

2011/12

In 2011/12, a special variation was approved by IPART under the new assessment process. It continued the 2010/11 approval for tourism and the resurfacing of the existing tarmac at the Merimbula airport. The approval is for 20 years.

The amount of variation also includes an amount of 0.14% for a 'Crown Land Adjustment' which the Council is able to apply for under the Local Government Act 1993 and which the Division of Local Government recommended be included in the Council's special variation approval.

			Total Expenditure in 2010/11	Total expenditure 2011/12
Merimbula Airport	\$584,148	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tourism development and promotion (SCT Ltd)	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Total	\$834,148	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000

environmental levy achievements

Council's Environmental Levy has been in place since 2003 with permanent approval from the Minister for Local Government issued in 2006. At the time Council was one of the few Council's in NSW that had a permanent Environmental Levy in place to ensure that environmental management initiatives were adequately funded.

The following amounts show actual income and expenditure for the reporting period:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| • Actual net income 2011/12 | \$342,385.58 |
| • Actual expenditure 2011/12 | \$346,379.03 |

The main expenditure areas are listed below:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • Community Environmental Works: | \$31,250.00 |
| • Vegetation Management: | \$42,762.00 |
| • Noxious Weed roadside control: | \$40,000.00 |
| • Towamba Valley Vegetation management: | \$10,000.00 |
| • Crofton, Saggittaria & Chilean Needle Grass: | \$11,000.00 |
| • Stormwater management: | \$60,000.00 |
| • Rehabilitation Works Bega River Junction: | \$65,442.00 |
| • Sustainability & Energy Footprint initiatives: | \$23,500.00 |
| • Environmental Education Initiatives: | \$17,425.00 |
| • Estuary Management: | \$ 5,000.00 |
| • Environmental Monitoring: | \$25,000.00 |
| • Pambula Lake Program: | \$ 5,000.00 |
| • Love our Lakes Program: | \$10,000.00 |

Expenditure marginally exceeded the income for the Environmental Levy in 2011/12. This additional expenditure was derived from carried forward funds from previous years.

The Community Environmental Works program is a new initiative from the Community Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan and was implemented this reporting year. Expenditure in identified projects aimed generally at environmental enhancement and improvement projects was undertaken by incorporated community groups on public lands across the shire to a value of approximately \$31,250.00. Community environmental improvement works were undertaken at Bega, Pambula, Springvale, Bermagui, and Tathra.

Environmental monitoring focussed on water quality studies at Dry River, algae studies at Merimbula Bay, and coastal lakes water quality studies at Cuttagee, Wallagoot Lake, Wapengo, Barragoot, Middle and Pambula Lakes.

Other coastal and estuarine works were also funded including work with the Love our Lakes Program that was launched during this reporting period.

Work also continued in defining Council's energy usage and footprint and building on Council's sustainability obligations.

A total of \$164,511.79 will be carried forward to the 2012/13 year from the reporting year. This carried forward amount has been derived from previous years and was largely from programs that were not able to be completed due to short falls in grant income sources.

Funds from the estuary management program make up the bulk of this carry over and were due to lower than expected grant income and subsequent demand for matching contributions. Some of these funds have been identified to match grant funding in 2012 2013 for the completion of the Shire wide coastal hazards project.

In addition significant planning has been undertaken for future projects and Council is well placed for the continuation of the Environmental Levy as the key contributor to environmental improvement and protection measures across the Bega Valley. Expenditure areas will continue to be based on the themes of waterways, biodiversity and sustainability. Specific projects in environmental management, estuary management, weed & vegetation management and erosion & sediment control will remain a focus with funds used wherever possible to leverage and expand upon government grants. In addition the Community Environmental Grants program, which was well subscribed in 2011 2012, is expected to continue to grow and will be an area where the community can undertake environmental management works on public land into the future. Further details of the Community Environmental Grants program will be separately reported on Council's web pages.

IPART SPECIAL VARIATION APPLICATION

BEGA VALLEY SHIRE COUNCIL

PART B

ATTACHMENT 2

**CONSULTATION AND
FEEDBACK DOCUMENTS**

Community consultation overview

Background

During 2009 – 2011 Bega Valley Shire Council developed the Community Strategic Plan, *Bega Valley 2030*. As a key part of this process, an Asset and Financial Sustainability Review with Professor Percy Allen and the 'Review Today' consortium was commissioned by Council in 2010 to:

- Assess the state of existing Council infrastructure
- Estimate the cost of fixing existing infrastructure and renewing it for the future
- Compare the cost of infrastructure and services under existing Council practice with that of alternative scenarios that fully rehabilitate, renew and maintain infrastructure
- Explore whether current revenue policy or a more ambitious option would be able to fund these alternative spending scenarios within responsible financial limits
- Suggest other possible measures such as productivity improvements that might assist in this task.

The resulting report was presented to Council and the community in February 2011 and recommendations were incorporated into the development of Council's *Long Term Financial Plan*.

Through the work undertaken in the *Asset and Financial Sustainability Review*, and the subsequent *Asset and Service Review in 2011/12*, Council's Long Term Financial Plan has outlined a proposed variation to rates. The proposal has been outlined and communicated to the community to detail:

1. *2013-2014* - New 2% one-off permanent increase above the 3.4% rate peg in 2014, for renewal of collector roads. This variation will raise the general rate yield by an estimated \$391,000 in 2014 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity. Total increase 5.4%.

2. *2014 – 2015* - Retained 2.5% one-off permanent increase above rate pegging in 2015 to retain the *expiring recreation and access approval*, with the options to use this amount for debt servicing or for annual project works in line with the LTFP for recreation asset renewals. This variation will retain the general rate yield at an estimated \$516,000 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity.

3. *2015 – 2016* New 2% one-off permanent increase above rate pegging in 2016 for infrastructure renewal for public domain areas and buildings. This variation will raise the general rate yield by an estimated \$433,000 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity.

The rate variations are a one-off % lift in total general rate income. With an expiring special variation, the value of a rate variation (including effect of rate pegs) is removed from the total rate income. An application to IPART anticipates the value of the rate peg, plus the amount above rate peg that is sought.

Prior to consulting with the broader community on a special variation, Council has made considerable savings to reduce the financial impact of managing the Shire's assets. Council's savings include :

- Reducing external contractor expenses - \$440,000
- Strategy development - \$180,000
- Legal fees - \$120,000
- Improved employee practices - \$600,000
- Workers compensation - \$750,000
- Technology savings - \$200,000
- Stationery and postage - \$40,000

In addition to these savings, Council has scheduled around \$300,000 efficiency savings for each year.

