

DISCUSSION PAPER

APPLICATION FOR
A SPECIAL

GENERAL RATES
INCREASE

by 8% in 2013 - 14

Proposal

Shoalhaven City Council is intending to apply to the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for permission to increase General Rates by a total of 8% in 2013/14 (*which is 4.6% above the rate-pegging limit of 3.4% set by IPART*).

The additional revenue raised by this increase (*estimated to be approximately \$2.3 million in 2013/14*) will be wholly allocated to road renewal (*\$1.8 million and pathways \$.5 million*).

Background

Shoalhaven City Council is responsible to maintain an infrastructure asset base valued at over \$2.8 billion. As at 30th June 2012, it was estimated that an amount of \$37.2 million would be required to bring these infrastructure assets up to a satisfactory standard. It was also estimated that the amount of maintenance required on this asset base should be \$23.7 million per annum. Council currently allocates an amount of \$18.4 million per annum, so there is a yearly shortfall of \$5.3 million. (*Source: Special Schedule 7 Shoalhaven City Council Annual Financial Statements*)

Council's Resourcing Strategy outlines four Core Sustainability Principles:

- Program sustainability
- Rate Predictability
- Inter-generational equity
- Meeting growth needs

To begin addressing these shortfalls, Council has attempted to increase the amount of funding being allocated to asset renewal in its annual budgets. As part of its Resourcing Strategy, Council has prepared a Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) which projects its revenue & expenditure estimates for a period of 10 years. This LTFP has projected an accumulated deficit of \$55 million accruing over the next 10 years due mainly to Council not being able to finance the increased expenditures projected to be allocated to its infrastructure assets. This LTFP had assumed that:

1. Council's rate revenue would increase each year by the rate-pegging limit.
2. Council's current level of services would continue for the 10 year period.
3. Council's current workforce would not increase in size.
4. Additional funding would be directed to road renewal over the 10 year period.

Survey results and analysis

In response to a telephone survey in 2009, 51% of residents agreed or strongly agreed that "I am prepared to pay more each year in rates for better facilities and services". A total of 19.4% of people disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Community engagement for the 2012 review of the Community Strategic Plan has identified strong support for the maintenance and renewal of existing Council assets as a priority over building new ones. A specific survey was undertaken to establish the views of the community about maintenance and renewal of Council's infrastructure, seeking feedback on satisfaction, priorities and 'level of service' expectations regarding key infrastructure types.

The survey results and interim analysis are based on 180 written and on-line responses.

The graphs shown on the opposite page summarise the results of the survey and **Figure 1** provides an overview of some of the key elements with 'citywide' importance and dissatisfaction plotted. (**Graphs 1 and 2** show separate results for 'importance and level of satisfaction').

About 50% of respondents were dissatisfied with the condition of infrastructure types of Roads and Paths. Similarly, over 50% considered these to be very important infrastructure, with Roads being cited by 92% of respondents. Although there was not much difference between 'citywide' and local' views for Roads and Paths, only 45% of respondents thought that their 'local' Car Parks were important but 56% thought Car Parks were important on a 'citywide' basis.

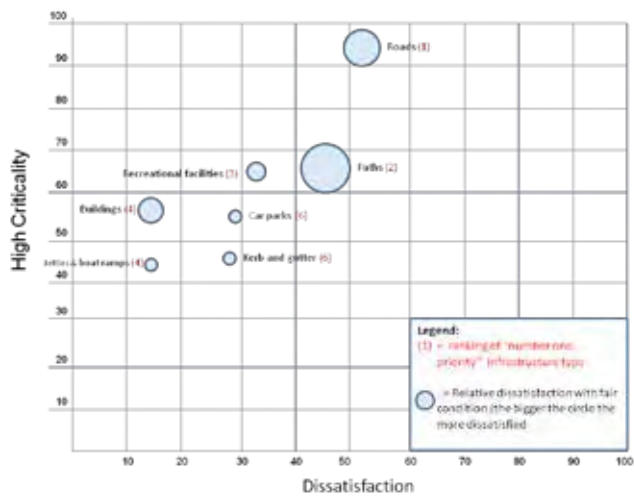
When asked which single infrastructure type had the highest priority for maintenance and renewal, Roads had the highest ranking with 65% of all respondents stating it was their Number 1 priority - see **Graph 3**. Paths were ranked second with 12% of responses. The survey proposed some 'level of service' comparisons by using images of infrastructure in 'fair' and 'good' condition. The size of the circles in **Figure 1** represents the relative dissatisfaction with 'fair' condition of the respective infrastructure types, when asked if it was 'good enough'. **Graph 4** shows 92% responded that Paths were not 'good enough' and 62% considered that Roads in fair condition were not 'good enough'.

Graph 5 shows the percentage of respondents who would agree with increasing rates to improve infrastructure from 'fair' to 'good' condition. Paths (58%), Roads (47%) and Buildings (31%) were the infrastructure types most supported for an increase in rates.

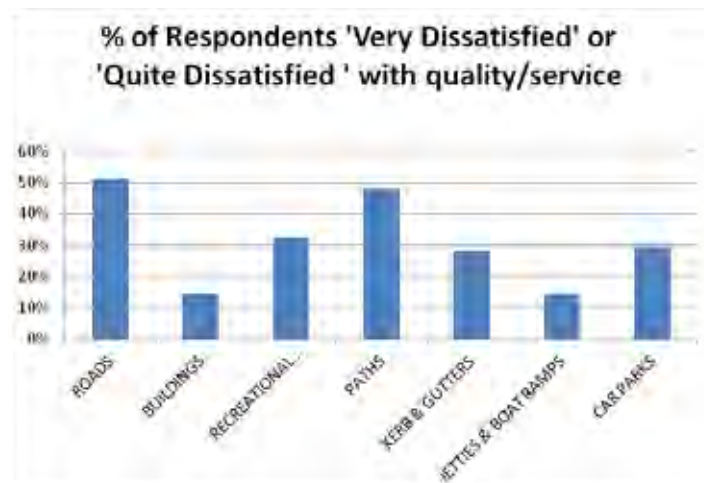
Survey Conclusions

The survey demonstrated that Roads and Paths maintenance and renewal are the highest priorities. Respondents also showed a willingness to pay to improve the condition of these infrastructure types i.e. for Roads (47%) and for Paths (58%).

