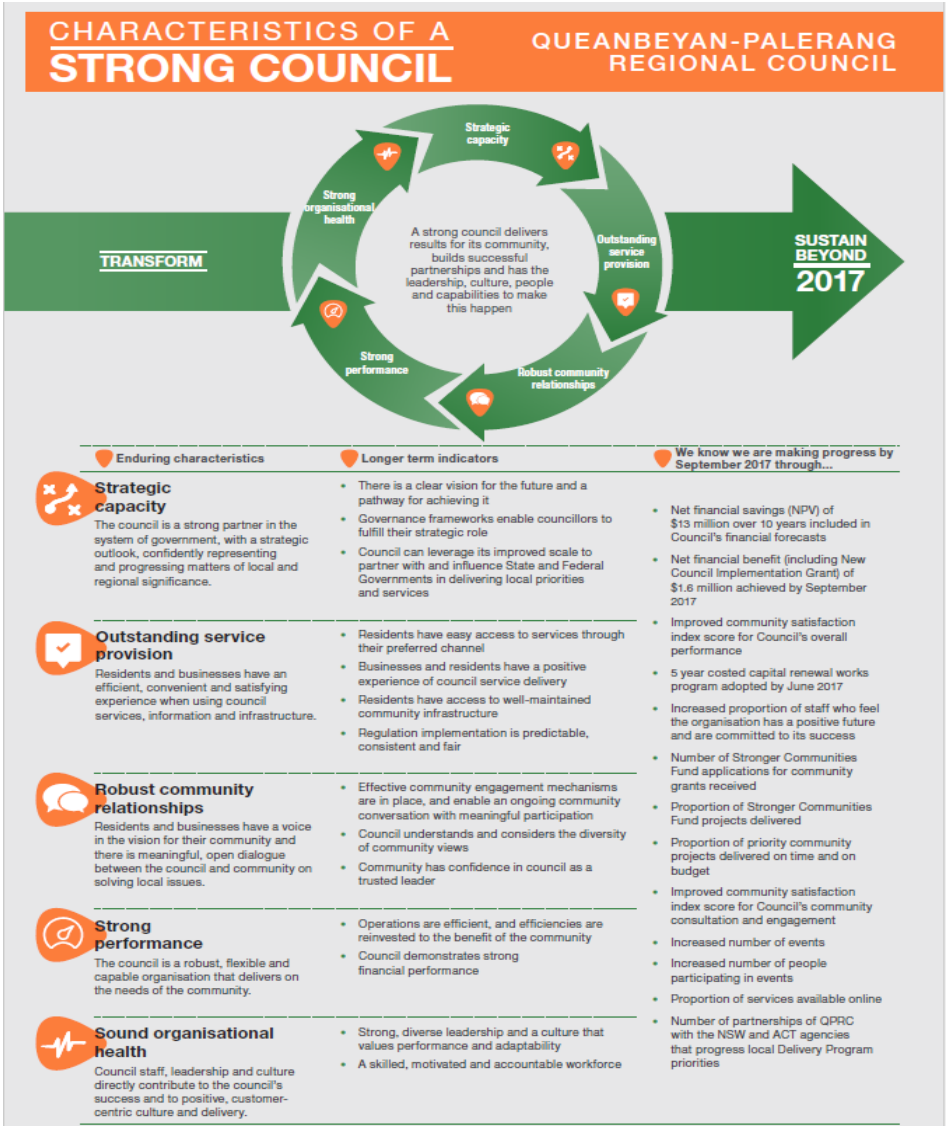
DPC established a performance framework for the merged councils that identified a mission and a standard set of characteristics for the councils – strategic capacity, service provision, community relationships, strong performance and organisational health. Figure 7 illustrates the framework.

In January 2017 Council adopted further performance measures to the SCF based on surveys, including a monthly 1:10 client callback to check the satisfaction with responses to customer requests. A set of other measures have been drafted with the service statements published with the Operational Plan.

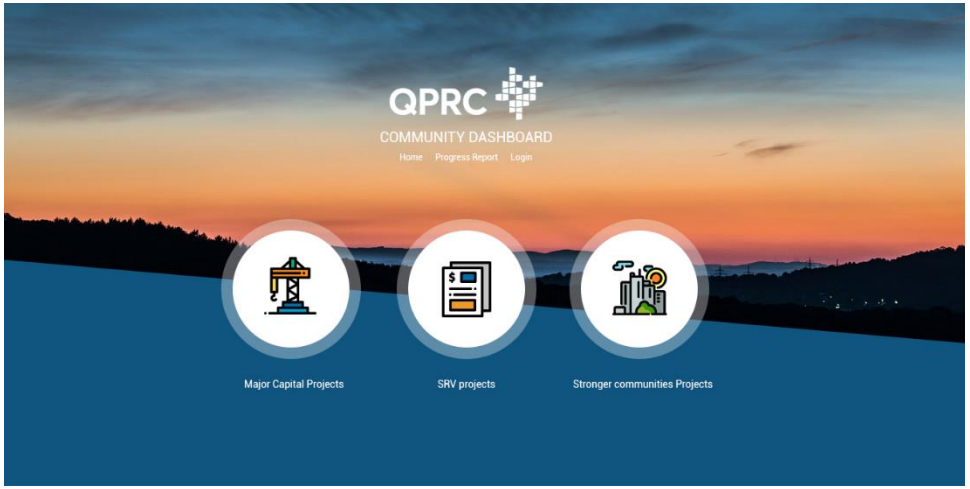
Progress against the measures will be reported to the elected council.

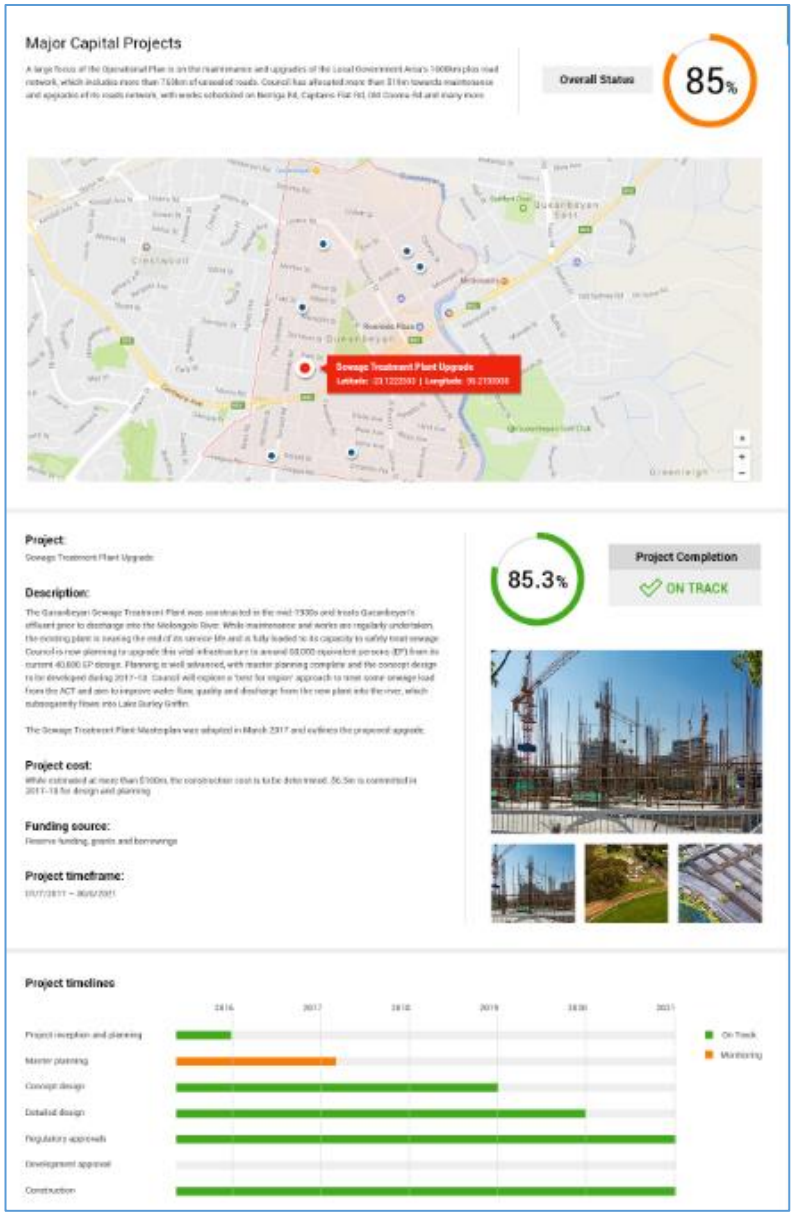
Performance measures and targets have been drafted with the development of the service and program framework, some of which correspond with other performance reporting required to government agencies, such as DA turnarounds. Table 3 summarises progress against the SCF.

| Measure | Progress |
|---|---|
| Community satisfaction | JWS Survey August 2016 - 58% |
| Capital renewal works | Adopted with Resourcing Strategy |
| Positive culture | ICT and Change Management Surveys; Culture survey August 2017 |
| SCF applications received | 103 applications; 51 grants |
| Engagement satisfaction | 53% - baseline survey Sept 2016 |
| Events numbers | 3 Street parties, 4 Activation events; 2 Festivals |
| Online services | Single website launched; SNSW applications; DA tracking |
| QPRC partnerships | Host council for CBRJO; part of Regional Leaders Executive with NSW agencies; ACT MoU executed; Icon Water MoU draft |



Council has worked with CAMMS to design a project and performance monitoring tool called a community dashboard. The Key Performance indicators published with the service statements will be published on the web



