

"The survey is conducted by independent research company, IRIS, and we are asking the community to be frank and up front with their thoughts about Council.

"We are looking to be scored on our ability to effectively manage community, environment and infrastructure services.

"This is the first time we have run an online survey in conjunction with a standard telephone survey, and we are looking forward to the results better representing shire demographics.

"A better understanding of community views allows us to action specific strategies aimed at making this great place even better."

To access the online survey, go to <http://www.iris.internetrix.net/survey/NoIDStart.exe?Bega-Online+True>

**END**

## **Council in strong position and looking ahead**

### **Tuesday 27 November 2012**

External auditing firm, RSM Bird Cameron, have confirmed Bega Valley Shire Council's favourable position for the year ahead with a report showing an above average operating result and strong performing investments.

A presentation of this year's financial audit made at Wednesday's Council meeting revealed smart moves in investment, infrastructure and asset handling has resulted in an \$8.9 million operating result, and \$2.8 million returned through investments.

"Right now, Council is well placed to handle the challenges of the year ahead," Finance Manager, Lucas Scarpin said.

"Having money in the bank at a time when governments the world over are struggling to pay for vital infrastructure requirements and community services certainly places us in a favourable position.

It's worth noting, however, that Council currently maintains assets to the value of \$1.4 billion, and of this about \$839 million is tied up in roads, buildings and recreational facilities.

"We are mindful of the shire's aging infrastructure in these areas and we are working now to prevent significant cost increases in the near future.

"This is why we have recently proposed to Council a special variation rates increase over three years above the newly sanctioned 3.4 percent rise from IPART.

"A small incremental rise now will allow Council to invest funds using the same expertise and forward thinking that has put us in the strong position we are in today.

"A smart investment now will save the shire significant costs further down the track."

**END**

## **Shire land revaluations explained**

### **Friday 8 February 2013**

Bega Valley Shire Council is taking steps to guide residents through the complicated issue of land revaluations and the effect on ratepayers.

The first step will involve a dedicated space on Council's website for the explanation of rates in relation to the recent NSW land revaluations and the current proposal for a special variation rates increase.

"This latest step in communicating the complex issue of rates and how we work them out forms part of the consultation process required as part of our proposal for a special variation," Finance Manager, Lucas Scarpin said.

"The NSW land revaluation came at a time when the community was trying to gain an understanding of the mechanisms involved in a proposal to raise our rates for essential infrastructure renewals.

"We know that understanding the complexities of the rates structure can be challenging, so we are making steps to explain the rating system in as clear a manner as possible.

"Put simply, the common notion of a lower land valuation leading to a guaranteed drop in rates is a myth.

"If your land value moves up or down before exceeding the shire's average increase or decrease, you will pay more. If your land value lowers by more than the average decrease, however, your payments will go down.

"What ratepayers need to bear in mind, therefore, is that movement in land value does not necessarily reflect movements in rates charged.

"This system ensures the distribution of rate payments remains fair and equitable. It has no effect on the amount we raise from our rates, just the restructuring of payments based on up to date land valuations.

"We realise that ratepayers want to know what this means in dollars and cents, so to accompany an explanation of rates in relation to land value and our proposed special variation we now have an interactive rates calculator on our website.

"Residents are now able to enter their latest land value and instantly see the exact amount they are expected to pay. They will also be able to see the cost of our proposed rates increase."

To access the rates calculator, go to [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au), click on 'find out about', 'rates and charges', and then 'calculate you rates online', or visit this link:

[http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp\\_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-AUP-68-52-24](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-AUP-68-52-24)

Customers without a computer or internet connection are welcome to call Council offices on 6499 2222 and ask for assistance.

**END**

## **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 opportunity to see what the proposed increase means in dollars and cents, and to discuss their concerns with Councillors.

"With four workshops booked in Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula and Eden, the community will be shown how to work out the cost of the increase for their individual properties," Community and Relationships Group Manager, Leanne Barnes said.

"Council staff will be there 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.

"Staff will be on hand to explain how raising rates in small increments above CPI over three years will allow for vital renewals of roads, recreational facilities and public buildings.

"Councillors will also host a Q&A session to answer any concerns or confusions regarding the proposed increase.