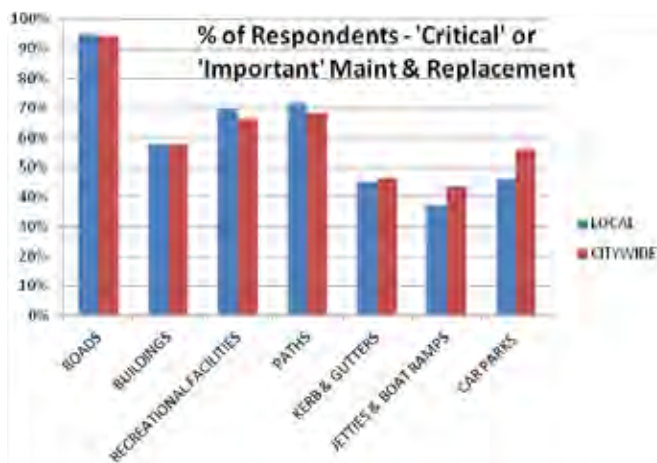
Figure 1



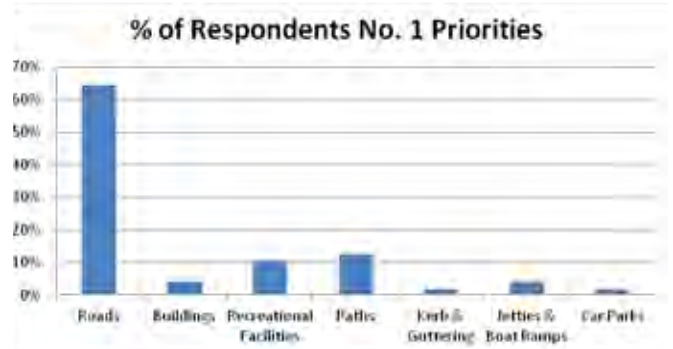
Graph 1



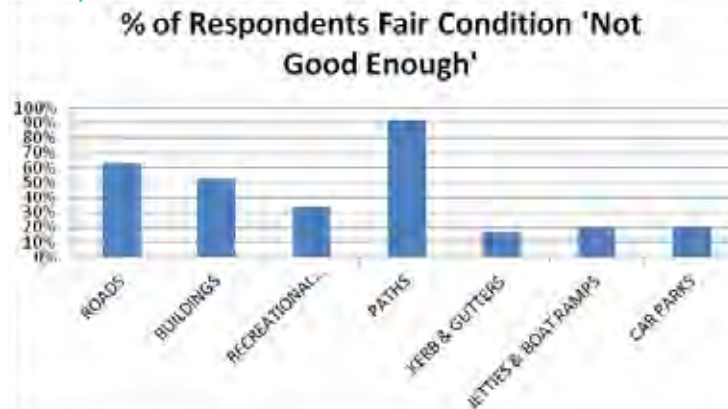
Graph 2



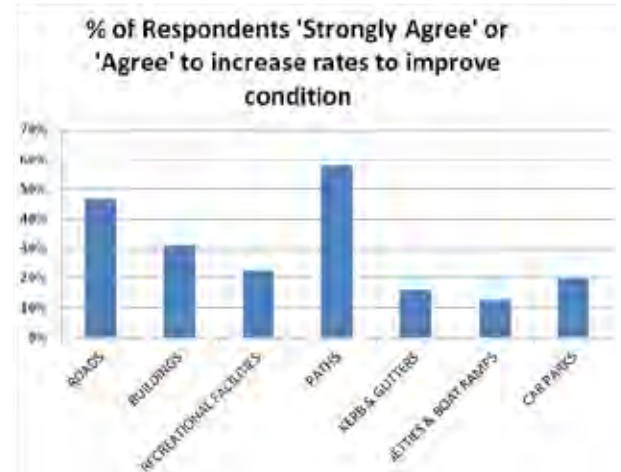
Graph 3



Graph 4



Graph 5



Are there any other options to provide more funding for roads and paths?

If Council chose not to proceed with its application for a Special Variation, it would need to significantly reduce expenditure on other works & services and redirect this funding to renewal of infrastructure to achieve an increase in resources being allocated for this purpose.

As part of its 2012/13 Budget consultations, Council asked for feedback from the community on what works & services could be reduced to enable greater funding to be allocated to infrastructure assets. It is always difficult to reduce levels of service that are currently enjoyed by the community, and there was no real indication provided as part of the consultative process on any particular area where expenditure could be reduced. In fact, there were further calls for increases in expenditure and service levels in a number of key areas such as paths, roads & parks.

As part of its Long Term Financial Plan, Council has set itself targets to decrease operating expenditure by \$1 million per annum by 2014/15. To achieve these targets, some changes are being made to Council's structure and staffing levels. Further, a comprehensive examination of all works & services provided by Council is being undertaken in an effort to identify areas where resources could be re-allocated to provide more funding for roads, paths & other infrastructure.

If Council was successful in receiving the Special Variation what specifically would the additional money be spent on?

An additional \$1.8 million would allow the renewal (rehabilitation) of about an additional 3km of rural roads each year. Projects to this value would be brought forward from the Roads Rehabilitation Strategy priority list to supplement projects already proposed for 2013/2014. These projects would include the rehabilitation of additional sections of Jindy Andy Lane (Numbaa) and Currarong Road as well as other projects progressively.

The increased allocation for paths could be used to continue support for existing and planned community projects. For instance, the 'Woolly Way' path, along Woollamia Road, could be completed and a path along Pine Forest Road in Tomerong could be commenced. The funding could also be used to rebuild the path in Berry Street, from Emporium Lane to Worrigee Street, if not allocated to community projects. There are many other priority path projects which could be considered, including the commencement of the Orion Beach section of the Bay foreshore route; the extension of the path in Beinda Street, Bomaderry; the completion of the path in Croobyar Road, Milton; projects from the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan; and the Community Consultative Bodies' priority projects. Some repairs of existing paths could also be funded so that these important community assets continue to serve users into the future.

How can I have my say about this issue?

Council is inviting the community to comment on this proposal before a final decision is made on whether to make an application to IPART. Council needs to submit its application for this Special Variation by Monday 11th March 2013, so it needs to make a final decision in early March 2013 on whether to proceed.

If you would like to make comment on this proposal, you can do this by:

Writing to Council;

PO Box 42, Nowra, NSW 2541

Faxing Council 4422 1816

Email council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

Making a submission direct on Council's website

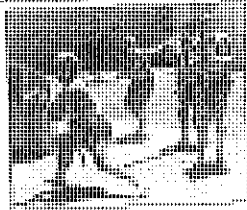
www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

It would be appreciated if any submission regarding this issue could be received by Council by 1st March 2013 to allow a report regarding the issue to be properly considered by Council prior to the closing date for applications.

INSIDEYOUR

South Coast Register

INMATES TELL STORIES



A PROGRAM at the South Coast Correctional Centre is strengthening Aboriginal family and community ties by helping inmates tell their life stories. Page 4

LOCAL BESTSELLER

A LOCAL self-published author has made the ABC bestseller list with his inspirational autobiography that has plucked the heartstrings of those who have read it. Page 5

REMEMBER THE NEEDY

CHRISTMAS can be a stressful time for the less fortunate in the community, according to the St Vincent de Paul Society, which is receiving many calls for help. Page 6

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WEATHER FORECAST

FRIDAY

Partly cloudy. Winds N 15 to 20 km/h turning E/NE 15 to 25 km/h during the day. Min: 15 Max: 29

SATURDAY

Partly cloudy. Isolated showers in the south. Winds N/NE 10 to 20 km/h. Min: 17 Max: 28

SUNDAY

Partly cloudy. Isolated showers. Isolated thunderstorms during the afternoon and evening. Winds NE/NW 10 to 20 km/h tending S/SE later in the evening. Min: 18 Max: 31

MARINE FORECAST

Friday: Winds North to northeasterly 15 to 20 knots. Seas: 1 to 1.5 metres. Swell: Easterly about 1.5 metres.

Saturday: Winds: North to northeasterly 15 to 20 knots. Seas: 1 to 1.5 metres. Swell: Easterly about 2 metres.

WIN

ice ESCAPE

the first to ice skate in Nowra

January 2-20

For details & to reserve your spot, call the Nowra office on 1300 788 503 or visit www.shoalhavenentertainment.com.au

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Win 1 of 4 family passes or 1 of 7 double passes

Ice Escape, the coolest fun this summer, is coming to Nowra in January 2013! For three huge weeks the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre will be home to a world class ice skating rink measuring 25 by 15 metres. There will be:

- General 60 minute ice-skating sessions daily
- Penguin skating aid hire
- Friday night disco sessions
- Saturday night movie sessions
- Camp Chillin' (vacation care)
- Cultural days
- Private parties and dinner functions
- Café open daily

Open Wednesday 2nd - Sunday 20th January
Tickets available now at box office: 1300 788 503
Info at: www.shoalhavenentertainment.com.au

Ice Escape,
c/- PO Box 106, Nowra 2541 or drop into 122 Kinghorn Street

Name: _____ Address: _____ Postcode: _____
E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Original coupons only. NO photocopies accepted.
Entries close 5pm Friday, December 14, 2012

Convicted cabbie killer gets parole

THE man convicted of the murder of Nowra taxi driver Kevin Lester in 1999, Shannon Blake Wilson, was granted parole on Wednesday.