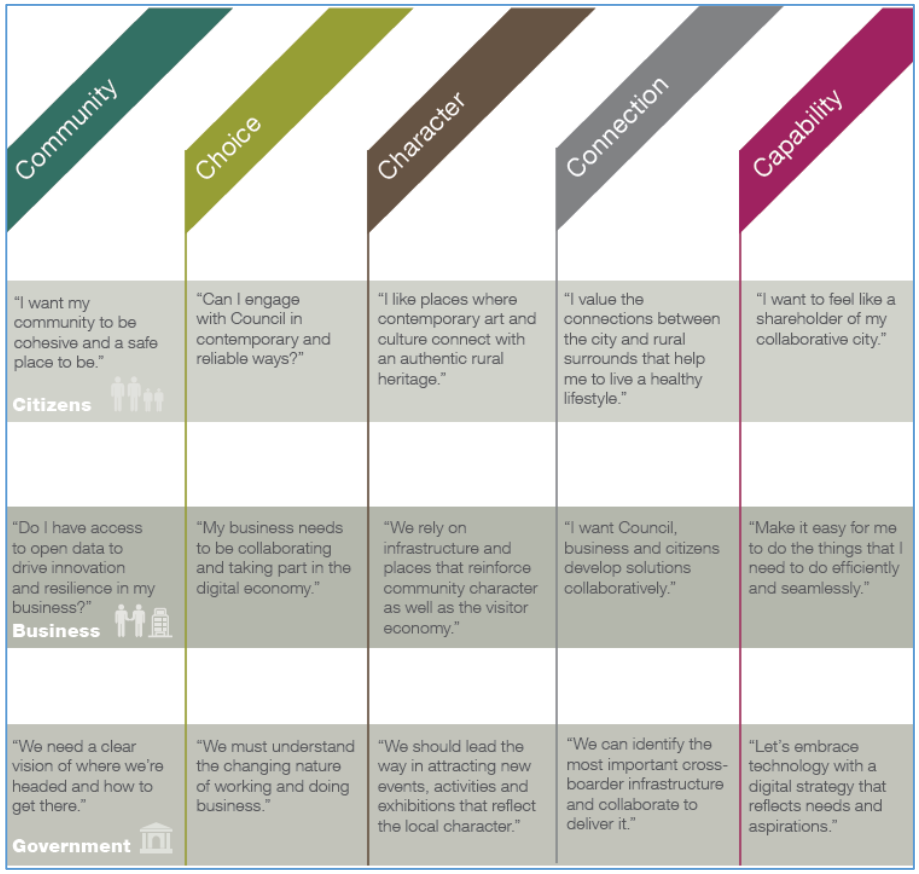
# Strategic Directions

Council collected the aspirations previously identified by the former councils with local businesses, community groups and government agencies. These were expressed in their respective Community Strategic Plans.

Those aspirations were collated into the five strategic 'pillars' of Community, Choice, Character, Connection and Capability in a January 2017 report seeking:

- A safe, harmonious and healthy *community*
- A diverse, resilient and smart economy that creates *choice* and job opportunities
- A clean, green community that cherishes its natural and physical *character*
- A well *connected* community with good infrastructure enhancing quality of life
- A *capable* organisation that leads a community which is engaged and participative

A Strategic Directions discussion paper was exhibited in March 2017 resulting in the views (Figure 8 opposite) being expressed by the community.




The Services and Program Framework and Organisation Structure have been designed around those pillars. Each pillar has a number of goals expressed on service statements that will be extended into strategic actions in the Community Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Directions guided the 2017-18 Operational Plan and together with information on services and visioning from an integrated community engagement exercise between February-April 2017, will form a base for the new Council when elected in September 2017, to set its vision and prepare a 10 year Community Strategic Plan for the newly merged Council.

# Financial Position

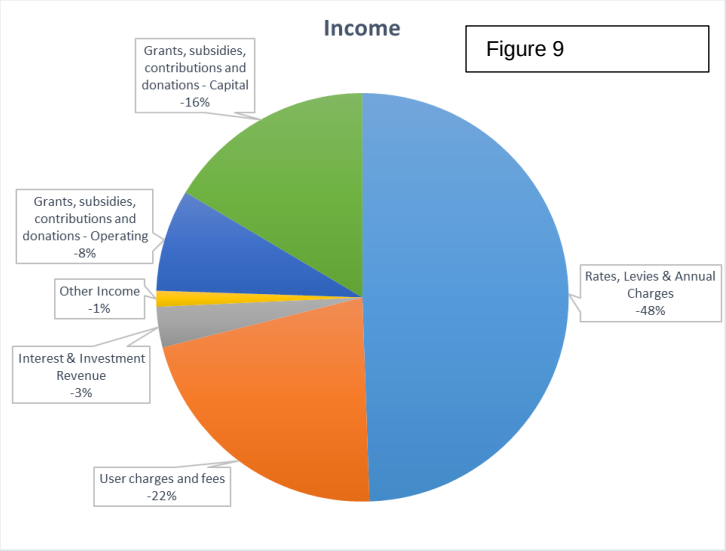
The 2016/17 Operational Plan and Budget was a combination of the former councils' plans, with a projected budget of $286k. Savings over $600k were identified as a result of the merger, including insurance premiums, councillor fees and bulk materials costs such as water treatment chemicals. Following investment in repairs and extended services to the eastern pools before the 2017 season, the budget deficit was contained to $140k.

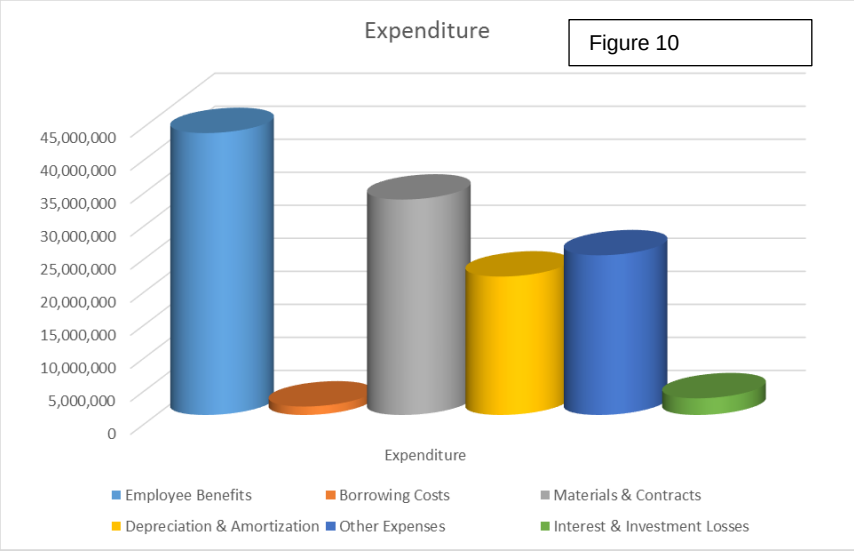
The 2017/18 Budget is $211m comprising $137m operating and $74m capital expenditures, and projects a modest surplus of $13k.

As reported to Council, the $5m merger grant will be used to invest in resetting organisation culture and capability. The grant will primarily be used to invest in new technologies to integrate enterprise software systems; expand the scope of self-serve enquiry/self-heal services for residents; online applications and transacting; introduce remote access to meetings (eg web streaming); establish smart hub sites at council offices; and improve mobility for access to information and delivery of services by staff.

The 2015/16 Financial Statement of the former Queanbeyan and Palerang Councils were audited and reported to Council in December 2016 and March 2017. As a result of accounting treatments required for the merger period, 52 weeks of rate revenues were brought to account, while 46 weeks of expenditure (to 12 May 2016) were recognised in 2015/16. The reverse will apply to 2016/17. Notes to account will explain that and federal grant treatments.

Figures 9 and 10 below illustrate the mix of revenues received and expenditures.



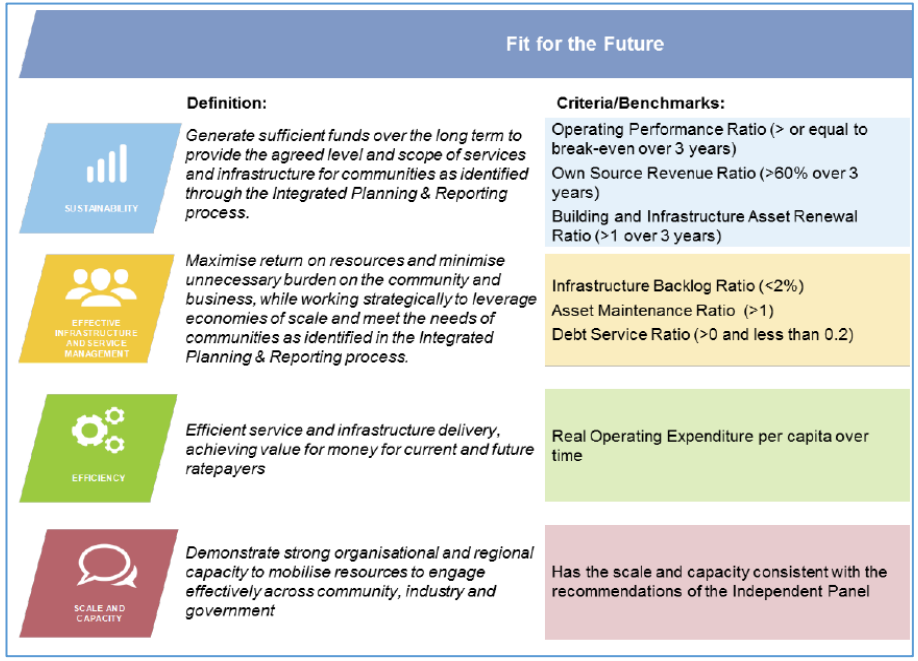
## Financial Forecasts

The Financial Strategy adopted in 2016 and reinforced with the financial plan in July 2017 was based on the following principles:

- achieve financial sustainability,
- manage the asset backlog to prevent an infrastructure crisis,
- preserve essential public services in line with population growth
- keep rates, fees and charges affordable
- borrow at acceptable levels in line with intergenerational equity and
- meet financial benchmarks to be fit for future (FFF)

For merged councils, the Fit for Future (FFF) financial benchmarks (opposite) are required to be met over 10 years.