"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  
6:00pm – 8:00pm
- **Eden**  
Thursday 21 February 2013  
Eden Fisherman's Club  
6:00pm – 8:00pm

END

## **Public meetings overview**

### **Monday 25 February 2013**

Bega Valley Shire Mayor, Bill Taylor has offered his thanks to residents who attended last week's special rates variation public workshops.

The workshops held in Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula and Eden offered residents a clear explanation of the proposed special variation, plus the chance to work out the cost of the rates increase for their individual properties.

"Talking face-to-face with local residents about the proposed rates increase has allowed Councillors a valuable insight into community sentiment and how proposals of this nature are generally understood," Mayor Bill Taylor said.

"The outcome of the public workshops when coupled with earlier stakeholder and community group meetings saw a wide range of views presented, and I am grateful for all who took time out of their busy days to attend.

"The public workshops saw an initial negative response to our proposal, which is to be expected considering in its most basic form we are proposing an increase to the cost of living.

"This was a recurrent theme at the public workshops, and certainly the greatest challenge when considering a rates increase is the delicate balance between cost of living and the maintenance of Council assets.

"What was encouraging, however, was the number of people who came up after the event and offered a handshake and their thanks for explaining how a special rates variation works, and why it is being proposed.

"This is another challenge in proposing a rates increase. The complicated nature of statutory requirements and the recent land revaluations have resulted in a lot of confusion over the facts.

"It's promising to see that some of this confusion has been addressed through the public consultation process where sitting down and talking with the community, and guiding residents through a special variation using tools such as our online rates calculator has returned some positive results.

"Listening to representatives from the tourism, retail, transport and sporting communities was also encouraging as they were able to see the long-term benefits of special variation increases for specific purposes.

"A local bus operator for example was happy to see a moderate increase in his rates if the end result was better roads and safer passage for his passengers.

"Naturally, there will always be a mix of people in support of and against an increase in rate payments, and following the outcome of this current public consultation period, Council will decide on where to go next with the proposal.

"I would like to thank every person who attended the public and stakeholder meetings. We have nine councillors, 316 full time staff and about 33,000 residents in the shire. We need your views to be effective in our role as community advocates."

Councillors will discuss the outcome of the consultation period and make a decision on whether to apply for the special variation at an extraordinary council meeting to be held on Thursday 7 March at 10:30am in Council Chambers.

**END**

## **Rates tools ready to help**

### **Tuesday 26 February 2013**

Bega Valley Shire Council has a raft of new tools ready to assist the community in understanding and simplifying the rates process.

The tools, including interactive mapping and an online discussion forum empower the community to work out costs for individual properties and comment on Council proposals such as the special rates variation.

"The provision of these innovative tools form part of our commitment to providing access to services that normally would require the making of enquiries to numerous departments within state and local government," Acting General Manager, Leanne Barnes said.

"Residents wanting to learn more about their rates can now go online at home or at any of our libraries and view an interactive map showing the recent land revaluations and how these relate to the rating of individual properties.

"People wanting to go a little further to see how land revaluations and our proposed rates increase affects their rates in dollar terms are welcome to try out our easy to use online rates calculator.

"If anyone wants to learn more without wading through pages of complicated documents, they can visit our Bega Valley Views site and read about our proposed special variation and the rating system in plain English.

"Once there it is easy to comment on our proposal, ask a question or take a survey based on the information presented on the site.

"These services are vital for people who want to know more but were unable to make it to any of the public workshops held last week.

"Although formed as part of the special variation consultation period, we are committed to making interactive mapping, a rates calculator and a forum for commenting on Council's performance available to the public on a permanent basis.

"We also recognise that not every resident in the shire has access to a computer or internet connection; for this reason enquiries regarding any matter will always be welcome via phone or by letter."

To access our Bega Valley Views site go to: [www.begavalleyviews2030.com.au/srv-proposal](http://www.begavalleyviews2030.com.au/srv-proposal)

To access our interactive land values map click on the 'Future Plans' window on Council's homepage ([www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)) and then on 'Land values within the shire' under the 'Understanding my Rates' heading.

The rates calculator is available directly through Council's homepage.

**END**

**Media – press clippings attached**

## Broadcast

Regular weekly interviews with Mayor on 2EC local radio. Rates and SV common subject.