Wilson was 18 at the time of the murder (October 15, 1999) in which he stabbed Mr Lester, 55, at Thompson's Point, west of Nowra.

Wilson later set Mr Lester's cab on fire in bushland.

Mr Lester's body was found the next day, the same day his son was scheduled to be married.

Wilson who has been in custody since he was charged on October 22 but did not appear before a special empanelled jury until 2002 after being found unfit

to stand trial on two occasions.

It wasn't until July 2004 that he was sentenced by Justice Carolyn Simpson to 12 years before being eligible for parole, sparking community outrage.

Upon appeal he was sentenced to 15 years and a non-parole period of 11 years.

He was previously refused parole in 2010 and 2011.

The parole authority granted his release on Wednesday, the day before his 32nd birthday, despite still having 22 months of his sentence to serve.

A spokesperson for the State Parole Authority said Wilson will remain

closely monitored and supervised in the community over the next 22 months.

His parole is on strict conditions, including exclusion from the Shoalhaven local government area, and he is to have no contact with the victim's family.

He will also be required to attend physiological and psychiatric counselling.

The Serious Offender Review Council and the Probation and Parole Service both supported his release.

The spokesperson said Wilson had completed a number of required courses while in jail.

The man in charge of re-slicing the pie

By ADAM WRIGHT

ALONG with a rate increase council will investigate options to make the organisation function more affordably.

That task falls to council's director of finances Peter Dun.

Mr Dun described the request as "re-slicing the pie".

"This council wants to want to spend more on roads than we have before, but there is only so much of the pie. We just want to give roads a bigger slice of the pie," Mr Dun said.

"Some of that comes from putting rates up, but even after that something else has to change."

"So we will be looking at organisational restructure."

Mr Dun said that would not necessarily mean job cuts.

"I'm in favour of natural attrition," he said.

"If, for example, we have staff turnover of 10 per cent a year, that's about 80 people who retire or resign in that year."

"We will look at what those jobs are and see if we can restructure in a way to avoid replacing that person."

"Anyone who has lived here a long time knows the roads need more money spent on them and to do that we are going to have to make some hard decisions, and some of those decisions may be unpopular."

"Sometimes contract work is more effective and efficient, and sometimes it's not, we'll steer the best course for the rate payer."

"I won't be championing any job cuts; council is a very important local employer."

The recommendations

Council car fleet
• Recommended that council pursue a strategy to reduce the number of vehicles included in council's fleet.

Land sales
• Recommended that council dedicate funds received from the sale of property to the acquisition of further land.

Long term projects
• Recommended that the Capital Works Program for 2012/13 be re-examined, and projects that are clearly not going to be completed in the 2012/13 financial year have their funding then moved into appropriate years in the long term financial plan.

Road maintenance
• Recommended that the long-term financial plan be remodelled including an additional injection of \$2 million per year to be allocated toward road maintenance and rehabilitation.

An extra \$67 per year

from page 1
"She never said she would do it by raising rates; any council can do that."

"It's the wrong time and the wrong strategy, and it's all because of a political promise."

Section 94 contributions
• Recommended that council review its section 94 contributions plan and reallocate the contributions to projects with a more immediate community need.

\$2 million software upgrade
• Recommended that council amend the long term financial plan to borrow funds for the integrated software solution valued at about \$2million.

Double time
• Recommended that council receive a report on other delivery options for council services that require staff to work on week-ends.

Contractors
• Recommended that council receive a report on alternative models of operation for the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre and Visitor Information centres.

today.
Council then has until March 11, 2013 to lodge an application with IPART.

"Prior to that we will seek community feedback," Cr Gash said.

ESTABLISHED 1885

South Coast Register

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southcoastregister.com.au

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2012

PRICE \$1.60 Includes GST

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CAN DO PEOPLE

**RAFFLE RAISES
\$2000 FOR CANCER**

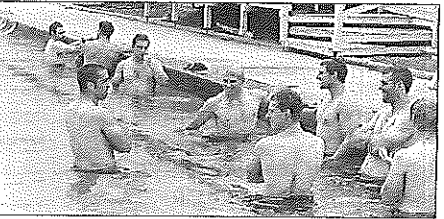
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FOOTY TRAINING

**RAIDERS IN
THE VALLEY**

PAGE 3



Fatal smash closes highway for 18 hours



Story: **FRANCES RAND**
Photo: **ANTHONY McDONOUGH**

TWO men died when a petrol tanker and a ute collided head on at 1.15am Saturday at the intersection of the Princes Highway and Jaspers Brush Road.

The ute driver, 22-year-old

Ulladulla man, Corey Gavin, died at the scene, while the truck driver, 59-year-old Bradbury man, Kevin Schey, was rushed to St Georges Hospital where he later died.

Police said the accident occurred when the ute veered onto the wrong side of the road. The truck driver

swerved to the left to avoid him, but they collided in the northbound lane.

The impact ruptured one of the petrol tanks, causing ethanol to leak on to the road.

The highway was closed until 7pm, although it was partially open at times, as Hazmat crews cleaned up

the scene.

Traffic was rerouted, although a road closure for the Gerringong Street Parade between 11am and midday caused some delays.

An accident at 5pm on Bolong Road, at the corner of Backforest Road, also held up traffic.

Three vehicles were involved when, in heavy rain, a car entering Bolong Road spun onto oncoming traffic on either side of the road.

Both lanes were blocked for an hour and a 40-year-old woman was taken to Shoalhaven Hospital with chest pain.

HARD BALL

Council goes down to the wire in rates hike move

By ADAM WRIGHT

THE extraordinary council meeting on Thursday night to vote on a raft of recommendations including the 8 per cent rate rise was stopped by Cr Andrew Guile who lodged a rescission motion.

That rescission motion was then dealt with at the ordinary meeting on Friday night at which the rate rise was voted through.

It took some political handball to keep the issue in play, in order for the councillors' vote to matter when faced with a tight deadline.

Council was supposed to lodge notification of a rate rise request above the rate pegging level to IPART by Friday,

December 14.

An extraordinary meeting was held on the Thursday so councillors could vote in time to meet the deadline.

However Shoalhaven City Council general manager Russ Pigg suspected a rescission motion might have been lodged by Cr Guile, who had previously asked for a rate freeze until the community was consulted.

Mr Pigg prepared a contingency plan in case Cr Guile did play his rescission card.

"I talked to an officer in IPART about the likelihood that even though the council had a meeting on the 13th, there could be a rescission motion," Mr Pigg said.

"If that happened the issue couldn't be considered until the following meeting, on the 14th, the deadline day."

"They understood the politics of what I was saying and agreed to take council's notification."

"It was a contingency plan, because it had been a hot topic of debate particularly between the new councillors and Cr Guile."

"The likelihood of having a rescission motion lodged was high."

"I was looking for assurance [from IPART] that if that card was played it would not prevent council from making any application if they voted that way."

More stories **PAGE 2**

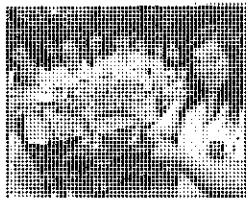
INSIDEYOUR

South Coast Register

IN THE NAVY

LOCAL high school students are experiencing navy life in a program staged at HMAS Albatross and HMAS Creswell.

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CREAM OF THE CROP

SHOALHAVEN High students have taken out top spot with a blog on local farmers in the 2012 Archibull Prize.