The financial plan has scheduled significant capital expenditure (around $500m in the next term), drawing on 46% debt and 38% grant funding. As a consequence, the 10 year forecasts of asset backlog under 2% and debt service at under 8% in that period, are within the FFF benchmarks, while proposed rate increases around 1%pa (in real terms) and property returns, accomplish the aim to keep rates and charges affordable.



# Key Issues, Achievements and Highlights

| Community | Choice | Character | Connection | Capability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Expanded lifeguard services and improved assets: BGD and BWD pools | • Community and business interaction: QCBD Transformation Strategy and Business Connect forums | • Commenced town centre streetscape and parks beautification: BGD and BWD | • Opened refurbished QE2 Park with Governor-General. Park received ISCA ward and NSW/ACT Park of Year | • Executed MOU with ACT government for cross border infrastructure connectivity |
| • Community Christmas street events: QBN, BGD, BWD<br>• Q-One Activation events: QBN, BGD, BWD, CF<br>• Canberra Symphony<br>• River Festival | • Shop Local initiative in Bungendore and Braidwood | • Concerns raised regarding E4 zoning in parts of former Palerang | • Compiled comprehensive asset renewal and upgrade schedule for consideration of assessment panel for $9m SCF asset grant | • Established heads of agreement with agency as tenant within QBN head office |
| • Major infrastructure projects nominated by the community and the Assessment Panel under the $9m second round of the Stronger Communities Fund placed on exhibition for community consultation. | • Mobile library services to remote parts of the region; | • Community opposition to proposed Jupiter wind farm project. Council opposed<br>• Community opposition to proposed waste facility in QBN, to be determined by JRPP<br>• Community opposition to planning proposal for memorial park | • Independent panel approved environmental impact assessment for EDE. Council approved loan funding of $36m towards the $86m project | • Mapped and populated current service statements, standards and resource costs into CAMMs to enable modelling of modified levels of service impacts |

| Community | Choice | Character | Connection | Capability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Carwoola Bush Fire, 17 February - 11 homes destroyed, 12 damaged and 45 outbuildings destroyed. QPRC staff involved in front line incident response and the establishment and staffing of the Recovery Centre. QPRC Bushfire Appeal established within 24 hours ~ $200k raised and distributed | • Meet the Maker arts trail and reconciliation walk | • Established heads of agreement with consortium to redevelop QCBD sites and civic plaza | • Commenced integrated transport strategy<br>• Commenced review and harmonisation of asset management system<br>• Adopted Sports Facilities Strategy<br>• Adopted Regional Sports Masterplan | • Completed Mobility Survey – exploring options to become more of a digital workplace, and utilise mobile applications to improve delivery of services<br>• New banking services and bill payment contract awarded<br>• Awarded legal services panel contract |
| • Proposed Queanbeyan Memorial Park (Old Cooma Road/Burra rural area) of concern to a number of residents | | • Commenced engagement and public domain design and connectivity with QCBD masterplan | • Draft MoU with Icon Water to prepare concepts for upgrade to QBN STP and accommodate some effluent flows from ACT<br>• Draft IWCMP | • One-stop shop for community engagement with Council established with launch of “Your Voice QPRC” – a dedicated online engagement hub |
| • Significant media regarding murder of service station attendant in Queanbeyan by local teenagers. Teenagers were known to staff through Youth Centre. Staff assisted police with enquiries | | • Significant DA approvals including: Stage 2 Googong; Seniors Living BGD; | • Nearing completion of Kings Highway upgrade near River Forest Road<br>• Commenced designs for MR92 upgrade<br>• Roads upgrades: Captains Flat; Wanna Wanna | • Awarded contract for concept plans for design of QBN head office<br>• Review of water and sewer pricing |
| | | • Regional heritage awards<br>• Refurbishment Rusten House approved | • Continued tests for potable water from fractured rock BGD | • Single finance system, PO Box, phone number and website: July 2017 |

BUNGENDORE CONNECT



Water: Drilling for source in fractured rock -

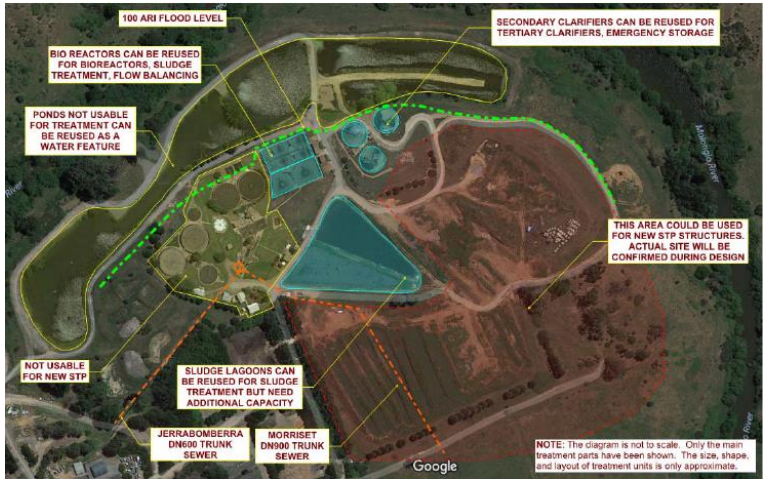


Roads: Wanna Wanna; Captains Flat, Kings Hwy



Artist's impression – Old Cooma Rd, Ellerton Drive Extension intersection

Plan: EDE environmental and funding approval




Planning: QSTP masterplan

QPRC



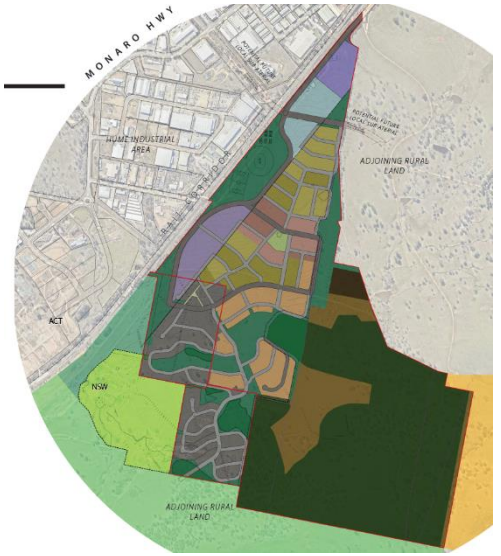
Fires: Carwoola, and Currundooley



Events: Symphony in new QE2 Park; ACT/NSW Park of Year




Events: Street Parties -QBN, BGD, BWD




Planning: South Jerra

# What's Next

The election for the 11 councillors will be held on 9 September, administered by the NSW Electoral Office at a cost around $350k. The councillors will elect a mayor from amongst them for 2 years. In line with the amended Local Government Act, councillors will be required to take an oath of office and undertake professional development for their public role. The program for the conduct of the election, candidate briefings, and the induction of councillors was reported to Council in June and July 2017.

Some of the key early issues for attention of the new council include:

- Service levels and harmonisation
- Community strategic plan and delivery program
- Policy reviews
- Priority and delivery of major capital projects including Nerriga Road and Old Cooma Road construction; Queanbeyan sewerage treatment plant upgrade; redevelopment of Queanbeyan head office and civic plaza

The Resourcing Strategy outlined common drivers and pressures on the organisation, and proposed a number of responses based on the current capacity and capability of the organisation:

- Invest in organisational culture and the digital workplace to improve productivity and redeploy staff to front line services
- Continue the transformational actions identified in the merger transition plan
- Continue the investment in a single integrated enterprise software platform, through TechnologyOne and CAMMS
- Increase levels of infrastructure maintenance and renewal to reduce the asset backlog
- Revise the asset 'intervention condition levels' and asset standards at affordable and acceptable levels
- Revise and consolidate the asset management plans
- Review levels of service (frequency, quality, location and mode) and examine impacts on budgets
- Expand levels of capital expenditure and debt and consider a general rate SRV following the rate path freeze and merger staffing protections, to accommodate service expectations and asset backlog
- Having regard to asset and service settings established by elected council, publish the organisation's appetite for risk
- Update the financial plan following elected council's review of assets and service settings
- Continue development of monitoring and reporting framework for organisational performance and risk

# Appendix 1 - Roadmap

| No. | Roadmap for Phase 1. | % Complete |
|---|---|---|
| | **Due by End of September 2016 (Items 1 – 8)** | |
| **1.** | Identify process and timing for moving to new salary structure. | 100 |
| **2.** | Adopt an operational plan, budget and fees and charges for 2016-17. | 100 |
| **3.** | Issue rates notices. | 100 |
| **4.** | Document service levels and plan a review process. | 100 |
| **5.** | Adopt a code of conduct. | 100 |
| **6.** | **Commence** development of an organisational structure, including consultation with Consultative Committee. | 100 |
| **7.** | Deliver initial community engagement activities. | 100 |
| **8.** | **Continue** to deliver the Implementation Plan and monitor and report progress. | 100 |
| | **Due by End of December 2016 (Items 9 – 13)** | |
| **9.** | Adopt the logo and other key elements of the visual identity, prepared with community input. | 100 |
| **10.** | Incorporate the statement of local benefits into the Implementation Plan. | 80 |
| **11.** | Prepare the audited financial reports for the former councils. | 100 |
| **12.** | Continue to deliver the Implementation Plan and monitor and report progress. | 100 |
| **13.** | Prepare and adopt a statement of vision and priorities, with community input. | 100 |
| | **Due by End of March 2017 (Items 14 – 16)** | |
| **14.** | Prepare the draft operational plan 2017-18, including integrated budget, with community input | 100 |
| **15.** | Deliver a new website, which features the new visual identity | 100 |
| **16.** | Continue to deliver the Implementation Plan and monitor and report progress | 100 |
| | **Due by End of June 2017 (Items 17 – 19)** | |
| **17.** | Have new workers compensation arrangements in place. | 100 |
| **18.** | Adopt the operational plan 2017-18, including integrated budget. | 100 |
| **19.** | Undertake a thorough review of the Implementation Plan to focus on the second year of the council. | 75 |