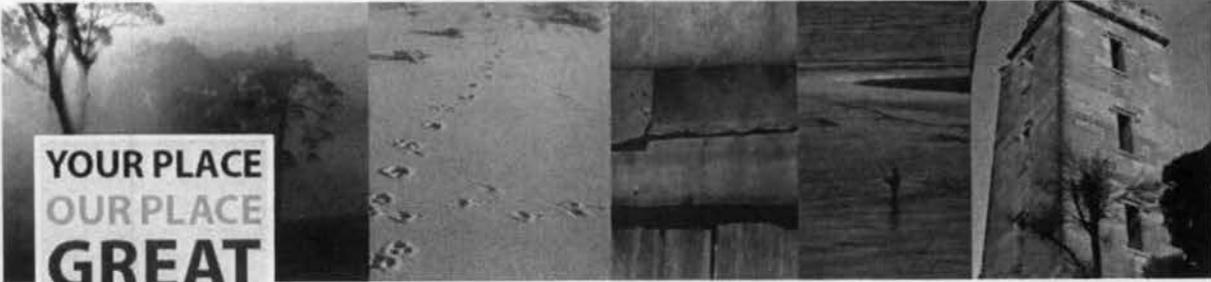
Regular appearances on local ABC radio. Post Council meeting interviews. Rates and SV common subject.

## Social Media

*Facebook page –*



# 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](#)

 **Photography Workshop**

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

#### Land Valuations

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

#### Special Variation Public Workshops Announced

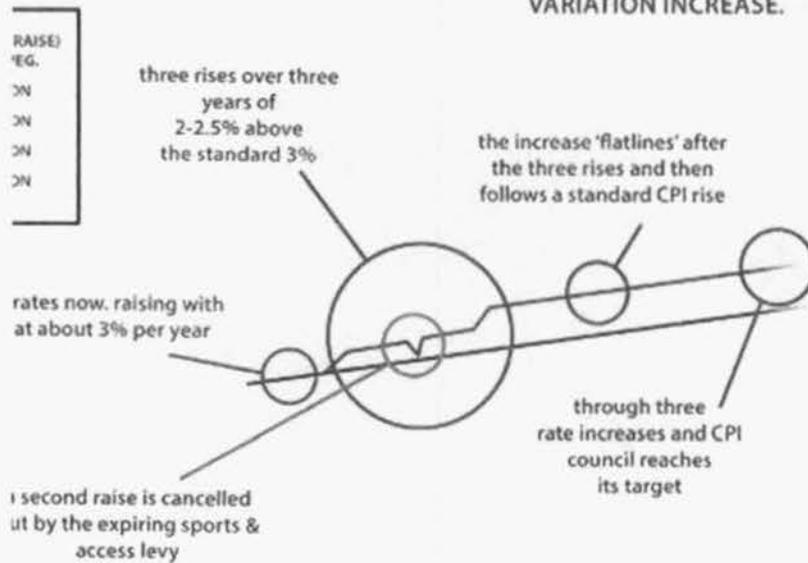
[www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

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>

### YOUR RATES WITH A SPECIAL VARIATION INCREASE.



Like · Comment ·

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 ·

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

February 20 at 1:30pm ·

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

OUR PLACE  
SUR PLACE  
GREAT  
PLACE

**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](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?fbid=301627089943411&set=a.192270474212407.34793.192269477545840&type=1&ref=nf>

February 22 at 10:37pm · Edited ·

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](http://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](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](http://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

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](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](http://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](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](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

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

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**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](http://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

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1 4

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 Kensa, 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](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](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](http://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

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## **Council website**

SV material prominently displayed on home page

[www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

Other online consultations at our Bega Valley Views website

<http://begavalleyviews2030.com.au/srv-proposal>

## Community Consultation Summary

### **Stakeholder meetings**

Four stakeholder groups were consulted with to engage in early consultation prior to the 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.