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BERRY'S BEST

A NEW book and CD provide drivers with a guide to the highlights of Berry and its surrounds.

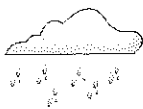
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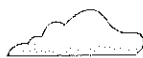
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WEATHER FORECAST



MONDAY

Cloudy. Isolated showers contracting inland by early evening.
Min: 15 Max: 22



TUESDAY

Partly cloudy. The chance of showers early in the morning.
Min: 14 Max: 26



WEDNESDAY

Mostly sunny.
Min: 15 Max: 27

MARINE FORECAST

Monday: Southerly 15/20 knots turning east to southeasterly below 10 knots in the morning. Seas: Up to 2 metres decreasing to below 1 metre during the afternoon. Swell: Southeasterly about 1.5 metres.
Tuesday: Variable about 10 knots becoming easterly 10/15 knots during the afternoon then decreasing to about 10 knots during the evening. Seas: Below 1 metre. Swell: Easterly 1.5 metres.

Can do people help local cancer sufferers



THE Can Assist Cancer Assistance Network fund-raiser monster summer raffle was drawn on Friday putting more than \$2000 into the local kitty.

Can Assist Shoalhaven was established two years ago and has helped 50 local residents in that time through financial hardship while undergoing cancer treatment.

The major prize was the box trailer filled with various items that has been parked in the foyer of NAB. It was valued at more than \$2000. The prize was won by Phil Douvan.

Second prize, a Masport lawnmower valued at \$429 was won by Kathy Harris.

Third prize a family pass to Jamheroo Action Park was won by John Fergusson of Bomaderry.

For more information about Can Assist Shoalhaven phone 44220705.

LOCAL ASSISTANCE: June Wardle from Can Assist, Sam Moore from Can Assist, deputy mayor John Wells, Can Assist Shoalhaven founder Kate Moore, Suellyn Mann and Tracey Sheehy from the NAB and Can Assist Shoalhaven president Lyn Gerstenberg at the organisation's monster raffle draw Friday.

Guile to take issue higher 'We've been hogtied,' says Wells

By ADAM WRIGHT

THE events that unfolded at Thursday night's extraordinary meeting might be taken to the NSW Ombudsman.

The extraordinary meeting to vote on the rate rise has been labelled an ironic waste of money by Cr Andrew Guile who on Friday said he would take the process up with the NSW Ombudsman.

Mr Guile said he thought the meeting would have cost council between \$6000 and \$7000 but was not needed because an agreement had previously been sought with IPART to allow an extension of the rates application deadline.

"I think council deliberately put this up at the 11th hour to force the rate rise through on numbers."

"It's ironic that we are wasting money by having that meeting to make a decision aimed at raising more money."

"I think someone had gotten wind of my rescission motion, but I didn't tell them."

"I thought that if it could delay the rate increase for another year then that would be a win for everyone."

"That would give us time to engage with the community about a rate rise."

"To circumvent that by going behind the back of the elected council and lobbying for an extension is an issue I'll be raising with the Ombudsman."

DEPUTY Mayor John Wells has accused the previous elected council of hogtying the new council.

"The outgoing council, nine of whom did not stand for re-election, splashed out in the end having achieved very little over the four years of its term and committed to a number of significant projects and set up the processes to get the tender work going on those," Mr Wells said.

"I do note the sports centre had been on council's books for a number of years."

"Those projects have been fully funded, Nowra pool and the indoor sports centre from the cash reserves in place."

"It is going to put us through a pinch. Council is endeavouring to do its best to provide those replacements and upgraded assets and in the case of the indoor sports centre a new asset."

"We accept that is going to put us under the hammer over the term of this council which we think was a deliberate strategy of the outgoing council to hamstring us and bind us up."

Mr Wells said the outgoing council voted all the funds in this financial year and created an enormous spike in council's capital works program "that the organisation simply can't deliver."

"You only have to look at the city's books, the outgoing council committed the organisation to 10 years of deficit budgeting - in the order of \$4 to \$5 million per year over 10 years and that will leave the community with a \$55 million black hole."

Shoalhaven Mayor Joanna Gast continued to defend the rate rise.

"It would be irresponsible, but politically popular for me to say no to a rate increase, and I considered that," she said.

"But I'm not here to be politically popular, I'm here to make a difference to this council and that means council has to reduce costs."

"We inherited this. We have only been here two months and we already have to make these decisions decisions that should have been made before."

Christmas Carols

with the

Salvation Army Band

Monday Dec 17:

Christmas Hamper distribution at
The Salvation Army Hall at St Anns St & Salisbury Drive,
East Nowra 10am

Thursday Dec 20:

Carols at the park Hanson's Road, Nowra 6pm

Sunday Dec 23:

10am Worship meeting & Craig's Family Farewell

Listen to 2ST after 3pm for special announcements in bad weather or phone 4423 2102 or 0427 287 396

OFFICE CLOSURES:

Welfare Deliveries End December 14
Corps/Welfare/Financial Counselling Office
at The Salvation Army Hall at St Anns Street &
Salisbury Drive East Nowra will be closed from
Friday December 21 and re-opens Monday January 7
Red Shield Family Store at 182 Princes Highway
South Nowra (Behind Pacific Furniture) closes
Friday December 21 and re-opens January 7
Pick-ups and deliveries from January 9



~ Shoalhaven (Nowra) celebrating 128 years ~
A church for everyone ~ Sunday Services @ 10am & 6pm
Christmas Day Service 9am



Council applies for rate rise of 4.6pc above pegging limit

SHOALHAVEN City Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for permission to increase general rates by 4.6 per cent above the rate pegging limit (3.4 per cent) for the current financial year.

This amounts to an 8 per cent rates hike.

Council said the increase would provide it with an additional \$2.3 million, all of which would be allocated towards road and path renewal in 2013/14 (\$1.8 million on roads and \$500,000 on pathways).

Council staff have created a discussion paper to explain the proposed rating increase, outline council's current budget situation and identify the specific areas the additional funding would be spent.

Shoalhaven Mayor Joanna Gash said she hoped all local residents would take the time to read the simple document before making comment on the area's future rating structure.

"It is little secret that council will be facing a situation of increasing deficits over the coming years if expenditure is kept at similar levels," said Cr Gash.

"Recent survey data, carried out as part of the ongoing Community Strategic Plan review, show that the majority of respondents are currently dis-

satisfied with the quality of the area's roads and paths.

"While this is understandable, current financial modelling indicates that without a significant increase in revenue council will be unable to fund desired future capital works programs or increase spending on the maintenance and renewal of existing infrastructure assets.

"If council chooses not to proceed with the special variation application, there will need to be a significant reduction in service levels with council already having made a commitment to increase spending on roads over the coming year.

The confirmation of the bid to lift rates above the rate pegging limit brought swift condemnation from Cr Andrew Guile, who accused council of leaving community consultation to the last minute.

"After ramming through an 8 per cent rate rise late last year, Shoalhaven City Council has again left the required community consultation to the last minute in a bid to add \$8 million to the budget of council over the next three years," Cr Guile said, accusing Mayor Gash of not being upfront about the reason for the increase.

"On the one hand Joanna Gash says we are forced into the increases or we will face cash flow issues into the future while

at the same time the accompanying brochure says that the increases will be channelled to new projects. Both cannot be true.

"Not one Gash party councillor has provided any justification for why this is 8 per cent and not 4 per cent or 12 per cent.

"Other savings have still not been quantified but I guess if you are committed to increasing taxes and you've got the numbers on the floor then all the other measures are just meant to be a distraction.