# Appendix 2 – Stronger Communities Fund Grants – Phase 1

| Project | Purpose | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| Queanbeyan Landcare Inc. | Friends of Mt Jerrabomberra and Stringybark Ridge (FOMJASR) Bushcare Group | $1,386 |
| Wamboin "Drop In" Activity Group | Wamboin "Drop In" Activity Group | $2,000 |
| Karabar Preschool | Office area renovation | $2,420 |
| Wamboin Community Association Inc. (WCA) | Littlish Libraries for Wamboin, Bywong and Sutton – A Little Free Library community book swap project | $3,500 |
| Nerriga Progress and Sporting Association Inc. | Painting and refurbishing of exterior and parts of interior of Nerriga Hall | $5,410 |
| Royalla Country Fair Association Inc. | Power to the Royalla Country Fair | $8,500 |
| Braidwood Recreation Ground s.355 Committee | Furnishing the newly acquired Canteen and Club Room at Braidwood Recreation Grounds. | $9,330 |
| Queanbeyan District Cricket Club | Queanbeyan Cricket Pavilion Clock | $10,000 |
| Majors Creek Festival Inc. | Waste recovery and Landcare partnerships at a public event | $11,637 |
| Bungendore Preschool | Renovating existing bathroom to provide a clean and safe environment | $13,518 |
| Burra Community Association (BCA) in cooperation with the Burra, Cargill Park Management Committee (S355 Committee) (BCPMC) | Enhancements to Burra Park and hall | $13,680 |
| Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association | Solar Gain | $14,000 |
| Queanbeyan District Cricket Club | Queanbeyan Cricket Pavilion Improvement Project | $15,000 |
| Valmar Support Services Ltd | Linking community service provision for sustainable flexibility | $17,500 |
| EveryMan Australia Inc. | Regional Partnerships in preventing domestic and family violence | $20,000 |
| Braidwood Men's Shed | Triple Garage | $25,000 |
| Bungendore War Memorial Hall | Replacement of windows and restoration of window surrounds, and repainting of the hall | $25,000 |
| Queanbeyan Little Athletics Centre (QLAC) | Moving QLAC into the 21st century | $25,000 |

| Project | Purpose | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| Queanbeyan District Girl Guides | Queanbeyan Girl Guides facility upgrade | $25,000 |
| Braidwood Urban Landcare Group (BULG) | Flood Creek Community Recreation Precinct | $26,000 |
| Les Reardon Reserve s.355 Committee in conjunction with Bywong Community Assoc Inc. | Safe facilities access for the Les Reardon Reserve | $26,365 |
| Wamboin Community Association Inc. (WCA) | Enhancing the capability of the Wamboin Community Hall Complex through the purchase and installation of Audio Visual (AV) equipment. | $30,000 |
| Queanbeyan Park Tennis Club Inc. | Disability Access Project | $32,162 |
| Royalla Common s.355 Committee | Completion of Royalla Community Hall | $32,168 |
| Campbell Street Children's Centre | Bathroom renovation & re-fencing of service outdoor playgrounds. | $33,000 |
| Braidwood & District Historial Society | Museum Archival Storage Project | $41,000 |
| Braidwood Regional Art Group (BRAG) | Enhancing community access and opportunity at the Braidwood Community Arts Centre. | $46,150 |
| Bungendore Showground Trust | Upgrading and rationalising the exhibition hall and undercover facilities | $48,572 |
| 1st Bungendore Scout Group | Construction of a Scout & Community Hall in Bungendore | $50,000 |
| Googong Residents Association | Googong Dog Park | $50,000 |
| Monaro Panthers FC Inc. | Community Football Support | $50,000 |
| Home in Queanbeyan | Extending Home - Giving Hope | $50,000 |
| Queanbeyan Tigers Australian Football Club Inc. | Upgrade of oval lighting at Allinsure Park (Margaret Donoghoe Sporting Complex) Queanbeyan | $50,000 |
| Queanbeyan and District Historical Museum Society Inc. | Queanbeyan Museum Rural Display Redevelopment: Conservation, Interpretation and Protection Works | $50,000 |
| Braidwood National Theatre and Community Centre s355 committee | Braidwood National Theatre & Community Centre (BNTCC) Building insulation and refurbishment. | $50,000 |
| Italian Community Festival Inc. | Casa d' Italia - Italian Community Hall | $50,000 |
| Queanbeyan Netball Association | Resurfacing Queanbeyan Netball Courts | $50,000 |
| Queanbeyan Children's Special Needs Group Inc. | Group Therapy Room, 1 Thorpe Avenue Queanbeyan | $50,000 |

| Project | Purpose | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| Queanbeyan Art Society | Extension to Queanbeyan Art Society 2016/2017 | $50,000 |
| Gundillion Recreation Reserve Trust | Co-funding for Telecommunications Tower at Gundillion Krawarree | $50,000 |
| Lions Club of Queanbeyan Inc. | Queanbeyan Lions Centenary Legacy Project – Lions Inclusive Playground | $50,000 |
| Araluen Area s.355 Committee | New Public Toilet Block for the Araluen Recreation Ground | $50,000 |
| Braidwood Showground s.355 Committee | Projects for Braidwood Showground Reserve Committee, Braidwood Show Society, Braidwood Rodeo Association, Braidwood District Pony Club (2 projects), Braidwood Polocrosse Club, Braidwood Campdraft Club | $100,000 |

# Appendix 3 – Progress against KRAs

| Key Result Area | Progress |
|---|---|
| **Service continuity** | • On line payments<br>• Pre-planned capital projects (eg Captains Flat Road, Wanna Wanna Road) delivered<br>• Even though finance, banking payroll, DA and records systems of former councils were not integrated, little impact on clients<br>• Achieved federated Telstra network across QBN, BGD and BWD March 2017<br>• Resolved to acquire TechnologyOne integrated software platform based on former Palerang licence, under s55 exemption<br>• Mapped current level services, programs and activities; adopted Service and Program Framework January 2017, to guide organisation structure, performance and accounting frameworks<br>• Engaged fixed term staff resources to deal with DA surge and post-merger planning legacy matters; and HR churn and change management load |
| **Robust governance** | • Local Representation Committee (4 x former councillors), Implementation Advisory Group and Audit Risk and Improvement Committee provided assistance to Administrator and independent oversight of merger<br>• Independent audits of progress against DPC merger actions<br>• Published Transition Plan and reports on progress<br>• Completed 'stocktake' of former strategies and plans: ICT, finance, asset, property, services<br>• Independent asset and financial sustainability review (PAA/GHD), shaped the adopted Responsible Scenario financial strategy<br>• Audit of decision-making framework<br>• Commenced review of policies; completed key council policies (Codes, donations etc)<br>• Unqualified external audits of former council financial statements 2015/16 |
| **Easy to do business** | • Introduced Business Connect programs to QBN, BGD and BWD<br>• Piloted online tree and waste applications through SNSW<br>• Positive feedback on resolution of issues and processing of Das<br>• Piloted 'easy to do business' start-ups with SNSW July<br>• New single integrated website launched July 2017 |

| Key Result Area | Progress |
|---|---|
| **Engaged staff** | • Community and staff engagement plan June 2016<br>• Weekly staff communiques, monthly newsletters, quarterly get togethers/BBQ<br>• Staff surveys through ICT and change management audits<br>• L2-L4 staff involved in 'colloquium' personal and team development<br>• Transition organisation structure adopted January 2017; L2 commenced May, L3 engaged June, L4 placed July<br>• 10% staff turnover<br>• 1 in 5 staff now worked longer with QPRC than former councils<br>• Commenced staff training in Lean/Agile review and project delivery |
| **Involved communities** | • Regular positive feedback from community via social media and at events<br>• Community and staff engagement plan June 2016<br>• Bi-monthly community newsletters to letterboxes<br>• Weekly e-newsletter to subscribers<br>• LRC members participated on community/s355 committees (63)<br>• Quarterly community forums at QBN, BGD, BWD and Captains Flat<br>• Multi-channel community engagement (services, vision, economic development, CBD masterplan) Feb-Apr 2017<br>• Community engagement report June 2017<br>• Community engagement strategy July 2017<br>• Council meetings alternate between QBN and BGD<br>• Meetings are live-streamed on web |
| **Readily identify** | • Visual Identity - Concept brand for the new organisation, adopting the theme "one heart many parts<br>• Merged the demographic and economic ID Profiler on web<br>• Expanded mix and scope of donations, grants and subsidies to community |

| Key Result Area | Progress |
|---|---|
| **A shared vision and direction** | • Strategic directions statement Mar 2017<br>• Community Strategic Plan drafted July 2017, awaiting elected councillor input<br>• Resourcing Strategy adopted July 2017: comprising asset, workforce, ICT and financial plans<br>• Strategies adopted: Tourism, QCBD Transformation; Smart City; Digital Economy; Rural Lands Strategy; Captains Flat Flood Plan; Sporting Strategy; Disability Inclusion; Queanbeyan STP Masterplan;<br>• Commenced Integrated Transport Strategy, |
| **Rates maintained within existing pathways** | • Independent asset and financial sustainability review recommended average ~ 1% increase pa above rate peg, to manage asset backlog, but reliant on productivity gains from merger<br>• All merged councils had property revaluations undertaken by NSW Valuer-General. Residential properties rose average 1.48% in QCC and 4.07% in former PC, with combined increase across QPRC was 2.16%<br>• Operational Plans 2017 and 2018 adopted, retaining same general rates structure, with total yield increased by rate peg only in accord with Government rate pricing path freeze<br>• Independent water and sewer pricing review<br>• Water, sewer and waste charges increased in accord with former councils' pricing path<br>• New bulk water supply contract negotiated with Icon Water |
| **Clear, measurable benefits** | • Stronger communities fund applications independently assessed; $10m community and asset projects funded<br>• Stronger councils framework performance measures adopted January 2017<br>• Merger savings of $600k identified |
| **A newly elected council** | • Reports on preparations for election June; and onboarding elected councillors July 2017 |