### **Stakeholder meeting feedback**

**Date :** 29<sup>th</sup> January

**Target groups :** Bega Valley Shire Ratepayers Association Inc. Local media

**Number attending :** 6

### **Key issues raised :**

- How do the new land valuations impact on Council's rate collection? General confusion regarding the impact / perceived impact of land valuation process and collection of rates.
- Will proposed rate increases be across all, residential, farming and business?
- Confusion over wording of, "one off – permanent": does this mean it is a compounding increase?
- Concerns and mistrust over whether a newly elected Council in 2017 will propose a further SV, as the message has been that it is a '3 year proposal and that's it for 10 years'
- Concerns over when the SV proposal was initially raised, ratepayers can feel caught off guard if not enough time has been provided to consult.
- Council needs to do a better job in clearly promoting and advertising the Special Variation proposal.
- Information on Special Variation should be posted on our Facebook site.
- Council needs to review Census data on the community's household income to understand capacity to pay.
- Council should send a letter to every rate payer to outline the proposal to ensure it is well communicated. This would be better value for money than the community satisfaction survey conducted by *IRIS*.
- Council should tighten its belt before coming to the community asking for more money.
- Our information brochure indicates that Council has saved \$2 million, if this is so, why do we need to raise the rates.
- What will the impact be if we push the SV proposal back one year to provide the community with one year relief? Will this have a compounding affect?
- Could Council borrow the money rather than increase the rates?
- The results of the Deliberative Survey presented by *IRIS* show a high percentage of people sitting in the 'unsure' category as was presented to Council on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012. How will this category be portrayed to IPART? Concerns that the statistics could be skewed.

**Meeting summary :**

*There was a general level of mistrust of Council decision making processes, and the ability of Council to deliver projects as proposed. Lack of, or perceived lack of information on the purpose of the proposed Special Variation and how these funds will be allocated had led to a greater sentiment of mistrust. Comments raised highlighting how Council is communicating its current efficiency savings were useful and have been incorporated to improve our current communication material. The use of the 'Rates Calculator' eased concerns over the direct impact of costs. The general sentiment of this target group was minimal support to the Special Variation proposal.*

---

**Date :** 29<sup>th</sup> January

**Target groups :** Representatives of Sports and Recreation Committee

**Number attending :** 4

**Key issues raised :**

- The money raised through the proposed Special Variation - can it be guaranteed that this money will remain allocated to the 3 areas (collector road, sporting and recreational, community buildings) after the LTFP period.
- The last SV (2007 Sports Levy) worked well, providing infrastructure for the whole community not just the direct sporting groups. This has been beneficial and the money was well spent.
- Sporting group members and general public who recreate on fields are seeing the direct benefits. When sporting grounds are in better condition, the broader community are utilising them for free recreation and leisure.
- Using the committees (Sporting Committees) has been an effective way of spending the money efficiently and fairly across the Shire.
- Community effort adds value to any financial contribution.
- Improved and better maintained grounds have reduced injury claims. Injury claims have dropped by 25% in one year.
- Need for better promotion of funding allocations. When a project is undertaken need greater media coverage and signage to show the money invested.

**Meeting summary**

*This target group have worked closely with Council on the delivery of funds from the expiring 2007 Sports and Recreation Levy. The group showed genuine support of all three years of proposals and indicated that previous Special Variations had been of benefit to the broader community in the past. A point was raised for Council to better promote previous use of funds. It is also worth noting for this target area that the Community Satisfaction survey showed a high level of satisfaction with local sporting and recreational facilities, this improvement is of a direct result of previous Special Variations. The general sentiment of this target group was strong support for the proposal.*

---

**Date :** 30<sup>th</sup> January

**Target groups :** General Halls Committee

**Number attending :** 7

**Key issues raised :**

- How can we guarantee that there will be no further rate increases when a new Council is elected in 2016?
- Has Council looked at its own efficiencies before increasing the rates?
- How many times over the last 10 years has Council applied for SV's? Why wasn't this enough?
- The information that is available to the community does not give enough information on what the money will be spent on.
- Council needs to consider residents on fixed incomes and how the increase in living costs impacts.
- If Council feels that the community expects higher levels of services, then the Council needs to re-educate the community on having realistic expectations so that we can deliver without needing to source additional finance.
- The fact that Council needs to raise rates is an indication that Council is living beyond its means.
- Can we sell our assets to help pay for backlog of work?
- If our General rates are below average for group 4 Councils, can we compare what the average household income for group 4 is?
- The community wants to see Council being efficient with money. There are many examples of pot holes / patching done on roads, only to be in disrepair within a week of Council staff being on site. How effective is our road maintenance?