A special variation proposal has been considered as a last option yet a necessity to maintain Council's vital infrastructure.

The community has been engaged on numerous levels in this proposal as outlined in the consultation summary below.

Phase 1 of consultation – community survey

Community satisfaction survey

In November 2012, Council sought feedback from residents as a way of measuring the community's satisfaction of Council performance in delivery of key services and facilities. The survey aimed to provide Council with an understanding of the perceptions and needs of the local community with respect to both Council services / facilities and to customer service. The broad objectives for the Community Satisfaction Survey were to:

- Measure the importance of and satisfaction with, services and facilities provided by Council
- Compare levels of satisfaction for Council services and facilities where applicable, with the benchmark results of 2006 and 2009 as well as the *IRIS* Council benchmark database
- Assist Council in identifying service use priorities for the community
- Identify key drivers of resident dissatisfaction
- Gain an understanding of the perception held by residents towards how safe they feel in their area
- Identify priority action areas for Bega Valley Shire Council over the next 5 – 10 years.

The results of this consultation

750 residents participated in this survey. The level of satisfaction amongst the community with Council's performance is statistically unchanged from 2009 with results showing 36% felt that Council's performance was good, 44% thought it was OK and 20% provided a poor rating. Residents felt that 'Management of roads / pathways / parking' was the number one priority for the Shire, mentioned by one in five residents. This was closely followed by 'Promoting tourism' and 'Planning for growth / development / sustainability'. Full details of this consultation and results are provided through the '*2012 Bega Shire Local Government Community Survey – Management Report*'.

Deliberative Survey -

In November / December 2012 *IRIS Research* was commissioned by Bega Valley Shire Council to take the first step in measuring community sentiment towards a proposed application for a special variation to the rates. The main objectives of this study were :

- To assess the level of support and reaction to Council's proposal to apply for a special variation to rates.
- To explore rate payer satisfaction of the quality of infrastructure and the range of services and facilities provided by Bega Valley Shire Council.
- To explore rate payer importance of the Bega Valley Shire Council proposed infrastructure improvement programs.
- To assess rate payers perception on the value of the rates they pay.
- To establish rate payers awareness of Council's financial position.

Initially 1,000 residents were recruited by telephone to participate in the survey. Each recruited resident received an information package containing a letter and a brochure outlining Council's proposals and reasons for the proposed special variation. The questionnaire was only administered

to those rate payers that had **received and read** the information package so that they could make an informed choice. Rate payers were randomly selected across the Shire in proportion to population densities ensuring a geographic spread, an approximate 50/50 sex , and spread of age groups. A final sample of 407 adult rate paying decision makers was achieved.

The results of this consultation

The key finding of the survey is that just over half of surveyed rate payers (51.4%) in the Bega Valley Shire showed some level of support for a rate increase. When 'supportive' or 'very supportive' rate payers were asked why they supported an increase, 20.2% said because of the needed improvements in infrastructure.

There was however 48.6% of rate payers who would not support a rate increase, with 27.3% of unsupportive rate payers saying that rates are already expensive and 23.2% thinking current funds could be spent more wisely.

Most rate payers (73.7%) were aware that the special variation proposal would only affect general rates and not waste, water and sewer rates, while 60% of rate payers rated their understanding of the proposal as 'good' or 'excellent'

Full details of this consultation and results are provided through the '*2012 Bega Shire Local Government Rates Survey – Management Report*'.

How we used the 'Community Satisfaction Survey' and 'Deliberative Survey' information.

Based on the results of both the 'Community Satisfaction' and 'Deliberative' surveys, and the research undertaken in the development of Council's Long Term Financial Plan, on the 12th December 2012, Council elected to lodge the intention to apply for a special variation which is outlined in Council's adopted Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans and Bega Valley 2013 (Operational Plan). The model is outlined below:

1. **2013-2014** - New 2% one-off permanent increase above the 3.4% rate peg in 2014, for renewal of collector roads. This variation will raise the general rate yield by an estimated \$391,000 in 2014 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity. Total increase 5.4%.
2. **2014 – 2015** - Retained 2.5% one-off permanent increase above rate pegging in 2015 to retain the expiring recreation and access approval, with the options to use this amount for debt servicing or for annual project works in line with the LTFP for recreation asset renewals. This variation will retain the general rate yield at an estimated \$516,000 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity.
3. **2015 – 2016** New 2% one-off permanent increase above rate pegging in 2016 for infrastructure renewal for public domain areas and buildings. This variation will raise the general rate yield by an estimated \$433,000 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity.

The rate variations are a one-off % lift in total general rate income. With an expiring special variation, the value of a rate variation (including effect of rate pegs) is removed from the total rate income. An application to IPART anticipates the value of the rate peg, plus the amount above rate peg that is sought.

Although this stage of the consultation process was not a 'public exhibition period', several submissions and comments on Council's Facebook page were received during December 2012. These have been included in the *summary of written submissions attachment*

Phase 2 of consultation – stakeholder meetings

Stakeholder and key interest group meetings were held during the month of January prior to the formal public exhibition period. Invitation was by direct letter from the Mayor and included an information book on the proposed Special Variation to enable stakeholders to have a background understanding prior to the meeting. Meetings were hosted by the Mayor and attended by Councillors and selected staff. The purpose of these group meetings were to enable a personal and direct approach with key interest groups within the community, and to allow these members of the public to raise issues and concerns prior to the public exhibition period. The rates calculator which was available on line through Council's website was demonstrated at these meetings. Feedback from these sessions is outlined in the *summary of consultation feedback attachment*

Phase 3 of consultation – public exhibition period and public information meetings

Residents and ratepayers were asked to share their views and questions with Council in regards to the special variation proposal.