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
The council has misspent funds considerably and now want to raise rates instead of fix financial issues.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not appropriately no. They are building a brand new council building costing a considerable amount of money. I don't believe they have looked at selling this building and renting it back. Council members gave themselves a raise recently.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
They have outlines the increase in dollars

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
They have but haven't listened to this engagement.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
There was no action. The consultation was worded is such a way to guilt you into voting for the most expensive option and was not an unbiased consultation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It is completely unreasonable

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I do not believe it was taken into account.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
You could apply for hardship

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I am not sure if it is incompetence, corruption, fraud, or a wonderful combination thereof. In any case it is not ok to expect the ratepayers to shoulder the burden of QPRC mismanagement. IPART, I implore you to not grant this Special Variation on behalf of our family of five, and the unspoken other families in our community who are resigned to the financial hardship QPRC is trying to inflict on the community it is supposed to serve. Please dont make life any harder for struggling families trying to survive and keep our houses. If this increase is approved you will have directly facilitated increases in mental health issues, domestic violence, divorce, substance abuse, suicide and all the worst outcomes that are exaggerated by financial hardship. Please think of the children and the most vulnerable who are always affected most in these situations, rather than overpaid comfortable councillors who cant be bothered to manage their budget properly.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
QPRC has failed to establish the need for and purpose of a significant increase in council rates in their application on the following grounds: Lack of transparency: QPRC fails to provide clear and detailed information about why the rate increase is necessary, how the increased revenue will be used, and how it will benefit the community, which has created confusion and scepticism among ratepayers. The lack of transparency has also created a perception that the council is trying to hide something. Inadequate consultation: QPRC has not consulted genuinely with the community justifying the proposed rate increase, which has led to a lack of support for the decision. The council needs to be able to demonstrate that they have taken the views of their ratepayers into account for this decision. Failure to demonstrate value for money: This council who is already failing to deliver adequate value for the current rates, has been unable to demonstrate how the additional revenue generated from the rate increase would provide any value for money services and infrastructure to the community. Ratepayers have a lack of confidence in the council's decision-making process and need to be assured that their money is being spent efficiently and effectively. In summary, the failure to clearly establish the need for and purpose of a significant increase to council rates can be attributed to a lack of transparency, inadequate consultation, and failure to demonstrate value for money.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
QPRC has not demonstrated sufficient exploration of alternative revenue sources, such as grants or partnerships, before proposing this rate increase. Ratepayers have the perception that the council is not taking a comprehensive approach to financial management and need to be assured that all avenues have been explored before increasing rates.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
I dont recall any communication regarding the total increase in dollar terms, however the percentage is completely unreasonable.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I havent spoken to anyone who was not aware and outraged by the proposed increase, so the community engagement strategy has at least ensured community awareness.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Ignoring negative sentiment and proceeding with this application.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Completely unreasonable and with the current cost-of-living crisis, it will be further strain household budgets, making families try to reduce their expenses even further. This proposed increase is literally taking food out of childrens mouths and making it impossible to have adequate healthcare, heating, and housing.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The community cannot afford this proposed increase and should not have to with already inadequate value at the current rates. We are barely able to pay our mortgages and have no non-essential expenses as it is.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Hardship has expanded dramatically since February 2022 with everyone feeling the affect. Dual fulltime income families are struggling with little hope for any relief likely for years.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I am unsure if this has occurred.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
QPRC has completely lost all credibility for financial management or service/project delivery with ratepayers. Even if QPRC have managed to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and/or plans to realise over the proposed special variation period, there is zero likelihood of their ability to deliver.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. They've stayed a need but not accepted responsibility for their mismanagement nor offered an option to reduce costs.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No. As above, no cost-neutral option offered.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Yes.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
They are unwilling to accept responsibility for their mismanagement. Cost neutral option not offered. This is not good enough.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Unreasonable.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
They haven't paid any attention to this.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Very poor plan. Root causes not addressed.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Cost control not addressed properly.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
When I moved to Araluen I had fortnightly bin collection and 3 roads in and out. Now Im down to half a road.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Theyve tried to rationalise is but seem to be unable to look at things like not borrowing large amounts of money to build a sports facility. These sorts of projects should be put on the back burner until their irresponsible use of current finance is fixed. Im not interested in hearing the standard it was the council before when theyre doing exactly the same thing

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No. They made it out to be only an 18% ride but the reality is over 3 years more like 60%+

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
They attended public forums to answer questions but it was more them telling us it needs to be done

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
With the current cost of living the massive increase (especially in my area with the extortion of our IGA Braidwood) will mean most people will not be able to feed themselves

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I dont believe a large number will be able to

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Only $100 of aged pensioners

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Unable to answer

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I dont believe theyve done this only blamed previous council

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Please approve the proposal.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes. The increase is necessary to maintain critical council services.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Yes. Council put forward three options but the lowest option would have eroded services while the highest option was too expensive. The option proposed by council to IPART strikes a balance.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Yes

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council is proceeding with a balanced option based on community feedback.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The proposal is reasonable in the circumstances.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Council considered a range of factors and arrived at a balance.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
The plan is reasonable and provides for consideration for people who may find it difficult to pay.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
The council was open about it's finances and how these were adversely impacted by council mergers and rate fixing over several years.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
- does not include a he new unimproved capital values recently given, so potentially their percentage of rate increase can be decreased to reflect the increase in land values. Councils original information is misleading as it is based on lesser land values

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Partially

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council has not shared what the feedback received was.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The proposed variation was prepared prior to the NSW valuer generals update on property values. The property values in the region have increased significantly and along with other the proposed rate variations will exceed reasonableness in comparison to prior years.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The proposal was prepared prior to the valuer generals property values which wouldnt have considered the significant increase in property values, which translates to an increase in rate revenue, adding on to this stage proposed increase of rates - the capacity of many households to pay will be challenged. Council has not acknowledged the increase in unimproved capital values.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Im not aware of this plan

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Unsure

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Response from council is not reassuring that they will be able to solve their financial issues through this rate rise

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Not sufficiently. Some services could be reduced, particularly given the large number of rural residents under this council who do not receive garbage services, water, sewerage and other basic services.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes, but still has greater impact on some residents over others. The council also needs to demonstrate that it can live within its means.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Questionable. Whilst letters have been received, the community engagement and consultation has not been brought to the attention of all residents.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Appears to have been ignored, with the argument some options were not viable. If this is the case then they werent really an option and were just humouring the community.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Many rural residents who receive access to very little of the councils services but still expectation they need to pay still for these services ices. Why not charge more for these individual services rather penalise all ratepayers

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Not sure they have considered this against the cost of living pressures. It appears that council are only contributing to these pressures rather then trying to assist ratepayers.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
N/A

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Unknown.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Unknown

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Thursday, 13 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Recently, observed four trucks, 15 staff to fill one pot hole. They are not serious about cost reductions or looking for savings. Council is not state govt. Cut social services that are not core business.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No it has not.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No it has not done this seriously. Manage the budget, cut things outside of core services which are roads and rubbish. Cut the social services stuff, reduce staff..if I have to manage my budget, they can manage theirs.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
People dont listen ...

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It will cause great hardship to community, council staff will continue to receive their generous salaries and conditions.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
They dont care.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Yes, but it would not be needed if they managed their budget.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Did not do this without thinking of alternatives - cut the budget,

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 14 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
All residents are outraged at the misuse of funds and huge increase in rates.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
QPRC has informed its constituents it intends to increase our rates by an outrageous sum, far above the national average rates, for no real increase in services. Many residents complain we're footing the bill for Council's mismanagement of funds and for unnecessary vanity projects. Given the financial state of the economy, rising inflation, huge jump in land values and rapid increase in interest rates, this is an unacceptable additional strain on thousands of families. An increase of 64% cumulative rate rise over just 3 years is absolutely outrageous.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
They've ignored the community.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
They need to stick to reasonable increases that match the inflation rate only.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Unsure.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
They're making residents foot the bill for unnecessary vanity projects with a permanent and hefty increase that puts a strain on most families.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 14 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Yes

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The council appears to have completely ignored community feedback.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Impact is unreasonable given the current impacts of inflation on household budgets and rates in other comparable councils

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
There appears to have been no consideration of this.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
It is inadequate. Payment plans do not reduce the debt burden on households.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Unknown.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
They are obviously inadequate.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 14 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I have, in the past, appreciated the work carried out by our council officers, despite the usual bureaucratic hiccups. But, I don't think good management has prevailed recently, given that, just as a huge new building is being built to house our council administrative officers , council declares itself in financial stress & proposes that the only way forward is to impose on residents a HUGE rate increase. Particularly at a time when financial distress is a very common theme for many families and residents throughout the area, I feel such a large increase in rates is both unwarranted and potentially very damaging for individuals and for the confidence in our council.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
QPRC council has indicated a significant budget deficit problem

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
QPRC council has proposed for discussion alternatives to the large rate rise

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
to my knowledge, yes

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council's response to propose the full rate rise as outlined initially

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
QPRC Council seems to have assumed that the proposed rate rises are affordable for residents, but our area houses many who are already financially struggling in the current climate of mortgage interest rate rises, cost of basics like food and other general cost of living rises across the board. I am of the belief that this rise will force many to either default on payment and/or sell their homes, an unnecessary and fearful outcome.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I believe that Council has proposed several options which are unsavoury to the general public, eg establishing pay parking, in a bid to gain compliance on the rate rise. I think this is a cynical move by Council to gain acceptance of the lesser evil, rather than to provide an accurate assessment of affordability of the huge rate rise for the general citizens of the region.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Council already has in place ways to address hardship, but such a massive rate rise over several years will have a huge impact on people of the region, especially given the aforementioned cost of living pressures being experienced at the grass roots level.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I read that QPRC Council has made/is making productivity improvements, but that quantifying is so wishy-washy. I wonder if staff on the ground were ever consulted when management brought in (and paid lots to) a consultancy firm to advise in this area? Perhaps, staff at the coalface would have made some useful suggestions on how to save money. Perhaps, some may even have suggested not investing at this time in a multi storey council building?!