**Meeting summary**

*Target group demonstrated a mild level of mistrust towards Council in relation to Council's commitment to propose 3 years of variation then flatline/maintain for the remaining of the 10 year period. Strong concerns over the community's capacity to pay, particularly those on fixed incomes. Demonstration of the rates calculator eased concerns over direct impact of proposed increases. There was strong support for the areas selected to benefit from the proposal but concern over capacity to pay. General sentiment from the group once all information was provided was mildly supportive.*

---

**Date :** 31<sup>st</sup> Jan

**Target groups :** Business Chambers and Transport Working Group

**Number attending :** 9

### **Key issues raised :**

- Confusion over wording – is the proposed variation in addition to CPI or including?
- How can we tie the new Council to the 10 year plan? How do we guarantee that a new Council won't apply for a new Special Variation once elected. A level of mistrust when Council states that this proposal will cover the 10 year period.
- If Council is making efficiency gains, we need to promote this so that the community is aware.
- Council is wasting money on issues that are low priority for the Shire such as the Airport and re-branding of the Shire.
- Delays on the airport has concerned the business community – how much money is being wasted on delays?
- Why should businesses give more money to Council if Council is still not providing a solution to the carparking in Bega CBD. If Council takes away car spaces, why would businesses give more?
- Can Council provide a guarantee that the money that is raised through the Special Variation will be isolated to be spent on the three areas, or will this extra revenue be 'absorbed' into Council budgets?
- Does the community know and understand the benefits gained from previous variations? Could Council better promote this?

### **Meeting summary**

*Group demonstrated a level of frustration over past Council decisions, and perceived activities from Council which has led to a level of mistrust. Target group acknowledged the need for the proposal and there was support for the areas identified to benefit from the proposal. Concern over community capacity to pay, and how this may impact on business activity. General sentiment was mildly supportive.*

### **Community information sessions.**

Community information sessions / consultations were held in the major town centres for the Bega Valley Shire, Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula and Eden. Information on the public information sessions were provided through :

- Advertising space – Bega District News – 9<sup>th</sup> February
- Advertising Space – Community Link, Bega District News, Merimbula News Weekly, Eden Magnet. Advertising dates : Wednesday 13th, Thursday 14 Friday 15th February 2013
- Website advertising
- Facebook advertising
- Notice placement in front foyer of Bega Valley Shire Council administration building.

- Notice placement in foyer of four library branches, Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula and Eden.

Material provided at each community information session included:

- On-line rates calculator – numerous laptops were set up with staff available to guide people through the online rates calculator with their new land valuation notices to determine direct impact on their rates. Information session regarding the rates calculator was held at the start of each community meeting.
- Special Variation Proposal information booklet
- 2013-14 Operational Plan
- 2013-14 Budget
- Long Term Financial Plan

*Community information session feedback*

**Date :** 18<sup>th</sup> February

**Audience :** Bermagui community information session

**Number attending :** 6

**Key issues raised :**

- There is community confusion regarding the impact of land valuations on rates.
- Need better communication that the proposed Special Variation applies only to the general rates
- Does the Council get money from the State Government for regional roads? Does this assist Council in budget planning?
- Does Council have any plans for an alternate route through Bermagui? If there is an accident or flash flood the town, people can be cut off with no alternate access.

**Date :** 19th February

**Audience :** Bega community information session

**Number attending :** 3

**Key issues raised :**

- General confusion over how the proposed Special Variation will build on CPI, and whether the proposed variation is compounding.
- General feeling of distrust from previous Council. How do we know that this will be the last application for the remaining 10 year period (remaining period of LTFP)
- What is Council doing to save money? We are currently in a 'Global Financial Crisis' and retail is suffering in Bega, an increase to rates will create an impact.