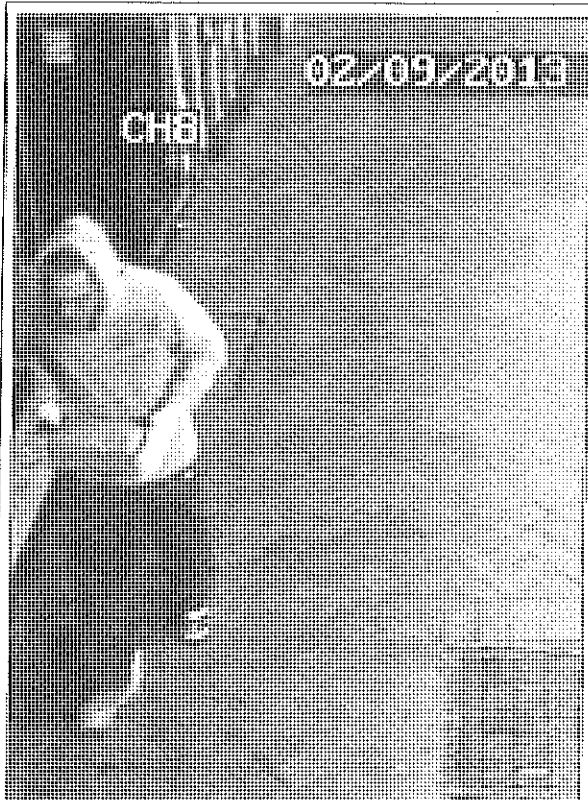
"It is classic political party arrogance," he said.

Cr Guile dismissed the research conducted for the Community Strategic Review as a "sham".

"The 180 surveys even included councillors as well as a number of other specially chosen people. There was no attempt to get a cross-section of the community or even to get a statistically significant response."

Cr Guile encouraged members of the community to speak up, urging them contact the general manager and all councillors to voice their concerns.

The Special Variation Discussion Paper can be found on council's website www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au, at the Nowra and Ulladulla Administration Centres, all local libraries and leisure centres.



SUSPECT: Police are keen to interview this man, who was recorded on a shop CCTV after allegedly breaking into a store and making off with the safe.

Camera records theft

POLICE are investigating a break-in at a Nowra store in which a safe has been stolen.

In the early hours of Saturday morning CCTV footage from a neighbouring shop captured a man using a brick to break the front door of Gallety 7 in Rodway Arcade.

Footage shows the man entering the business where he allegedly kicked over and removed the safe, which contained a small amount of cash.

The break-in took all of 35 seconds.

Alma Webb, who has owned the business for nearly seven years, said apart from having a broken glass window on another occasion it was the first break-in she has suffered.

"It was amazing how quickly it all transpired," she said.

Anyone who recognises the man in the CCTV image should contact Nowra Police on 4421 9699.

Draft LEP back on exhibition

THE draft Shoalhaven Local Environment Plan (LEP) is likely to be back on public exhibition following Monday's Development Committee meeting.

Shoalhaven City Council has received approval from the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure to re-exhibit the draft LEP.

While the majority of council's changes were accepted by the department, the approval to re-exhibit remains conditional on a series of small amendments.

These include a number of rezonings considered

by the state government to be lacking in justification, not fair and without a strategic approach.

They include rezoning within Lake Wollumbulla catchment, changes to the proposed Crams Road Urban Release Area and rezoning contrary to the South Coast Regional Strategy.

A further amendment provided by the department is the changing of its name from Shoalhaven LEP 2009 to Shoalhaven LEP 2013.

A report on the re-exhibition approval and its conditions will be considered by council's Development Committee on Monday, February 18.

Jervis Bay Kinesiology Centre

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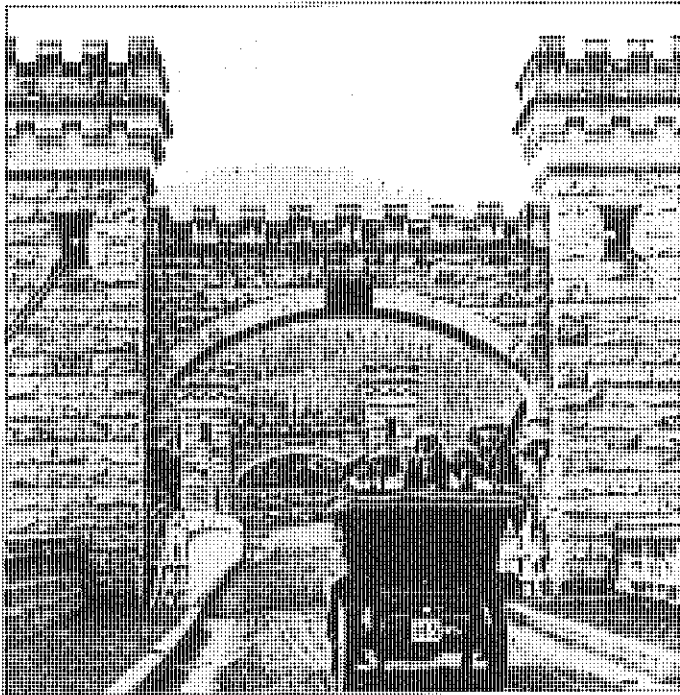
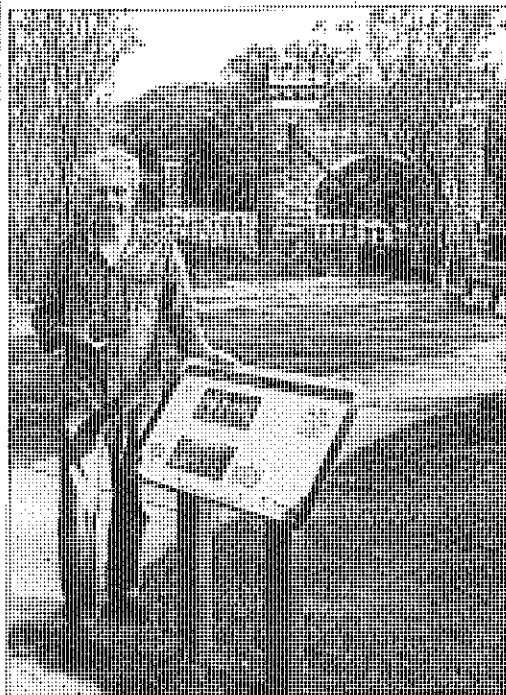
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Wednesday 6 March 2013 10.30am — 12.00pm Bomaderry RSL Club 5 Bunbarra Street Bomaderry	Wednesday 6 March 2013 2.30pm — 4.30pm Milton-Ulladulla Ex Servos Club 212-222 Princes Hwy Ulladulla	Thursday 7 March 2013 10.00am — 12.30pm Batemans Bay Soldiers Club Beach Road Batemans Bay



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NEW EXPERIENCE: President of the Kangaroo Valley Tourist Association Chris Warren with one of the new interpretative signs that tell the story of the historic Hampden Bridge and Kangaroo Valley. **RIGHT:** Hampden Bridge in the early 20th century.

History gets a helping handout

THE Kangaroo Valley Pioneer Museum has been granted \$30,000 by the Department of Primary Industries to help with the construction of a new conservation shed.

"The funds will go towards building a conservation shed in order to store machinery and conserve many of the historical objects, so we can actually show people how they worked in the old days," said president of the museum settlement trust Elaine Apperley.

"For instance we recently restored an old clock which has been a popular attraction.

"We are excited about the funds we have received."

As well as the \$30,000 grant the settlement trust received a \$30,000 low interest loan.

Kiama MP Gareth Ward recently presented the grant to museum members, saying it would allow the museum to preserve local history.

"It will provide storage of some really impressive examples of old machinery and also help with the preservation of these valuable items.

"It will also ensure they remain safe and secure."