To help the community understand the proposal and make a decision the following information was provided:

- Web site and online rates calculator – Council's web site included the complete proposal, and a rates calculator where enquirers could input their new 2013 property valuation details and calculate the potential rates effect.
- Special Variation Brochure – an updated booklet outlining the proposal, the purpose and effects of the proposal was available on line and in hard copy. Hard copy brochures were available from Council and library branches.
- Council's Community Strategic Plan documents, including the Delivery and Operational Plan and 2013-14 Operating Budget were placed on public exhibition as of 7th February 2013. The documents which include a Special Variation proposal to rates included the following:
 - Delivery and Operational Plan 2013-14 which includes the Revenue Policy and Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)
 - Operating Budget 2013-14

The community were able to provide submissions, actively engage and participate in discussion on the special variation proposal through the following avenues:

- Public meetings – The Mayor and Councillors hosted a series of community forums on the special variation over the period of public exhibition. Forums were held in Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula and Eden. The forums provided rate payers the opportunity to meet with Councillors and informally ask questions as well as accurately calculate the impact of the proposal on their rates. Council staff were available with computers to assist community members calculate the rate impacts. The sessions were divided into two parts. In the first session members of the public were invited to bring a copy of their last rates notice and their new valuation notice from the Valuer General so that they could be show the real impact on their rates for the period of the special variation. The second session was a more formal forum chaired by the Mayor outlining the proposal, its objectives and potential impacts, providing responses to questions and issues raised and asking for an indication of support or otherwise for the proposal. A presentation was given during the second session, which is provided in the attached hard copy PowerPoint Presentation 'A special rate variation proposal explained'
- Bega Valley Views – Council's online discussion and forum website included polls, calculators and links to documents as well as specific discussion forums about the proposal, enabling community members to provide feedback to Councillors.

Deliberative survey questionnaire – the deliberative survey as conducted by IRIS in December 2012 was made available to all members of the community through the Bega Valley Views site. Feedback from this survey is provided in the *Bega Valley Views – Special Variation survey – comparison to Deliberative Survey conducted December 2012*

The ways in which the community could access information and have their say were communicated in numerous ways. These included:

- Advertising space – Bega District News 9th February
- Community Link – advertising page which ran on Wednesday 13th, Thursday 14 Friday 15th February in the Bega District News, Merimbula News Weekly and the Eden Magnet.
- Council Facebook page
- Council website
- Radio interviews held with the Mayor
- Placement of notices in Council administration building foyer and Council library branches
- Media releases

A full summary of media in relation to the special variation proposal is provided in the *media summary attachment*

How we used that information

On the 7th March 2013, Council considered all submissions, results and feedback through consultations, and information provided through the adopted Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plans.

Council Resolution

RESOLVED on the motion of Crs Britten and Allen


1. That Council submit a general special rate application to IPART consistent with the proposal adopted in Council's Long Term Financial Plan and outlined in the draft operational plan 2013-14, being:

- New 2% one-off permanent increase above the 3.4% rate peg in 2014, for renewal of collector roads. This variation will raise the general rate yield by an estimated \$391,000 in 2014 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity. Total increase 5.4%.
- Retained 2.5% one-off permanent increase above rate pegging in 2015 to retain the expiring recreation and access approval, with the options to use this amount for debt servicing or for annual project works in line with the LTFP for recreation asset renewals. This variation will retain the general rate yield at an estimated \$516,000 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity.
- New 2% one-off permanent increase above rate pegging in 2016 for infrastructure renewal for public domain areas and buildings. This variation will raise the general rate yield by an estimated \$433,000 and then be indexed by LGCI on an ongoing capacity.

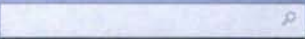
2. That should IPART not approve the application (in full or in part), Council revise the Community Strategic Plan, Asset Management Plans and Long Term Financial Plan, to reflect the impact on asset standards and finances, with appropriate community consultation; and advise IPART and DLG accordingly.

3. That Council lobby the Minister for Local Government through the local member, seeking to annually index the value of pension rebates as a minimum, and seek the full reimbursement of pension rebates by NSW government subsidy, as is the case in other States.


Project Landing Page





Bega Valley Shire Council



A Liveable Place
Community

**An Enterprising Place**
Economy

**A Sustainable Place**
Planning & Environment

**An Accessible Place**
Facilities & Infrastructure

A Leading Organisation
Council

Home » Council » Working with Us » Public Exhibition » Future Plans » provide feedback!

Working with Us
Working with Us
Committees of Council
Councillors
Jobs with Council
Public Exhibition
Public Notices
Tenders / Expressions of Interest

Future Plans.....provide feedback!

Bega Valley Shire Council has placed the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) including the 2013/14 Delivery and Operational Plan and 2013/14 Operating Budget on public exhibition for 28 days from February 7, 2013.

All submissions must be provided to Council by close of business on March 6, 2013.

Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposal

This is a great chance to learn about our proposed special rates variation and to tell us what you think. Our Bega Valley Views site allows you to read, discuss and comment on our proposal.

SRV Discussion Forum

The following questions have been posted for your comment:


- ▶ Which Council services would you like see improved and why?
- ▶ What community infrastructure would you like to see improved and how will it affect your usage?
- ▶ What would you like to see Bega Valley Shire Council do more of to contribute to your lifestyle and community?
- ▶ What is the ONE BIG THING that you would like to see in your community?

SRV Survey

Please take a couple of minutes to complete our survey. Your views and comments will be considered included as part of Council's submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for their consideration.

- ▶ Special Rate Variation Survey

Bega Valley Views



Visit Bega Valley Views and have your say and help shape the future of the Bega Valley

Understanding Our Future Planning

The documents which include a Special Variation proposal to rates are on exhibition for a total of 28 calendar days and include the following:

- ▶ Delivery and Operational Plan 2013/14 which includes the Revenue Policy
- ▶ Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)
- ▶ Operating Budget 2013/14

Submissions on these documents will be received up until the close of business on March 6, 2013. These documents are also available at Council's main office and libraries.

Understanding My Rates

- ▶ Special Variation brochure
- ▶ Calculate your rate using our Rates calculator
- ▶ Use the interactive map to see the distribution of land values within the shire

How can I have my say?

On-line

Council's consultation page, Bega Valley Views www.begavalleyviews2030.com.au is open for comments, questions and also hosts an online survey. Comments are welcome on the Bega Valley Views discussion page and will be considered with submissions.

In writing:

Submissions are invited and can be made to:

The General Manager
Bega Valley Shire Council
PO Box 492
Bega NSW 2550

Submissions can also be made by fax (02)6499 2200 or by email council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au by close of business on March 6, 2013.

In person

In addition to written responses during the exhibition period, Bega Valley shire Council has announced four public workshops to be held in the shire to discuss the proposed Special Variation rates increase.

The public workshops will provide residents across the shire with an opportunity to see what the proposed increase means in dollars and cents, and to discuss their concerns with Councillors. The four workshops booked in Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula and Eden, will provide the community the opportunity to be shown how to work out the cost of the increase for their individual properties.

In person

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The public workshops will provide residents across the shire with an opportunity to see what the proposed increase means in dollars and cents, and to discuss their concerns with Councillors. The four workshops booked in Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula and Eden, will provide the community the opportunity to be shown how to work out the cost of the increase for their individual properties.