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Saturday, 15 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. Council has not articulated how they got into this situation besides attempting to blame the former mayor. It appears that mismanagement is a big issues.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Council have refused to look at the budget line by line and find savings internally. Council is subsidising childcare fees which is not the role of a local council. Council is providing donations and grants which need to be reigned in. There appears to be a top heavy staff structure that would need to be reviewed. Council also have properties that are surplus to needs that could be sold.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Councils communication strategy has been political in nature and not clearly articulating the needs.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
The mayor has tried to stifle any negative commentary around council and is attempting to politicise the issue for his own personal gain.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Inflation is high, the cost of living is high. These rat variations are going to cripple local households who are already struggling.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Council dont care. The mayor said in a news article. Pay up or we stop servicing. The term tough bikkies was also used. This council is out of step and out of touch.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
No. Not that Ive seen. I am concerned for the flow on mental health effects and financial impacts on local residents.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Unsure.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I find councils reasonings fanciful.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 17 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
Notification of council's SRV to the general community was poor - with most people I know aware of council's intention only by word of mouth. Community submissions on SRV to council were over the Xmas and holiday period - hence minimising the number of submissions

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I am not aware of any action taken by council

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Holders of rural farming land will be significantly more affected and council should consider the effects on farmers

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I think that council considers that we just have to pay

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I am not aware of any such exhibition

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
As can be seen in my attachment that cost containment strategies in the past have been minimal, with grandiose projects (which were not ratepayer priorities) undertaken in time of fiscal stress. The savings realised to date are minimal in light of major unnecessary expenditures

This Council's (QPRC) claim that its financial crisis was caused by rate pegging is only partly correct and it is just a smokescreen for its financial misjudgements. My concern is that QPRC ignores the priorities of ratepayers with its own agenda complete with unnecessary expenditures. I acknowledge that some of these activities were initiated by the previous council, but expenditures continue.

Some examples of financial misjudgement of which I am aware are:

1. The new QPRC precinct in Crawford Street Queanbeyan. The previous QPRC knew it had financial problems when approvals were given for an estimated cost of $74m and now expected to total $80m. This is the largest building in Queanbeyan and is grossly in excess of QPRC's requirements, with Council hoping to rent out spare accommodation. QPRC should look after the priorities of ratepayers before being the entrepreneur when they had no money. Now ratepayers have to service a large loan with rising interest rates and ongoing significant maintenance of the building.
2. QPRC offices in Bungendore. No doubt the previous council promoted the sale of the existing Bungendore office which was a perfectly adequate building, and any spare accommodation could have been used for community activities. There has been considerable objection to the resumption of this building and it's use for and the location of the new high school. Now QPRC wants to spend $5m on a new office and have just spent another $1.65m on a temporary office! Why do we need a new office when we had a perfectly good one previously?? In addition they have to find $10m for a new swimming pool and they are out of pocket from the NSW Government by$3.5m. The expenditures continue! And this does not account for millions wasted by NSW on temporary high school de-mountables – all avoidable had the existing QPRC building been retained and a greenfield site found for the new high school.
3. Promoting a private company to truck and dump excavated material at Hoskinstown Road Bungendore. Against the objections of ratepayers along this road, the previous council approved the above activity for a total of 300,000 tons to be trucked over a period of 5 years with 3 years still to go. As a result (and was initially pointed out to council) the road has been severely damaged already. Hence, whilst the private company will benefit by an estimated $5-6m, QPRC now has a significant ongoing maintenance cost which will probably amount to $1m or more, with the company only contributing about $20,000 per year. This activity has no public benefit, but has created a dangerous situation and again creates unnecessary expenditure for QPRC while the company benefits.

In summary it needs to be emphasised to QPRC to practise proper financial judgement and management, and adhere to the priorities of ratepayers without any further unnecessary grandiose projects and expenditures.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Wednesday, 19 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I believe this is a result of the incompetency of the previous and current councils along with the previous governments policy of forced council amalgamation. The impact of these increases far outweigh what the council claims will be delivered going forward. With ever other expense escalating far in advance of any wages growth, it will make the ability to live within the council much more expensive on top of interest rate increases for mortgages and general inflation.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No I do not believe they have made any compelling reasoning on the need to increase to this extent or explore any other options. The council did distribute a poll but seem to have gone against the results of the poll.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
Yes but it does not seem to have been taken into account in the final submission

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The increase seems to have only been provided in % terms, I have calculated the increase on my rates personally

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I do not believe so.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
There does not seem to have been a change in approach from the initially proposed intention by the council.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The impact of this increase on ratepayers does not seem to have been taken into account. In a questionnaire there were three options provided and this seems to have been disregarded in favour of the council's previously preferred approach

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I do not think this has taken place at all. If that has happened it has not been communicated or shown in the proposal which has been made to the ratepayers.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
I think the hardship caused by this major increase was given a token acknowledgement which did not impact the final outcome.I

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
I believe this was the case.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I believe their assessment of what is critical expenditure is lacking clarity. There seems to be a minor reduction in discretionary spending but not close to the same ratio as the increase in rates over the next 3 years.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Sunday, 23 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
The percentage of the rate increase is outrageous and in the current climate is offensive

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No, other than saying services will be lost. They have not addressed where the shortfall has come from and what impact their multiple storey council complex still under construction has had on their funds.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No, they have only specified three alternatives all of which are significant increases to the current rate levels.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes. All of which were significant.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
I can't comment on this as I don't know their community engagement strategy.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council sought feedback, but it was mixed with threars of closures to amenities and services if the full rate increase was not agreed to.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It's ludicrous. It is effectively an increase of 200%. Who can afford that. It seems the council are looking for the rate payers to bail them out of significant mismanagement

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
I don't think they care. When interest rates have been going upwards and now they want to further increase the cost of living placing more strain on inflation

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
As usual, all such discussions address low income earners who most likely can't afford a house and thus don't pay rates

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
No sure

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I don't recall seeing any such thing attached with the proposal

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 24 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
This Special Rate Variation should not be approved. QPRC has centralised services and is over spending in favoured locations and underspending dramatically in the outer regions. We have no representation in the East as all Councillors live in the Western areas of Queanbeyan. The disconnection and lack of interest on Councils behalf is unacceptable. The disadvantage both social and economical is blatantly obvious and we should not be burdened with this huge rate increase.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
Yes, however the burden should not be imposed upon the rate payer, especially the rate payers in the remote and rural areas of this shire which receive bare minimal service. Alternative funding should have been sought from other reliable and risk free sources.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No, not particularly. Pursuing high interest loans is not a viable option either. Maybe QPRC should have reconsidered their decision to install an added layer of management post amalgamation, then proceed to give themselves a large pay rise which was then followed with the imposition of this special variation. Cost cutting measures of wasted monies should have been addressed before reaching this stage.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No, I don't believe so. The online system to check increase projections was hard to determine and understand.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Definitely not. Our community of Araluen had a general meeting with 5 council representatives at the local hall. The meeting lasted all of an hour and wasn't presented to the community with any form or interest what so ever. Council representatives did not want to engage and were not interested in what the people asked or expressed.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council don't care about community feedback its just a formality.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Councils special variation is unacceptable and unreasonable highlighting consideration to the outer lying villages and rural areas which receive minimal service. My property is in the most remote area of this shire 150kilometres from Queanbeyan, service from council is diminished and all I receive for my rate dollar in my location is the gravel road graded once a year and a bin in the Araluen compound that is unsecured and freely available for everyone else to use. Absolutely appalling. So no I do not want to see such an increase. My property was burnt in the Black summer bushfire and I continue to suffer and face enormous challenges to rebuild. The extra financial burden of a substantial rate increase for less service will see me struggle to make ends meet.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
The socio economics in this shire vary so dramatically from those in the urban areas of Queanbeyan, Bungendore, Googong and Jerrabomberra that receive full services, better roads and infrastructure in comparison to the former Palerang areas of Braidwood, Araluen, Nerriga, Mongarlowe and many other rural, remote communities that see far less service, worn out roads, noxious weeds invading the environment, fire and flood damage that has been left outstanding for years and the general degradation of council service and its disconnection with this area. Those living in the rural areas are subsidizing those in the urban areas that have town water, sewerage, paved roads, street sweeping, kerb and guttering, road side bin pick up and the list goes on. Council made idle threats to close the local library, close the local swimming pool - these facilities are vital and how dare Council even think like that. Everything is not a commodity. A gross inequality is occurring in Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council of those who have and those who have not. In reference to the 2021 Census Average Weekly Income statistics show that the average weekly income in Queanbeyan is $2,295 compared to Braidwood at $1,414 and Araluen at $1,042. A direct indication of lack of capacity for many in the outer lying regions to absorb the extra cost. With the cost of living soring and fuel at $2:21 at the local service station people are suffering and under immense financial strain.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Council rate payment plans may appear plausible on paper, but the reality is if you can't pay your rates they will eventually sell