"The volunteers at the Kangaroo Valley Pioneer Museum really do exemplify the strong spirit of community and volunteerism we have in the Shoalhaven."

A tale of suspense and achievement

By **ROBERT CRAWFORD**

A NEW educational tourism experience that tells the story of Kangaroo Valley's historic Hampden Bridge is to be launched on Monday by the Kangaroo Valley Tourist Association.

The Hampden Bridge Experience will tell the story of the bridge's history from when work started in 1895, to its opening in 1898 through to the recently completed \$4.8 million restoration by Roads and Maritime Services.

Visitors will be able to read new interpretative signs on Australia's last surviving wooden suspension bridge on a self-guided walk from the bridge to the village, and see a short film about its restoration and history, online or on a smart phone.

The interpretative walk features seven benches, each with an interpretive sign, that explain seven key features of Kangaroo Valley.

The benches are made from the remaining timber from the bridge restoration, and are designed to aesthetically match the original bridge.

President of the Kangaroo Valley Tourist Association Chris Warren said the theme of the experience was a story of hope and respect.

"The bridge was built just before Federation in

BRIDGE FACTS

- Hampden Bridge is more than 77 metres long and was built using local sandstone and timber. Only the steel cables which were made in England were sourced outside the district.
- Worked started in 1895 and was completed in 1898.
- The bridge is named after Viscount Hampden, the Governor of NSW from 1895 to 1899.
- The bridge was declared open to traffic on February 2, 1898 by local resident John King and six days later the largest flood since 1870 washed away the old bridge which was two metres lower.
- The bridge was designed by the Department of Public Works engineer Ernest De Burgh and constructed by the company Loveridge and Hudson.
- The RMS restored the bridge recently at a cost of \$4.8 million.

1898 and the experience reflects the hope of a new country," he said.

"Respect includes the bridge restoration, Aboriginal cultural heritage and community sustainability activities.

"It is a great example of community and government respecting the past, so that future generations can admire Australia's heritage."

Mr Warren said the heritage listed bridge was the only surviving 19th century timber-decked vehicular suspension bridge in Australia.

"It is the second most important bridge in Australia to the Sydney Harbour Bridge," he said.

"Its remarkable stone towers are a beautiful sight and visitors from all around Australia love to stop and take pictures.

"It's one of the country's most remarkable engineering achievements still in use today."

The \$20,000 project for the Hampden Bridge Experience has been funded by the local community, with donations from Roads and Maritime Services and the Shoalhaven Tourism Board.

"The project has created a new entertaining tourism experience in Kangaroo Valley, which respects the past and conserves the heritage for future generations," Mr Warren said.

Money from rates hike to fix roads and paths

QUINNS Lane, Currarong Road and Jindy Andy Lane will be renewed with the extra funds generated by Shoalhaven City Council's proposed 8 per cent rate increase.

Council is intending to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for permission to increase general rates by 4.6 per cent above the rate pegging limit (3.4 per cent) for the current financial year.

The increase will generate an additional \$2.3 million, all of which would be exclusively allocated towards road and path renewal in 2013-14 (\$1.8 million on roads and \$500,000 on pathways).

On Tuesday night, the Policy and Resources committee recommended the funding from the proposed rate rise be allocated towards Currarong Road (5.6km to 6.8km from Coonemia Road), \$624,000; Jindy Andy Lane (0.0km to 0.7km from Comerong Island

Road), \$364,000; Quinns Lane (0.4km to 0.8km from the Princes Highway), \$512,000; Lake Conjola Entrance Road (within tourist park), \$300,000 and Orient Point road works, to be determined.

The committee also recommended funding from the proposed rate rise be allocated towards the following path projects: Woollamia Road (community) path, \$200,000; Princes Highway (south of Canberra Crescent) path, \$90,000; and the Berry Street, Nowra CBD path, \$210,000.

Shoalhaven mayor, Joanna Gash said council had chosen the most pressing road renewal projects to proceed with.

The Special Variation Discussion Paper can be found on council's website www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au, at the Nowra and Ulladulla administration centres, all local libraries and leisure centres.

Submissions can be lodged until 5pm Friday, March 1.

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Rate rise: where the money will be spent

SHOALHAVEN City Council's Policy and Resources Committee has recommended the road and path projects to be funded from the proposed Special Variation rate rise.

Council is intending to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for permission to increase general rates by 4.6 per cent above the rate pegging limit (3.4 per cent) for the current financial year.

The proposed increase is estimated to provide Council with an additional \$2.3 million, all of which would be exclusively allocated towards road and path renewal in 2013/14 (\$1.8 million on roads and \$500,000 on pathways).

The Policy and Resources committee last night recommended the funding from the proposed rate rise be allocated towards the following road renewal projects -

- Currarong Road (5.6km to 6.8km from Coonemia Road) - \$624,000
- Jindy Andy Lane (0.0km to 0.7km from Comerong Is Road) - \$364,000
- Quinns Lane (0.4km to 0.8km from Princes Highway) - \$512,000
- Lake Conjola Entrance Road (within tourist park) - \$300,000
- Orient Point road works - to be determined.

The Policy and Resources committee last night recommended the funding from the proposed rate rise be allocated towards the following path projects -

- Woolamia Road (community) path - \$200,000
- Princes Highway (south of Canberra Crescent) path - \$90,000
- Berry Street Nowra CBD path - \$210,000

Shoalhaven City Council Mayor, Joanna Gash said Council had chosen the most pressing road renewal projects to proceed with.

"After speaking with the community, Council has moved to allocate any increased funding from the proposed rate increase towards road and path projects," said Cllr Gash.

"While there are certainly a wide number of local roads that could benefit from increased funding,

Council has identified what are considered to be the most pressing projects to move forward with.

"Both Currarong Road and Jindy Andy Lane projects have deteriorated rapidly from a combination of additional traffic loading and wet weather and currently require a high level of maintenance to keep safe.

"The proposed additional funding would also allow Council to remediate the entire length of Quinns Lane as the 2012/13 budget will currently complete rehabilitation on half the Lane.

Mayor Gash said she anticipated the local community would be very pleased to see further funding for path projects as part of the proposed rate increase.

"I have spoken to a lot of local residents expressing concerns at the quality of the pathway in Berry Street within Nowra CBD area," said Cllr Gash.

"This additional funding would enable Council to replace the old concrete and asphalt sections of the path between Emporium Lane and Worrigee Street."

"This work was previously identified by Nowra CBD Action and I am pleased that staff have supported this as a priority project to be funded from additional rates."

Council staff have created a Discussion Paper to help residents better understand the proposed rating increase, outline Council's current budget situation and identify the specific areas the additional funding would be spent.

The Special Variation Discussion Paper can be found on Council's website www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au, at the Nowra and Ulladulla Administration Centres, all local libraries and Leisure Centres.

Submissions are able to be lodged until 5pm Friday 1 March 2013.



THE BALD TRUTH: Rosa Granelli is supporting the fight against blood cancers by shaving her head.

Rosa ready to lose her locks

By GLENN ELLARD

FOR years Rosa Granelli has been renowned for her thick, dark and curly head of hair.

However that is about to change as the 22-year-old prepares to lose her locks for charity as part of the World's Greatest Shave.

A staff member at Ulladulla's Target Country store, Ms Granelli admitted she was nervous about shedding the hair that frequently sported different colours, and was usually adorned with a flower, but she wanted to help in the fight against leukaemia.

"I'm so nervous, but I think it will be an exhilarating experience because I know I'm doing it for a greater purpose," she said.

"I believe it's a good cause and I've always wanted to help."

Ms Granelli said fundraising had been easier than she expected, mostly because of her hair.

"Everyone always comments on my hair," she said.