Council staff will be available at the public meetings with laptop computers to work out what the Special Variation means in dollar terms for anyone who attends. For this purpose we ask that people bring with them their new land values.

These workshops are important not only to hear the voice of the community, but also as a way to communicate how much the Special Variation will cost, what it is for and what we are doing as an organisation in terms of lessening the impact through savings and efficiency gains.*

Details of the workshops are as follows:

- ▶ **Bermagui**
Monday 18 February 2013
Bermagui Community Centre
6:00pm – 8:00pm
- ▶ **Bega**
Tuesday 19 February 2013
Bega Valley Council Chambers
6:00pm – 8:00pm
- ▶ **Merimbula**
Wednesday 20 February 2013
Club Sapphire, Merimbula
6:00pm – 8:00pm
- ▶ **Eden**
Thursday 21 February 2013
Eden Fisherman's Club
6:00pm – 8:00pm

All submissions must be provided to Council by close of business on March 6, 2013.

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Register

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Your Email Address

We will send a verification email to this address

Choose a Screen Name

This will appear on the site next to any comments you make or questions you ask.

Choose a Password

Retype Password

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Gender

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Bega Valley Views.....have your say



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Your Rates.....securing community infrastructure and services.

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Your Rates.....securing community infrastructure and services.

Bega Valley Shire Council is responsible for delivering a range of services and maintaining an extensive range of infrastructure including roadways, footpaths, cycle ways, stormwater drainage and community facilities.

Like most local governments across NSW, our service delivery and infrastructure maintenance costs have been increasing faster than the ability of the Council to generate revenue, which has resulted in roads, stormwater

infrastructure and other assets deteriorating at an unacceptable rate.

To address the increasing gap between Council revenue and costs, Council is investigating a proposal to apply for a Special Rates Variation.

We're seeking your thoughts and solutions to help secure community infrastructure and services.

You can participate in the following ways:

- [Review associated documents](#) in the library.
- Calculate your rates using the [Rates Calculator](#)
- Complete the [Special Rates Variation Survey](#)
- Send Council your [private comment](#)
- Add your ideas and comments anonymously to the [discussion forums](#)
- Ask us a [question](#)

Your views and feedback are important. Please have your say and take a moment to encourage your colleagues, friends and neighbours to also participate.

Your feedback is appreciated and highly valued.

Like

Be the first of your friends to like this.

The following links reload the page with different content below.

- [SRV Discussion Forum](#)
- [Ask a Question](#)
- [Comment Privately](#)
- [Survey](#)

SRV Survey

Please take a couple of minutes to complete the following survey. Your views and comments will be considered included as part of Council's submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for their consideration.

Please respond to the following on a scale of 1-10. (1 = extremely dissatisfied – 10 = extremely satisfied) optional

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How aware are you of the amount you pay in general rates and what this is spent on?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with availability and quality of infrastructure provided by council?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with the range of services for the community provided by council?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How important is the implementation of programs to provide better infrastructure and services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What is your level of awareness of Council's adopted long term plans?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What is your level of awareness of Council's financial position?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you understand Council's proposal for a special rates variation? optional

Yes ☐ Yes No ☐ No

Do you understand that Council's proposal only affects general rates and not waste, water and sewage? optional

Yes ☐ Yes No ☐ No

Do you support a small increase of approximately \$20 in your general rates in 2014 and 2016 to pay for improved roads and community buildings? optional

Yes ☐ Yes No ☐ No

Do you support the retention of the existing small increase to your general rates in 2015 to continue the renewal of recreational infrastructure? optional

Yes ☐ Yes No ☐ No

Do you understand the process Council must follow in order to propose and apply for a special rates variation? optional

Yes ☐ Yes No ☐ No

Submit

Cancel

- [use the Budget calculator \(collapse widget\)](#) use the Budget calculator [cancel](#)

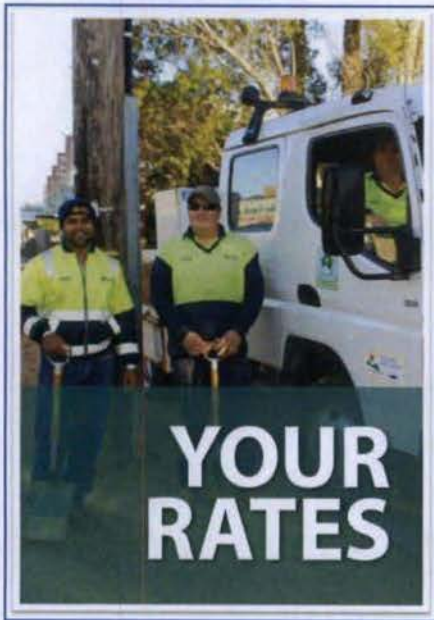


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your rates

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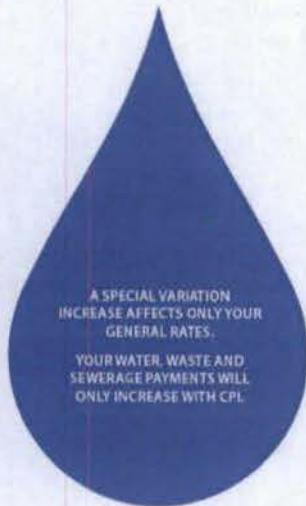
- [Understanding our proposal to rates \(459 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [2013-14 Budget \(592 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Revenue Policy 2013-2014 \(156 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Long Term Financial Plan 2013 \(1 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)

[more...](#)



• [Related Projects \(collapse widget\)](#) Related Projects

• [Bega Valley Views 2030](#)



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Enter your land valuation and quantity of items here:

General Rates		Quantity
Residential Land value:		100,000
Residential Base Rate		1
Charges		
Sewerage Charge		1
Stormwater Levy		1
Water Access/Number of meters	20mm	1
Domestic Waste		1
Domestic Garden		1

Total rates increase with the introduction of an SV:	\$15.79 per annum
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Comparison Rates and Charges - with and without the SV:

General Rates	Quantity	Rate	SV Rate	Total Cost	SV Cost	Difference
Residential Land value	100,000	0.0036940	0.0037700	\$369.40	\$377.00	\$7.60
Residential Base Rate	1	418.46	426.65	\$418.46	\$426.65	\$8.19
Charges						
Sewerage Charge	1	1080.53	1080.53	\$1,080.53	\$1,080.53	-
Stormwater Levy	1	25.00	25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	-
Water Access	1	193.10	193.10	\$193.10	\$193.10	-
Domestic Waste	1	383.18	383.18	\$383.18	\$383.18	-
Domestic Garden	1	52.47	52.47	\$52.47	\$52.47	-
		Total		\$2,522.13	\$2,537.92	\$15.79

Difference in your rates payments - with and without the SV:

	1st Instal.	2nd Instal.	3rd Instal.	4th Instal.	Annual Due
	31/08/2013	30/11/2013	28/02/2014	31/05/2014	
Current Rates	\$630.54	\$630.53	\$630.53	\$630.53	\$2,522.13
Rates with SV	\$634.48	\$634.48	\$634.48	\$634.48	\$2,537.92
Increase	\$3.94	\$3.95	\$3.95	\$3.95	\$15.79

Bega Valley Views.....have your say



[Home](#) [Help](#) [Search](#) [Sign In](#) or [Register To Get Involved](#)

Bega Valley Views 2030 > Your Rates.....securing community infrastructure and services.