you up and such a situation will only deliver poor outcomes all round. Why increase the rates so much that people will be pushed into financial hardship? It seems that the special rate variation is a counteractive approach to councils debt burden due to their eagerness to pursue expensive development and the wasting of rate monies.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
To a certain degree. I live in a rural location with poor internet access and no mobile phone service. Councils idea of exhibit is to place a copy of the document in the foyer of the Council building - I have to drive for over an hour to reach the Braidwood office which is often closed at short notice. Very inconvenient and hard to understand the overly processed documents.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I need my accountant to interpret these figures. Forced amalgamation destroyed the integrity of this Council. Council trying to justify their mismanagement. In my opinion Council need to peel the unnecessary costings back and concentrate on the grass roots problems we see everyday.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 25 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Yes.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
They have not demonstrated how their expenses are so high and that they could not cut costs to make up the deficit.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
The rate rises would have a much greater impact on residents than cost cutting by the council would have. Further to direct financial cost, these rate rises will also reduce value of property in the shire.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
Current, interest rates are very high, cost of living has increased significantly, and now we are expected to pay more for council rates without anything to show. Council have not considered capacity and willingness to pay fairly.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
It is best to avoid hardship rather than 'address it'. They have not convincingly shown how they will minimise impact on the community through rate rises.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
They have not demonstrated convincingly enough.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 25 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I'm just so annoyed of having to cop such a hefty rate rise when we get absolutely nothing for it. I would like to see Lucky Pass Road in Currawang be re-zoned to sit under ULSC or Goulburn Mulwaree given we have no connection or use for services in Queanbeyan or Bungendore. As mentioned we only use services in Collector and Goulburn. The other thing to consider is, that as a community we have been up against everything over the last several years. It seems to be one thing after another that we have to fight for, in able to live a peaceful life in the country. We had to fight (for years) against the application to establish a military use firing range in a farming area. We are currently opposing the re-opening of Barina gravel quarry. We are fighting the Tarago waste incinerator. Now a 64% rate increase. What's next? Please give us a break!

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No. The only way we found out about this rate rise was through media articles, which were stories of people in other council areas complaining about the impact the rate rise will have.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
The three options put forward were all unacceptable for us a residents in Currawang. Council needs to review how the rate increase should be applied. It needs to be largely based and user services and geographical areas. As an example people using the most services in the more wealthier areas of Queanbeyan, Jerrabomberra and Bungendore should be paying more than the lower socio economic areas, and those out on the fringes, such as those in Currawang who are so disconnected from Queanbeyan and don't access ANY of the QPRC services.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No, they did not provide a dollar figure. All options proposed were unacceptable. In their survey there was no choice but to choose one of their three options. A very narrow survey.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Certainly not. Hiding something on their website and not raising awareness of the issue is very poor community engagement, and certainly not transparent which will further erode in people's trust of QPRC.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
I think we got a very highly levely fluffy email saying thanks for participating in the survey. That was it. Like all Council decisions - like it or lump it. A council that's going under financially is all about getting the biggest cash injection they can, as quick as they can.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
Totally unreasonable. I am located on Lucky Pass Road which is on QPRC boundary with the Upper Lachlan Shire. We are so far away disconnected from Queanbeyan, I don't understand why we are zoned in the QPRC. We do not use any service in Queanbeyan or Bungendore. We go to Goulburn for all our shopping, banking, dining, parks and any sporting facilities. There is absolutely NOTHING here. The only minimal service we receive from QPRC is about twice a year they grade our gravel road. In between that time our road is corrugated, gully washed and all the drains fill up with gravel. The reason I moved here was because I am able to ride my horse out on the road but it's becoming more and more dangerous as the roads are gully washed and there is no option to get off the road. The sides of the roads have high grass and this really needs to be slashed. One because it's a fire hazard; two, snakes love it - I've nearly stood on two; and it's impossible to see any wildlife coming out onto the road such as kangaroos, deers, wombats, and echidnas. We also do not have any garbage or recycling services. We are in a terrible situation where we are close to ULSC transfer station which we can use but QPRC removed the funding for us to use the transfer station for free. Now we pay a very hefty fee (around $50 each trip) to take our own rubbish and recycling to the tip. For the pleasure of this, QPRC refunded us a measly $100 from our rates. I have two young children and there are no parks or facilities for them to use here, only in Collector which is in ULSC.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
QPRC. When my neighbour rang and spoke to someone in QPRC about us having to pay to use the garbage tip he said "oh well take it to Bungendore". Bungendore is about a half an hour drive away, and I believe we still have to pay to use it. When the QPRC representative was told that he said "I don't care, not my problem". So it sounds to me that QPRC couldn't care less about the community's capacity and/or willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
I'm a single mum with two toddlers. I live from payday to payday, and I will really struggle to be able to pay a 64% rate rise. I struggle to pay the current rates. A payment plan does not make the rates affordable, it just adds a bill to another week or another month.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
We weren't aware of any documents. We only found out about a survey. As mentioned we are so disconnected from Queanbeyan. Queanbeyan is a city. We are out on the fringe of the boundary in a rural/remote area. We are not exposed to any local media, social interactions etc. to be aware of what goes on in Queanbeyan or by QPRC.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
If the QPRC is going broke, someone is not doing their job. I shouldn't have to prop up a Council that delivers nothing to this area. We don't have great roads, we have trees constantly falling over roads which the locals graciously remove, we don't have a school, parks, footpaths, street lights, swimming pools, library, not even a shop or petrol station within 55 km of us within the QPRC. My rates should not be increased to cover bad financial management. I work for a government department and I see how much waste there is and bad financial management. The use of consultants, instead employ locals who have the skills to do the job. Yes, cut down on travel, the mayor can drive his own bloody car like everyone else, and cut the catering. It's not a right, it's a privilege.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Saturday, 29 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No - the council is proposing to maintain derives that have no distributional equity across the council area.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
As a rate payer in a rural area - no attempts have been made to engage meaningfully with balancing urban costs with rural costs.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
Communication was by notice and there was no effort to build awareness and understanding of what the proposed changes mean.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
Council has taken no effort to engage with rural rate payer concerns about the value for money associated with the costs increase

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
It is not reasonable and I am not willing to pay it due to the distributional equity concerns. All services maintained are in urban areas and no benefit has been articulated for rural areas

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
None

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
I have seen no plans or discussion of this.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Yes

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
No. The council has not done this other than to say that the liabilities accumulated to date are not sustainable.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Sunday, 30 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
No They are looking for an 18% increase per a year for 3 years. That is over 64% increase over 3 years. Nothing can justify this and it will destroy many rate payers financially. Only a council disassociated from their role and rate payers would even consider this. I currently receive virtually no benefit from existing rates, this would see us paying ~$5000 for nothing, highlight it is a fee structure issue, and the people using the resources in the towns need to pay their fair share. I use no water, no sewer, a neighbour is repairing our road at his own costs, and I pay for waste disposal at astronomical rates. I don't use in town facilities, and our road is in such disrepair it damages heavy duty 4wd suspension. This can be easily corrected by allocating existing rates to appropriately support the people paying them. The council should be cash rich with the current development happening in Bungendore. Similarly the amount of development in Googong. This is no different to developments in Shellharbour region where the council had more money than it knew what to do with. There no justification for a permanent increase. If a temporary increase is required a clear budget of income and expense should eb provided. Nothing transparent that is understandable by the general public is provided here. A budget deficit of $1.14 Million does not justify a 64% increase. An issue for one year doesn't justify an increase, especially of this magnitude. Making changes, including cultural changes to fix issues at the council, takes years. "the average operating deficit for the 10 year forecast period is estimated at $20.6M per annum" - This can not be true when it is currently $1.14 million. Independence isn't achieved when paying for the desired outcome. I run my own corporation, and a second business, am highly trained and see nothing tangible in this submission to support this request. A lot of high level figure and broad sweeping comments, but nothing that demonstrates tangible actions to date or moving forward. Let alone a justification for this scale or increase. The council has not clearly explained any cost reduction from the merger, or substantial effort do to so. Such as reducing duplicate roles and process. There is no evidence of change management to achieve this. I recently utilised a paid for council service. The charges through this service is excessive already and massively exceeds that of other smaller and larger councils, so the size of the council excuse, that should benefit from economy of scale, is completely false. I would say it is 10 times more expensive than the same ACT Government service and is a danger to the public also. This is not funding issue but management failure. Staff are poorly trained, do not understand existing fees structures and over or undercharge, and are potentially taking resources for personal use. They also did not appear to be potentially not fit for the duty for the role they are performing. The application is not correctly certified by the General Manager. The separate certification doesn't not show what was actual approved, and the application should be considered null and void as there is no evidence it is approved in full or as per the final submission. This is a legal basic and shows corner cutting and unprofessionalism at the council. Meaning this submission can not relied upon. There is repeated references to the Morrison Lowe document. It is not clear on review if the reviewers/s have the the required qualifications or experience to effectively and accurately complete an organisational or financial review or any size and how through an effective procurement process, would lead to this being the most suitable outcome for the completion of this review. (Happy to be corrected and retract where appropriate, but have the experience and training to comment on this area).