When people do, she tells them of her plans to shave it all off in the Target store on March 16, and "a lot of people donate on the spot".

The donations have resulted in Ms Granelli changing her fundraising target from \$700 to \$1500, and she has offered the biggest donor the chance to shave "my crazy, curly mop".

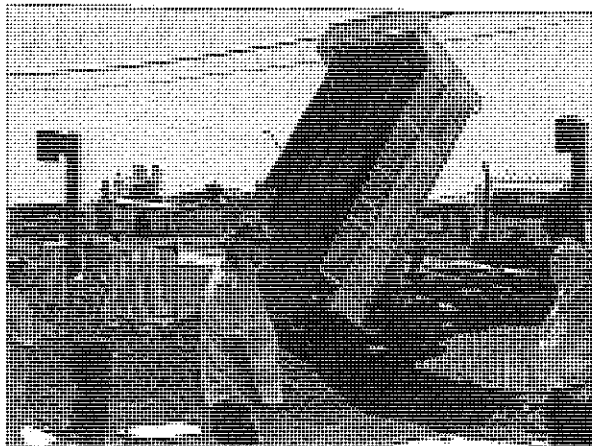
That "mop" requires plenty of time and effort to maintain, including brushing it while in the shower, otherwise it ends up as an afro.

In addition the costs of shampoo and conditioner "eat into my budget, especially the conditioner".

Instead she was planning to embrace being hairless for a while, along with embracing a new love of hats.

Donations for Ms Granelli's fundraising efforts to beat and treat leukaemia can be made online at my.leukaemiafoundation.org.au/rosagranelli.

Donations can also be placed in tins within the Target Country store.



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WE DON'T RATE IT

Basin residents oppose rate hike

By DAMIAN MCGILL

COMMUNITY members approached recently to take part in a survey about Shoalhaven City Council's plans for an 8 per cent rate hike were scathing in many of their replies.

"They will just waste this money as well."

"We don't need a rate rise."

"Why don't they [council] work within their means?"

These were just some of the responses collected.

Sanctuary Point residents Tony Blain and Allen Kruse conducted the survey as concerned community members and not as part of any group.

They approached residents near the IGA supermarkets in St Georges Basin and Sanctuary Point.

Being Saturday morning some people were in a hurry but 90 per cent of the people approached stopped and signed the petition.

People were worried they would not be able to afford to pay their rates.

Mr Blain and Mr Kruse collected around 500 signatures, which will be presented to council.

The two men were surprised by what they were told.

"Many people were not aware that council was increasing the rates," Mr Blain said.

Council did encourage the local community to have its say on the proposed rate rise by taking the time to read a discussion paper.

Mr Blain did not think people were even aware the discussion paper existed.

They said well publicised community meetings would have been a better way to go.

Shoalhaven mayor Joanna Gash said the community would be consulted as the process continued.

She reminded ratepayers that at this stage council had applied for 4.6 per cent increase above the rate pegging limit (3.4 per cent) for one financial year and that the application had not been approved.

Cr Gash also acknowledged the community's views.

"I don't want to be head of a council not living within its means," she said.

It was also suggested that the new council did not have a mandate to apply for the rise.

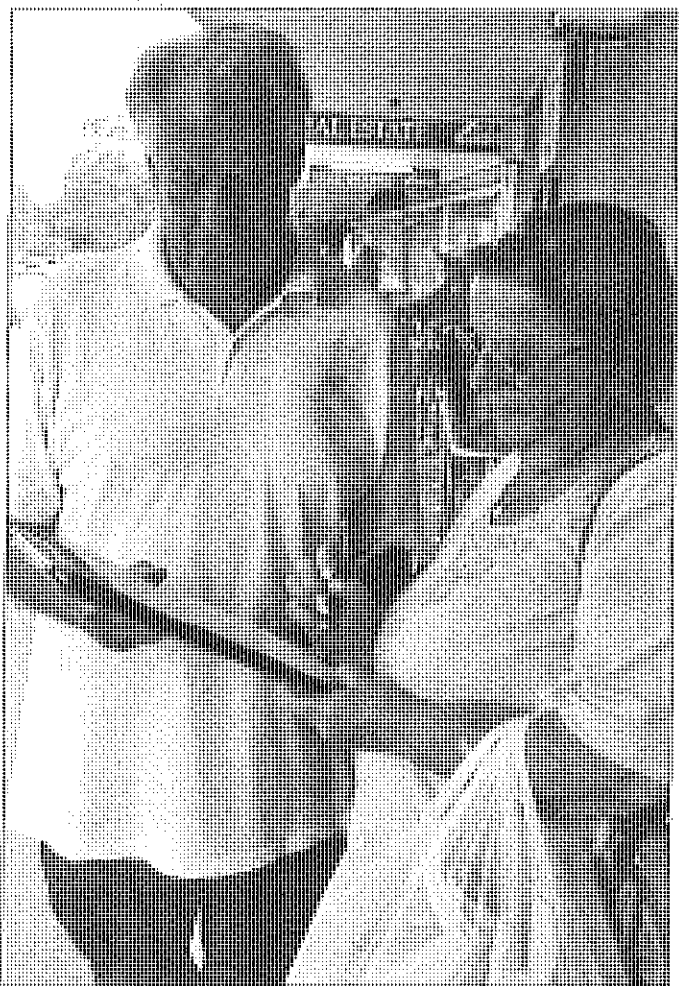
Cr Gash asked how she could have gone to the people with plans for a rate rise when before being elected mayor she was not even aware of council's financial situation.

Meanwhile, the discussion paper aimed to help residents get a better understanding of the proposed increase.

It outlined council's current budget situation and identified the specific areas where the additional funding would be spent.

Submissions on the rates increase were closed last week.

Mr Blain and Mr Kruse, on behalf of all residents, asked for community consultation take place to determine where the additional funds were spent.



NOT HAPPY: Tony Blain collects a signature from Sanctuary Point resident Zofia Maslinski, who is not happy with the proposed 8 per cent rate hike.

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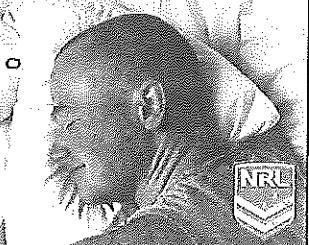
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Round one entry form appears today and also on Wednesday, March 6. Normal rounds in each Monday and Friday South Coast Register editions.



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LTPM/12/00502

Application for a Special General Rates Increase by 8% in 2013-14**File 46813E**

Author	Record No	Summary of Submission	For	Against
	D13/32237	Supports the increase and would even support a greater increase %	x	
	D13/40287	Supports the increase but not for cycle ways	x	
	D13/35175	Fully supports the 8% rates rise	x	
	D13/37778	Not in support of 8%. Inefficiencies, carelessness and poor administration blamed.		x
	D13/32193	Supports the increase for roads, not paths and cycle ways	x	
	D13/38430	Supports one off rate increase – funds used only for road and path projects - Currarong Road a priority require substantial work	x	
	D13/42517	Supports increase provided funds are spent wholly on roads and paths and that ownership/accountability for repairs is undertaken	x	
	D13/41309	No major developments put forward by Council to substantiate additional increase above the 3.4%.		x
	D13/38426	Supports increase provided funds go to roads and paths. Suggests Council could provide an extra tip voucher per year for everyone.	x	
	D13/42104	Supports increase provided funds go to roads and footpaths	x	
	D13/34653	Supports increase provided funds go to roads and footpaths	x	
	D13/35271	Does not support increase that pays for street lights that are on in daylight		x
	D13/38361	Large concentration of retirees and unemployed should be considered in respect to rate rise affordability		x
	D13/32257	Does not support increase. Council should instead review expenditure from last 10 years, better management and scrutiny of Council operations.		x
	D13/35489	In support of 'modest' rate rise – South Sussex Inlet area needs funds allocated to more footpaths, kerb and guttering, fixing potholes and better drainage	x	
	D13/35708	Opposed to rate increase. Lives in Kioloa and does not believe any significant investment undertaken in that area.		x