Your Rates.....securing community infrastructure and services.

Share    



Your Rates.....securing community infrastructure and services.

Bega Valley Shire Council is responsible for delivering a range of services and maintaining an extensive range of infrastructure including roadways, footpaths, cycle ways, stormwater drainage and community facilities..

Like most local governments across NSW, our service delivery and infrastructure maintenance costs have been increasing faster than the ability of the Council to generate revenue, which has resulted in roads, stormwater infrastructure and other assets deteriorating at an unacceptable rate.

To address the increasing gap between Council revenue and costs, Council is investigating a proposal to apply for a Special Rates Variation.

We're seeking your thoughts and solutions to help secure community infrastructure and services.

USE THE BUDGET CALCULATOR



Click here to use the **Budget Calculator** to calculate your rates

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

-  [Understanding our proposal to rates \(459 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)
-  [2013-14 Budget \(592 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)
-  [Revenue Policy 2013-2014 \(156 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)
-  [Long Term Financial Plan 2013 \(1 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)

more...


We're seeking your thoughts and solutions to help secure community infrastructure and services.

You can participate in the following ways:

- [Review associated documents](#) in the library.
- Calculate your rates using the [Rates Calculator](#).
- Complete the [Special Rates Variation Survey](#).
- Send Council your [private comment](#).
- Add your ideas and comments anonymously to the [discussion forums](#).
- Ask us a [question](#).

Your views and feedback are important. Please have your say and take a moment to encourage your colleagues, friends and neighbours to also participate.

Your feedback is appreciated and highly valued.

 Be the first of your friends to like this.

[SRV Discussion Forum](#)

[Ask a Question](#)

[Comment Privately](#)

[Survey](#)

SRV Survey

Please take a couple of minutes to complete the following survey. Your views and comments will be considered included as part of Council's submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for their consideration.

Please respond to the following on a scale of 1-10: (1 = extremely dissatisfied - 10 = extremely satisfied) optional


[more...](#)



RELATED PROJECTS

Bega Valley Views 2030

Front Page – Bega Valley Shire Council Website



Bega Valley Shire Council


A Liveable Place
Community

An Enterprising Place
Economy

A Sustainable Place
Planning & Environment

An Accessible Place
Facilities & Infrastructure

A Leading Organisation
Council



Future Plans

Have your say... closes March 5

Click to know more

CONTACT COUNCIL


(02) 6499 2222
council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au

I WANT TO...

HAVE YOUR SAY

FIND OUT ABOUT


News & Highlights



Time to update your address

Friday, March 01 2013

Ratepayers in the Bega Valley Shire are being reminded to update their postal address to avoid missing out on vital information from Council. [Read more...](#)



Risky swimming after heavy rain

Friday, March 01 2013

Heavy rainfall across the Bega Valley Shire has resulted in a reduction of water quality at a number of local swimming spots. [Read more...](#)

WHAT'S ON?

This month in the Community and Council

[View events for other months](#)

MARCH 2013

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Council Event
Community Event



Bega Valley Shire Council



**YOUR PLACE
OUR PLACE
GREAT
PLACE**

Bega Valley Shire Council

694 likes · 39 talking about this

Like

Message



Government Organization

Bega Valley Shire Council is a Local Government Organisation on the far south coast of NSW. We service 6280km2 with a community of about 33,000 people.

About



Photos

694

Likes



Events



SurveyMonkey



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

February 25

If you were wondering what the recent land revaluations mean to your rates, you can try out our new interactive map which shows how a rise or fall in value will affect the amount you pay. Click on this link to give it a go.

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-COG-88-73-44

Land Valuations

www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Land Valuations Use this interactive map to see the distribution of land values within the shire. Zoom in to your property by using the sliding control on the left, or keep double clicking on the approximate whereabouts of your property until close enough to see your

Like · Comment · Share



likes this.



My land value has gone down, thanks to you guys putting a by pass through the middle of the town..... However my rates are still going up..... Great...

February 25 at 1:28pm · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

February 21

The final public meeting on our proposed special rates variation is at Eden's Fisherman's Club tonight between 6 and 8pm. Yesterday's meeting in Merimbula provided some lively debate, so hopefully tonight we'll hear from lots of people in the Eden community. More details here
http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-BWK-18-03-74

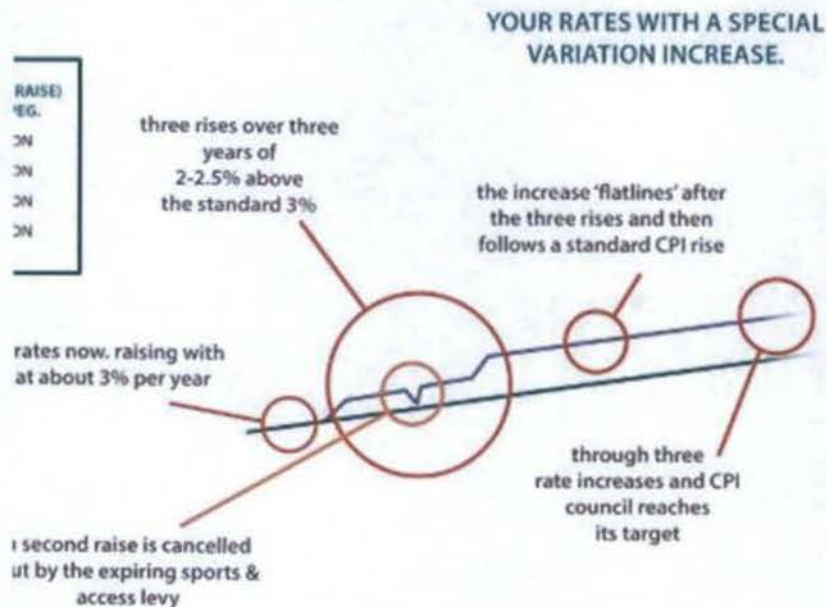
Special Variation Public Workshops Announced

www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Special Variation Public Workshops Announced Friday 8 February 2013
Bega Valley shire Council has announced four public workshops to be held in the shire to discuss the proposed Special Variation rates increase. The public workshops will provide residents across the shire with an