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No - I only found this whilst looking for waste charges on their website. "Councils should also publish their application on their own website for the community to access" This has not a happened or is unlocatable if you look at the home page.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
No - There has been no communication.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
No - There has been no engagement.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
There has been no engagement to ensure all people are reached. No neighbour has mentioned it and if people knew there would be a 64% increase on going there would be outrage. " Social media Media release Councils e-newsletter May edition of QPRC News Email notification to Your Voice subscribers Email to community groups and associations" This would not reach me or nearly any of my neighbours. It is a forced expectation of engagement with social media channels, despite all the independent reports of the damage social media has on society. These are optional streams of contact, highlighting how out of touch the council is with the community. Letters to each house and business would have cost less and reached a more diverse audience. The fact social medial tops this list, shows a complete lack of understanding of the rural nature of the council area and staff and cultural issues at the council cause this issue.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
A rate rise of 64% will destroy families, couples and individuals already struggling with increases in costs of living. Even the submission has lower cost options which are already inflated. "1. Development and population growth 2. Pandemic 3. Environment 4. Affordable Services 5. Government Policy" Above: 1 Is an income stream. 2 Is over. I was a frontline pandemic worker. 3 Doesn't highlight how the users and causes of environmental impact will pay. We are completely off grid and are paying for other peoples impact at an inflated rate due to property size. 4 We are already paying over 10 times the reasonable rate for services. QPC does not need Corporate Services Director, who seems focused on increasing budgets through this submission, but a community services Director focused on affordable community focused service. 5 Government policy. After 100s of years of government this should be established and require minor variations. How it can be listed as a major cost, unless it has been poorly managed by exiting staff. Nothing in Criterion 5 is tangible enough to show sufficient saving initiatives since the merger or new costs to justify and increase of this size or on going. "c. Indicate whether these have been incorporated in the councils Long Term Financial Plan. The LTFP includes the following financial savings targets: $200,000 per annum targeted organisational service review savings $300,000 per annum targeted increase in fees and charges as a result of annual service pricing reviews $500,000 per annum targeted increase in fees and charges to return to pre-covid levels" The above in general are fee increases and are not savings initiatives. The fee increase are actually an argument for not increasing rates, and highlights the rate of increase is actually higher than what is being proposed here. Further destroying families financially. The saving from the merger across the 2 council reasonably should have exceeded $10 of millions. $2.2 million noted would be below staff salary savings alone. I have extensive experience in corporate and process change management and analysis. The Director of Corporate Services doesn't even appear to work in or be connected with the council area, as there is no landline for contact at the council office. This is a clear examples of a role that isn't adding value to the community but it focused on taking from the community. They clearly can not understand the impact.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
They clearly have taken no consideration. I would be paying more than I was in the city, for a more valuable property, with infrastructure that supported millions of tourist a year. In one of the most prestigious beach side suburbs in NSW. This can not be right and makes no sense. Especially considering I have basically no impact on the council for most services. This issue here is clearly is the council and not the existing rates.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
No - No tangible evidence is provided.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
Not to my knowledge. Rate payer social media is optional and many people are probably 100% unaware of this proposal.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
I don't see at all how this will benefit me or other rate payers. Rain and Covid may have cause temporary increases in costs. Not a permanent 64% increase. Nothing in this shows a clear budget on specifics that the council can be held accountable for.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Sunday, 30 April 2023

Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
We purchased land in Bungendore of 731sq m, which was valued was valued at $229,000 USV. Halfway through current financial year they recessed USV to $394,000 then started this process of huge rate increases. Our problem with this is that there is a massive open storm water drain that runs across the back of our property (and 10 or so houses in the street) that is unusable land approximately 150sq m which was supposed to be rectified before we moved into our home that we are paying rates on. We have to allow council access to this land to maintain which has only been done once!!!!! (We have attached photos) This is a dangerous opening at all times, but especially if raining which the water rises and flows at a high current.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
NO, the rate rise is because the council's incompetence. Accountability with their spending, account keeping functions and management of these funds.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
No, they have not, we were offered 3 alternatives and all of significant rate rises but give themselves a big pay rise!!!!

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Only one meeting took place it wasn't widely known.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
We haven't received any address to hardship caused by this proposed variation.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.









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Please provide any other comments on the council's application that you would like to make here.
I found some of the information presented by council, in critical publications like QPRC news, useful but (apparently) inconsistent with other sources. QPRC News outlined both Income and Expense projections for 2022-23 General Fund and I compared this to Table D1 of the 2021-22 Financial Statements. The terminology across the two sources inconsistent but it appears that Income from Continuing Operations is $161.3M (QPRC News) vs $185.7M (Fin Stmnts), Expenses from Continuing Operations are $183.1M (QPRC News) vs $116.3M ( Fin Stmnts), and the subset Rates and Charges are $42.5M (Qprc News) vs $52M (Fin Stmnts). It appears on a year-by-year basis that Income reduces by $24M, Expenses increase by $66.8M and Rates reduces by $9.5M. Perhaps I am not comparing apples to apples but something looks awry. If it is true I can see why a big increase is needed - but it is not clear what driving those factors.

Question 1 (Criterion 1) - Has the council clearly established the need for, and purpose of a different revenue path for the council's General fund?
This has been stated (but not established) and this is actually part of the problem. In simple terms the existing scenario is clearly untenable but ratepayers are now faced with a Fait Accompli. Why has the present disastrous position arisen? In my view it is not fundamentally because of rate increases being restricted as the council claims. In my case over the last 5 years my rates (excl water, sewerage etc) have increased by 12.6%. Over the same time period the All Groups CPI has increased by 6.2%. Perhaps a reduction of support from NSW Govt has contributed? Council stated 'Economic Environment' aspects - what are they? Inflation? This has only arisen over the preceding year. More likely poor financial management in the past and spending on major developments such as the QPRC Headquarters, or development of totally unnecessary 'world class' sporting development in South Jerrabomberra. Pandemic related issues seem overblown.

Question 2 (Criterion 1) - Has the council canvassed alternatives to the rate rise?
On the surface yes, but the only 'viable' alternatives were presented as a fait accompli and it was a case of "agree or suffer". Two major considerations revolve around the "The Q" and the QPRC headquarters. Neither of these had any sort of rigorous financial assessment provided by the council to give ratepayers an informed basis as to how these ought to be treated. For example, council states that their development of the HQ building will bring in revenue when the item is paid off (in 15 or 20 years). It may be but where is the assessment? Alternatively it might be better if Council sold this development, or perhaps sold the Q, but these options were simply not realistically or economically considered.

Question 1 (Criterion 2) - Did the council communicate the full cumulative increase of the proposed special variation in percentage terms? And the total increase in dollar terms for the average ratepayer by rating category?
The main communication document was the QPRC News Dec 22 publication. This did not mention that the increases proposed compounded year on year. Presentation of the options bordered on the dis-ingenuous. Similar for rate comparisons to other jurisdictions - it showed the QPRC rates are currently competitive to other jurisdictions, but if you apply the proposed increases it would suggest they are no longer competitive. I fail to see the purpose of this table without specific recognition that it is, effectively, a short term artificial and misleading view - not a valid comparison. Specific mention was made that the SRV did not include, or alter, water or sewerage charges. The clear implication here was that those items would not change - whereas they now have. I realise they must increase but overall the approach used reflects a lack of transparency.

Question 2 (Criterion 2) - Has the council's community engagement strategy demonstrated an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness?
Ostensibly yes if assessed against the variety of communication channels, but most people need a really simple to understand document, not the full LTFP or similar, and most ratepayers would not have even been aware of the much vaunted radio interviews and public meetings. The council communicated with the QPRC News publication but by then it was almost a case of shutting the door after then horse had bolted.

Question 3 (Criterion 2) - Please comment on the action taken by council in response to feedback from the community on the proposed special variation.
There appears to be none. Replays of the council meeting deciding on the SRV option 2 did not canvass this point at all, aside from 1 or 2 councillors who disagreed with the adoption of SRV option 2. Justification of increased spending was mentioned, as was comment about 'not having Queanbeyan return to struggle town status'. I can't see further any action at all by the council to community responses which were overwhelmingly negative. It seems to be case of get used to it.

Question 1 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the reasonableness of the impact on affected ratepayers of the proposed special variation.
I've read the Council submission re ability to pay and it is a complicated analysis. To me it is a justification of the fact as distinct from an assessment of ability to pay. How does classification into the various streams (eg Housing Tenure) assess ability to pay? There are more than single parents and pensioners who are affected - what about self funded retirees? The

Equivalised Income analysis is confusing - are the dollar quartiles shown weekly/fortnightly income graduations? And if they are, how does that assess ability to pay? It may give a degree of difficulty but it doesn't seem to give any absolute outcomes. The fact of the matter is that the SRV will push up costs very significantly and as many submissions pointed out, many people's situations will be compromised.

Question 2 (Criterion 3) - Please comment on the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay.
A stated in Q1C3 immediately above I see little consideration at all. All SRV options were presented as Fait Accomplis.

Question 3 (Criterion 3) - In its application the council outlined how it intended to address hardship caused by the proposed special variation. Please comment on the council's plan.
Plan as outlined is ostensibly OK but when subject to scrutiny it appears flimsy, and not resting on any solid analysis of ability to pay. It will account for hardhips, pensioners etc, but it has little idea as to what extent hardship will be experienced. Like some other parts of the Councils submission it is self serving.

Question 1 (Criterion 4) - Have the relevant IP&R documents in the council's application been exhibited, approved and adopted by the council before it applied to IPART for the proposed special variation?
It would appear so.

Question 1 (Criterion 5) - In its application the council is required to explain and quantify the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period. Please comment on the council's response here.
Cost savings initiatives have been presented by the council. Council has made much of a $2.2M efficiency dividend arising from amalgamation - I would counter by saying if that is the only dividend it has been a failed initiative on financial efficiency grounds. Council also makes representations about further cost savings, such additional costs relating to (excessive, not basic) staff vehicle provisions. These are worthwhile. I want to see Council track and report these in a clear manner, and reduce the SRV impacts by the benefit so harvested. Council will doubtless say they are doing this but it is not clear how, when, to what extent.