Author	Record No	Summary of Submission	For	Against
	D13/32258	Oppose rate rise. Rates wasted on poorly managed repairs and schemes.		x
	D13/40057	Opposes rate rise. Survey did not cover a wide enough area. Sussex Inlet community mainly retirees.		x
	D13/34708	Cannot afford the increase.		x
	D13/37344	Opposes increase. Council needs to correctly manage the works. Substandard products requiring revisits and repairs.		x
	D13/33052	Supports increase. Suggests that a % of the increase be put to implementing energy efficiency strategies.	x	
	D13/43180	Does not support increase - doesn't agree with Survey results in Discussion Paper. Increase in rates could only be justified if result is improved infrastructure and services, particular to non-urban villages. Wants increase fully justified in a wider budgetary context.		x
	D13/43183	Object to increase – Council needs to improve standard of repairs/reconstructions, review current specifications, standards and procedures and allow more of the private sector, through competitive tendering to complete works.		x
	D13/43950	Supports increase noting that Currarong Road is mentioned as one of the projects Council would be undertaking as a result of the increase.	x	
	D13/45152	Objects saying not enough public consultation. Difficult enough to make the household budget stretch as it is.		x
	D13/45301	Against the rise. Considered the survey cynical exercise. If rates approved, savings to proposed increase will be shift expenditure in local businesses and on local business services and is contrary to promoting local business. Suggest Council outsources construction work to private contractors to standards specified by Council including sustainability.		x
	D13/45852	Many residents are senior citizens – wants proof of intent by demonstrated progress to decrease operating expenditure by \$1m by 014/15. Change structure and staffing levels and examine works and services provided by Council – improve efficiency.		x
	D13/43883	Supports rise however 8% needs to benefit all 49 towns and villages and workings based on a fair and most urgent need of priority. Concerned that as Shoalhaven increases in development the opportunity of council employment should also be in the best interest of Council.	x	

Author	Record No	Summary of Submission	For	Against
	D13/45437	Strongly opposes rate rise.		x
	D13/43180	Until the issues are properly addressed in a soundly based survey and discussion, the increase in rates above the 3.4% annual growth allowed should not be countenanced. Any increase must be fully and publically justified.		x
	D13/43958	Objects. Survey and results not representative. Wants to see SCC's productivity increased.		x
	D13/43905	Strongly objects – justification for increase a sham.		x
	D13/45842	Supports the increase especially if the kerb and guttering of River Rd., Lake Tabourie is included.	x	
	D13/43851	Objects to increase and requests his dissenting view on the submission be included in Council's report to IPART.		x
	D13/47194	Does not support additional increase and Council should be looking at more effective and efficient ways of delivering their services rather than spending above their means.		x
	D13/47186	Against the increase. Suggests Council looks at technology to lower Council's power costs and review staffing levels.		x
	D13/47169	Opposed to increase. SCC to lift its game in achieving value for ratepayer's money and productivity improvement, finding savings in its operations.		x
	D13/48095	Opposed to increase – 86 year old widowed pensioner cannot afford the rate rise. Advised that her friends also do not want and cannot afford the rate rise but they don't have computers and it would have been better for Council to send out a questionnaire with the Rates Notices so that they could make submissions.		x
	D13/48095	Invalid pensioner and daughter of Dorothy Poulter also objects.		x
	D13/48057	Representation on behalf of Forum – feedback from members was varied. Most were not prepared to accept a drop in services from Council. Comments included: <i>We want things. We have to pay for them BUT is Council apportioning money in a balanced way?</i> <i>If rates increased, funds be put towards works to adapt to impacts of sea level rise and climate change – replacement of low lying bridges over Burrill lake, Racecourse Creek and Ulladulla Harbour at risk of flooding from both sea and heavy rain events.</i> <i>No if streetlights are on in daylight but yes if money goes towards more efficient street lights and road signs 'Ulladulla' and not 'Batemans Bay'.</i> <i>Rates to be set according to efficiency and performance – both sadly lacking at Council.</i>		x

Author	Record No	Summary of Submission	For	Against
		<p><i>Ratepayers want value for money.</i></p> <p><i>If a choice between cutting back services and paying a bit more then a proposed rate rise is supported.</i></p> <p><i>Asking at SCC to examine internal cost saving/cutting measures before simply turning to the community for more income.</i></p> <p><i>What were the increases in Councillors expenses discussed and agreed to before the subject of increase in rates. Have services of the area increased to warrant a rise?</i></p> <p><i>Council need to spend more wisely – all of the additional rates are being spent on road and paths which will only benefit a small number of people.</i></p>		
	D13/47688	Disapproves and rejects rate rise.		x
	D13/46693	As a self-funded retiree – against the rise. Council needs to decrease wasteful spending. \$1.8m to renew just 3km of road is frightening.		x
	D13/49079	Forum members request that Council not increase the rates above the pegging limit of 3.4%.		x
	D13/48317	Opposes the rate. Economy still reeling from GFC and devalued superannuation entitlements of retirees. Large proportion of Shoalhaven's residents are senior citizens on fixed incomes. Council should exercise financial restraint, seek productivity increases and operational savings instead of ratepayers bearing the brunt. Online survey did not provide people the opportunity to respond who don't have internet access or computer skills.		x
	D13/48320	Does not object to the rate rise generally but wants Council to ensure attention is paid to the needs of the Bay and Basin area – in particular footpath at Idlewild Ave., Sanctuary Point; and quality repair to potholes in Larmer Ave.	x	
	D13/49466	<p>Members very concerned about proposed 4.6% special rate variation above rate pegging limit of 3.4%. Another 8% increase will result in further hardship for all low-income ratepayers. Consideration should be given to demographics of Shoalhaven with a higher than average low-income population, large community of retirees together with current economic climate and the effect this rate variation would have on these people.</p> <p>The compound effect of the increase would set the base level for all future rate increases to be imposed on Shoalhaven ratepayers.</p> <p>Instead the Assn would like Council to find funding for roads and paths from other sources such as efficiency saving within Council's current expenditure and with the announcement of restructuring of Council is a real possibility.</p>		x

Author	Record No	Summary of Submission	For	Against
		Sale of Council assets and the HBVA understands the needed expenditure on roads and paths but consideration for all ratepayers in the Shoalhaven is required when making decisions.		
i	D13/50207	Opposition to 8% increase. Feeling effects of GFC and every household to tighten budget with rising costs of power, water, fuel, etc. Many residents on fixed income. Council should look at options to reduce spending. Not the time to spend money on unnecessary capital works just to satisfy minority groups. Consider effects on all ratepayers.		x
	D13/47767	Semi retired citizen over 60. Over past 7 years income remained the same whilst rates have increased significantly. Land has decreased in value. Decreased water usage but water rates continue to increase. Council needs 'to live within their means' and cut the perks and consultants. Council needs to stay within rate pegging allocation and look at reworking budget, just like everyone else.		x
	D13/50361	Before applying for such an increase they request Council looks into saving money by: Investigating the efficiency of all current council processes and comparing Shoalhaven City Council's procedures with those of similar councils who are able to provide services within budget. Concerned that decisions have been based on a survey with a sample size of only 180 people. If application is made and successful, further community consultation be undertaken to determine where the additional funds are spent.		
	D13/50482	All 5 Committee members present agreed with proposal to apply for the Special Variation. There has not been an opportunity to present the discussion paper to a General Meeting of the CCB.	x	