Like · Comment · Share

There's often a lot of confusion about how a special rates variation works, so we've made a chart explaining it in simple terms. There's a chance to comment and lots more information about what our proposed rates increase will be spent on and how we've tightened our own belts here on our Bega Valley Views page. <http://begavalleyviews2030.com.au/srv-proposal?module=survey#tool>



Like · Comment · Share

The CPI increase quoted by State Super for the 2011/12 financial year as 1.3%. Not sure how this factors in with the accuracy of your figures on the chart! How the fixed income ratepayers linked to CPI within the Shire are coping with the myriad above... See More

February 20 at 1:04pm via mobile · Like

in the last decade, how many times has council applied for and received special rate increases above the CPI ?

February 20 at 1:30pm · Like

Do we or do we not have some of the most expensive rates in nsw.. we would be up there i bet

February 20 at 9:22pm · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council

Thanks for the question, and it's an important one to ask because this is one we often hear.

The truth is we actually charge rates at below the state average, and below our group average (The Division of Local Government separates councils into comparable groups...we're in Group 4).

We do, however, have a high sewer charge. This is because of the shape and size of the shire and the consequent building and maintenance of ten expensive sewerage treatment plants. The thing to remember here is that a special variation will only apply to your general rate, and not to your service charges such as sewerage and water.

If you are at all worried about what a special variation will cost, it's really a good idea to hop on to our online rates calculator. All you will need is your latest land valuation sent to you recently. Hope this helps.

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-AUP-68-52-24

February 21 at 2:10pm · Like

Here's an idea for spending the special

rate variation \$\$ 😊 [http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?](http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=301627089943411&set=a.192270474212407.34793.192269477545840&type=1&ref=nf)

[fbid=301627089943411&set=a.192270474212407.34793.192269477545840&type=1&ref=nf](http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=301627089943411&set=a.192270474212407.34793.192269477545840&type=1&ref=nf)

February 22 at 10:37pm · Edited · Like

Lets do this here. If the community takes some responsibility for their own waste it could free up some funds for other things we rely on council to do. <http://www.smh.com.au/data-point/bin-night-goes-diy-in-465m-shakeup-20130222-2ewz6.html>

February 23 at 9:08am · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

February 19

Here's a great chance to learn about our proposed special rates variation and tell us what you think. Our Bega Valley Views site allows you to read, discuss and comment on our proposal. You can fill in a survey or just comment privately if you wish. Every response will be read and considered. Just follow this link, sign up and you're ready to go.

<http://begavalleyviews2030.com.au/srv-proposal?module=survey#tool>



Your Rates.....securing community infrastructure and services. | Bega Valley Views 2030

begavalleyviews2030.com.au

Your Rates.

Like · Comment · Share

due to excessive bloating of management within BVSC the rates have to go up. The Council simply thinks the ratepayers are stupid morons

February 19 at 5:58pm · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

February 19

Don't forget to come along to tonight's public meeting at Council Chambers between 6 and 8pm. Councillors and staff will be here to talk you through the proposed special rates variation. Bring along your recent land valuation and we'll show you exactly what this proposal means in dollars and cents. You can also do this online with our interactive rates calculator. Just click on the following link.

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-AUP-68-52-24

Calculate your rates on-line

www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Calculate your rates on-line How to use this Calculator: This online calculator will tell you exactly how much you will be paying in rates with or without our proposed special variation increase. Here's how it works. First, get your current Rates & Charges Notice. On the left hand side of

Like · Comment · 

This is what Council perceives as "Consultation" and is designed to convince IPART that ratepayers are eager or at least compliant with Special Rate variations. The sincerity of this exercise is shown by three people attending at Bega, 6 the previous n... See More

February 20 at 10:14am · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council Hi , Good to see you at last night's meeting. Sorry you only found out about the meeting by accident, which is surprising as all four local newspapers ran stories about the meetings. In addition each of the local newspapers advertised the meetings in our Community Link section. The meetings have been announced on local radio, placed on our website and promoted here on Facebook also. Don't forget, tonight's meeting is in Merimbula at Club Sapphire between 6 and 8pm.

February 20 at 11:31am · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

February 11

As many of you will know there has recently been a revaluation of land by the NSW Valuer General. This can have an effect on your rates, but the way it works can be confusing. We'll soon be posting some clear information about land revaluations on our website, but for now there is a good explanation included in this media release. The release also contains a link to our online rates calculator where you can easily see the impact of land revaluations on your rates.

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-LFQ-33-26-08



Shire Land Revaluations Explained

www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Shire Land Revaluations Explained Friday
8 February 2013 Bega Valley Shire
Council is taking steps to guide residents
through the complicated issue of land

Like · Comment · Share

what i would like to know is why we pay for storm water Levy and we dont have storm water drains on our land ????

February 11 at 3:23pm via mobile · Like

Save the Penderlea Horses

Monday

A photo taken some weeks ago of a horse bogged in a creek who was clearly never saved. Another photo of the carcass today, still not moved.

Photo: A photo taken some weeks ago of a horse bogged in a creek who was clearly never saved. Another photo of the carcass today, still not moved.

February 13 at 9:36am · Like

<http://www.facebook.com/SaveThePenderleaHorses?ref=stream>

February 13 at 9:37am · Like

What are you doing about this situation which gone on for many years?

February 13 at 9:38am · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

February 11

Here are the details of the upcoming public workshops to discuss our proposed special rates variation. We'll have computers, staff and our online rates calculator on hand to show exactly what this means for each property owner in dollars and cents, so please come along and don't forget to bring your new land valuations. For more details and locations click on the following link.

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-BWK-18-03-74



**Special Variation Public Workshops
Announced**

www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Special Variation Public Workshops
Announced Friday 8 February 2013 Bega
Valley shire Council has announced four

Like · Comment · Share



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

November 2, 2012

Council has agreed to begin community engagement regarding a proposed special rates variation. There will soon be lots more information about this posted on our Facebook page. We'd really like to know what you think.

Engagement adopted on proposed rates variation

www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Engagement adopted on proposed rates variation2 November 2012Council has successfully moved to begin community engagement regarding a proposed special rates variation to pay for vital infrastructure renewals.The move was made as part of a

Like · Comment · Share

1 4



likes this.

The new Ratepayers Association will be looking at this in conjunction with it's undertaking to work and discuss co-operatively with council on this very subject. Can we say , after an informal meeting just today (7th November) that on the first blush we are against any rate variation over and above the mandated increase. A 12 month moratorium is simply not a big ask considering the imposts this shires ratepayers have had to endure over the last 8 years, but we remain all ears as to what is being put forward, together what aspects council is trying to achieve in improved productivity, savings, and business plans so we can be together objective to these matters.

November 7, 2012 at 7:07pm via mobile · Like · 1

Varying the rates up or down?

November 12, 2012 at 4:22pm · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council Thanks , the variation would be for three anual increases above the standard CPI increase. More information is available in the press release, and as mentioned we will soon post lots of clear information about the proposed increase here on Facebook.

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-SKE-65-50-31

November 12, 2012 at 4:34pm · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council Thanks for your valued feedback Peter.

November 12, 2012 at 4:37pm · Like



Bega Valley Shire Council shared a link.

February 20

Tonight's public meeting on our proposed special rates variation is at Merimbula's Club Sapphire between 6 and 8pm. Don't forget to bring along your latest land valuation to see the exact cost of our proposal. More details here

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-BWK-18-03-74

Special Variation Public Workshops Announced

www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Special Variation Public Workshops Announced Friday 8 February 2013
Bega Valley shire Council has announced four public workshops to be held in the shire to discuss the proposed Special Variation rates increase. The public workshops will provide residents across the shire with an

Like · Comment · Share

1



Bega Valley Shire Council

7 March 2013

The Editor
Merimbula News Weekly
Merimbula Plaza
Merimbula NSW 2548

To whom it may concern

Merimbula News Weekly – Wednesday 27 February 2013 edition

It's interesting that the editor of Merimbula News Weekly should criticise the community for not turning up en masse to Council's public rates workshops, and yet use her position of considerable influence to mislead the community on the facts.

On the front page of last week's MNW, dated Wednesday 27 February 2013 the editor has clearly and repeatedly presented the wrong information. According to the editor, our proposed rates increase will see rates rise by a "whopping" 16 per cent by 2016.

This is wrong and misleading. The figure presented takes the gross increase over three years and adds them together. This figure includes the state government set rate pegging of about 9.4 per cent over three years. Remove this from the equation and you are left with an increase of 6.6 per cent. The editor knows this fact and knows also that year two of our proposal will see the 2.5 percent increase effectively cancel itself out as it coincides with the expiration of a previous SV. This takes the net increase down to 4.1 per cent, or 13.5 with rate pegging.

In presenting the story like this the editor has misinformed readers into believing that Council's proposed special variation will be responsible for a 16 per cent rise in rates. The SV will account for an extra 2 per cent in year one, 2.5 per cent (cancelled out) in year two, and 2 per cent in year three.

More concerning is the editor's portrayal of the "whopping" increase in dollar terms. She claims an average residential property will see its rates bill increase from \$2702 to \$3112 by 2016. Again this is wrong. The editor has applied the 16 per cent increase to both rates and charges, making the figure significantly higher.

We have repeatedly informed the editor that special variations apply to general rates only, meaning that charges associated with items such as sewerage, water and waste are affected only by CPI. If the correct figure of 13.5 per cent was to be added to general rates only the figure will rise from \$976.76 to \$1,067.71, a rise of \$99.95 over three years, including rate pegging. If we add a 3.4 per cent CPI increase to the service charges from the same bill, this will bring a \$2,702 rates and charges bill to \$2,707 by 2016. That's a \$205 error that has now been passed on to every reader of the Merimbula News Weekly.

Also incorrect was the assertion that if the special variation was to be applied for and approved it would spell 10 years of consecutive "rate hikes" in the shire. The editor knows that no special variation rate increase occurred during the 2012/13 financial year.

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INFORMATION

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council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au

It is astounding that the editor should also state on the front page that she has no knowledge of what Council is to do with surplus funds raised as part of the Merimbula airport special variation. Less than two weeks ago she was sent this line by General Manager, Peter Tegart:

"...any surplus funds raised above what is required to service the debt program associated with the runway project will be reserved under the Airport Maintenance Reserve for future maintenance and renewal of the runway. It should be made clear that any funds derived from the airport special variation will be quarantined to be used for the airport runway only." Interesting that the editor should choose not to include this in her story.

All the above occurred in one story on one front page. Errors, inaccuracies and misleading information of this nature are irresponsible and result in a misinformed community.

As a government organisation we support being scrutinised, particularly by the media, but scrutiny should occur through the presentation of accurate and unbiased facts.

I trust this letter will find its way to your letters page. This letter has been forwarded onto Fairfax Media and the Australian Press Council.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Taylor', written in a cursive style.

Bill Taylor
Mayor

Media summary – Special variation proposal 2012/13.

Media releases issued

- Meeting agenda to broach many subjects. Thursday 25 October 2012
- Engagement adopted on proposed rates variation. Friday 2 November 2012
- Community survey opportunity for shire residents. Monday 5 November 2012
- Community survey available online. Monday 12 November 2012
- Council in strong position and looking ahead. Tuesday 27 November 2012
- Shire land revaluations explained. Friday 8 February 2013
- Special variation public workshops announced. Friday 8 February 2013
- Public meetings overview. Monday 25 February 2013
- Rates tools ready to help. Tuesday 26 February 2013

Media coverage

Date	Type	Media	Subject	Tone
11 th Jan 2013	Letter to the editor	Bega District News	Special Variation – deliberative survey	Negative
9 th Jan 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Special Variation – deliberative survey	Negative
9 th Jan 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Special Variation – deliberative survey	Negative
1 st Feb 2013	Editorial	Bega District News	Rate Variation - variation on a theme	Neutral
1 st Feb 2013	Editorial	Bega District News	Calculate your costs on line	Neutral
1 st Feb 2013	Editorial	Bega District News	Rate variation information sessions	Neutral
31 st Jan	Editorial	Eden Magnet	Ratepayer Reps briefed on rate rise	Neutral
31 st Jan	Editorial	Eden Magnet	Calculate the cost on-line – rates calculator	Neutral
31 st Jan	Editorial	Eden Magnet	Rate rise talks begin	Neutral
Week ending 1 st Feb	Interview	2EC Radio	Mayor discusses SV stakeholder meetings	
Week	Interview	ABC radio	Mayor discusses SV stakeholder	

ending 1 st Feb			meetings	
8 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Bega District News	Proposal not endorsed – Ratepayer Association comment	Neutral / Negative
6 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Rate Rise – why? Council quizzed on reasons for rate rise	Neutral
6 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	The highs and lows of land values	Neutral
6 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Focus group member sees red over missing out	Neutral / Negative
6 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Council must establish that rate increases are affordable	Neutral
6 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Its tough enough – rate rise	Negative
6 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Council must explore all avenues before putting up the rates	Neutral
7 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Eden Magnet	Council urged to consider impacts of rate rise	Neutral
7 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Narooma News	Bega Valley rates variation	Neutral
Week ending 8 th Feb	Interview	2EC radio	Mayor regular interview	
Week ending 8 th Feb	Interview	ABC	General Manager re land valuations	
20 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Big problem with rates? Rates workshop tonight	Neutral
20 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Council charges missing in equation	Neutral
20 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Thumbs down to Council rate hikes	Negative
21 st Feb 2013	Editorial	Eden Magnet	Rates – public workshop tonight on proposed increases	Neutral
Week ending 22 nd Feb	Interview	ABC	Mayor – promoting SV public meetings	
26 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Bega District News	Caltex and Country Energy prices compared to Council rates	Neutral / Positive
26 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Bega District News	Rates session poor attendance	Neutral
26 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Bega District News	What do we get for our rates?	Negative

27 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Rates maths lessons <i>Please note this front page editorial included incorrect statements regarding the proposed rate increases and Merimbula airport. "Airport runway rate increase....."</i>	Negative
27 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Pathetic response to SRV public meetings	Positive
27 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Mayors take on the rates workshop	Positive
27 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Appalling apathy, SRV	Negative
27 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Rate rises are not minor	Negative
28 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Eden Magnet	The great rates debate	Neutral
28 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Eden Magnet	Rates – were you engaged?	Neutral
28 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Eden Magnet	Can Council fill a pothole, let alone repair a road?	Negative
28 th Feb 2013	Editorial	Eden Magnet	Not too late to have your say	Neutral
28 th Feb 2013	Letter to the editor	Eden Magnet	Rates apathy a 'civic disaster'	Positive
1 st March 2013	Editorial	Bega District News	Mayor thanks participants at rate variation meetings	Neutral / Positive
6 th March 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Have your say on rates increase	Neutral
6 th March 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	Rate tools ready to help	Positive
6 th March 2013	Editorial	Merimbula News Weekly	A litany of levies for ratepayers	Neutral / Negative
6 th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Simple way for the Council to save	Negative
6 th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Rates a serious issue	Negative
6 th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Rates bring budget to breaking point	Negative
6 th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Council will do what it wants	Negative
6 th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Survival replaces lifestyle	Negative

6th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Consultation a theatrical process	Negative
6th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Rate increase unaffordable	Negative
6th March 2013	Letter to the editor	Merimbula News Weekly	Vote 'no'	Negative

Meeting agenda to broach many subjects

Thursday 25 October 2012

Today's release of the Ordinary Council Meeting agenda for Wednesday 31 October has revealed a range of local issues up for discussion.

Topics for debate among Bega Valley Shire councillors will include the National Broadband Network, the Bega Town Hall and the Quarterly Budget Review Statement.

"Wednesday's meeting is set to encompass many subjects of interest to the community," Mayor, Bill Taylor said.

"In addition to the NBN and results of the Pambula Hospital poll, we will also see presentations of Council's Quarterly Budget Review Statement and a proposed special rates variation presented as part of the Community Strategic Plan review.

"Other reports of interest include an update on the status of Council's Local Government Infrastructure Renewal Scheme application where an interest reimbursement is proposed to minimise costs associated with significant infrastructure renewals.

"There is also the addition of a public forum beginning a 1pm to discuss the proposed Eden Marina development at Cattle Bay.

"I look forward to some vigorous discussions on this wide range of issues of importance to the shire."

The full Ordinary Meeting agenda is available at:

http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-YZA-67-42-23

END

Engagement adopted on proposed rates variation

Friday 2 November 2012

Council has successfully moved to begin community engagement regarding a proposed special rates variation to pay for vital infrastructure renewals.

The move was made as part of a recommendation that Council review the Community Strategic Plan in which an ongoing increase to the rate base over three years is laid out as part of the shire's long-term economic planning.

"Council has agreed to undertake a community engagement process to gauge public sentiment in regards to a proposed special variation application," Mayor Bill Taylor said.

"This is an important development for the shire as it takes recommendations outlined in our strategic planning to the community for comment.

"It's the people of the Bega Valley Shire who ultimately have the last say in this proposed increase, so it is our duty as councillors to present information regarding their rates in as clear a manner as possible.

"Put short, a stepped raise above the standard pegging rate over the next three years will future proof the shire against spiralling maintenance costs further down the track.

"It is better sense to renew certain shire assets now than to spend inordinate amounts on repairs and maintenance in years to come.

"This is the message we will be taking to the community, and ratepayers should be assured that Council is here to assist with clearly explaining the proposal to anyone wanting further information.

"Shire residents can expect telephone and online surveys, and information relayed through Council, local and social media."

Council will receive a management report on the outcome of community engagement at its 12 December meeting. A decision to formally notify IPART of Council's intention to apply for a special variation will then be made.

END

Community survey opportunity for shire residents

Monday 5 November 2012

Bega Valley Shire residents will soon be given the opportunity to comment on council services and performance in the 2012 community survey.

The triennial survey soon to be conducted via telephone throughout the shire will provide essential feedback regarding the overall performance of Council.

"Residents should be aware that over the coming weeks there will be calls made from independent research company, IRIS, for the purpose of conducting this survey," Community and Relationships Group Manager, Leanne Barnes said.

"People will be asked to comment on their satisfaction rating in terms of Council's influence on liveability, accessibility, sustainability and the local economy.

"Questions will be asked regarding access to services, the presence and state of local infrastructure and management of the shire's precious environmental assets.

"Results from the survey will play a clear role in our long-term strategic planning, turning community feedback into real action that affects every person living in the shire.

"The end result for this survey is to make the Bega Valley Shire a better place, and Council is reliant on feedback from the community to ensure this happens.

"I look forward to some interesting results."

END

Community survey available online

Monday 12 November 2012

Bega Valley Shire Council's triennial community survey is now available for answering online.

The online survey will expand the view of community perceptions relating to Council performance.

"The online survey allows for a wider reach in gauging community views," Bega Valley Shire Council General Manager, Peter Tegart said.

"People who miss the opportunity to comment through our current telephone survey can now hop online at home or at any Council library and tell us what they think about our performance.