- Concerns that much of Council's work is outsourced to contractors and whether this is a cost effective approach
  - New property valuations – concerns and confusion on how this impacts on rates
  - Council needs to learn to cut services and say no to things if we don't have the finance to support them rather than raising rates. (This point was made with in-direct reference to Council's involvement with Merimbula Airport)
  - Concerns that the median household income (\$848.00 for Bega Valley Shire) is below State median – and if our community has the capacity to pay.
- 

**Date :** 20th February

**Audience :** Merimbula community information session

**Number attending :** 20 (plus two members from media)

**Key issues raised :**

- How do land valuations impact on rates? How many properties in the Bega Valley Shire have received a lower land property valuation.
  - Has 'Wanatta Lane' impacted the land valuations or the rates? Will ratepayers need to pay for the road that was put in for the tip? Ratepayers objected to the Central Waste Facility and therefore should not have to pay for something they did not want.
  - Concerns over Council's current road maintenance schedule. It appears that repair jobs are performed to a poor standard, requiring additional repairs and constant repeat of work.
  - What would the impacts be if Council delayed the Special Variation proposal by one year to consider the possibility of Council amalgamations through the Local Government review
  - How does Council measure the community's capacity to pay? If community does not have the capacity we should not be asking ratepayers for additional money.
  - When does Council stop wanting more additional rates? Concern and lack of trust over the possibility of a new Council coming back and asking ratepayers for additional variations
  - What is Council doing about the areas that the community perceive as a 'black hole' for example Merimbula Airport and Pambula Aquatic Centre. Who is getting the benefit of the Merimbula Airport investment?
  - Has Council considered the assets that are 'laying idle' across the Shire? Could these be sold to raise additional revenue?
  - Support to Long Term Financial Plan and for the proposal from the Merimbula Business Chamber
- 

**Date :** 21<sup>st</sup> February

**Audience :** Eden community information session

**Number attending :** 4 (plus one member from media)

**Key issues raised :**

- When does Council stop wanting more additional rates? Concern and lack of trust over the possibility of a new Council coming back and asking ratepayers for additional variations
- Perception of a reduction in levels of service throughout Eden. Eden library is now closed at lunch times, perception that community is paying more in rates but receiving less in services
- Perception that majority of Council funds are allocated to the Bega CBD and that funds are not adequately distributed throughout the shire.
- Concerns over community capacity to pay. Many residents are on fixed incomes and/or pensions.
- Concerns over our standard of road repairs, many roads / pot holes appear to be fixed to a poor standard requiring re-patching within short period of time.
- Concerns that Council should cut costs through reducing financial support / salary paid to Councillors and Mayor

**Community Comments via Council Facebook page**

**Social Media**

*Facebook page –*

**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.

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

#### Land Valuations

[www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://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

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

#### Special Variation Public Workshops Announced

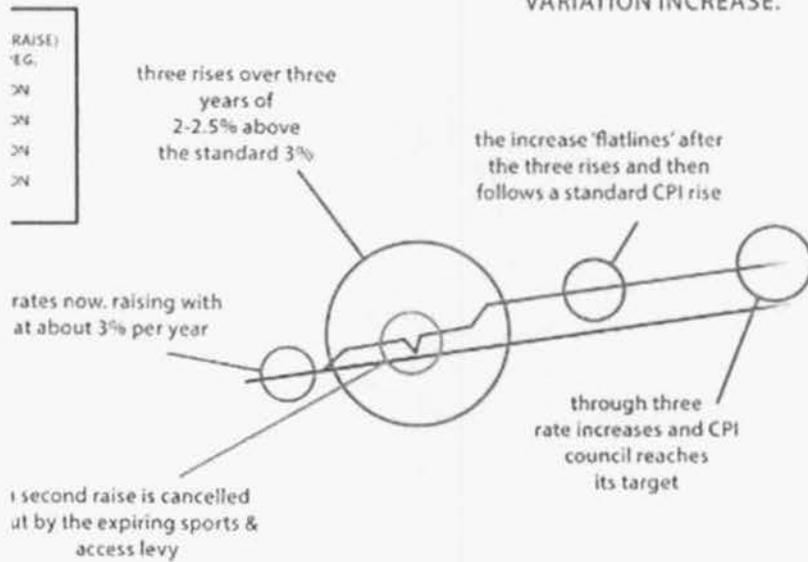
[www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

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>

### YOUR RATES WITH A SPECIAL VARIATION INCREASE.



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

TURN PLACE  
THE PLACE  
GREAT  
PLACE

**Bega Valley Shire Council** · i

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](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?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](http://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](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](http://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 · Share

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](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](http://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](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](http://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](http://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 | 14

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](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](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](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

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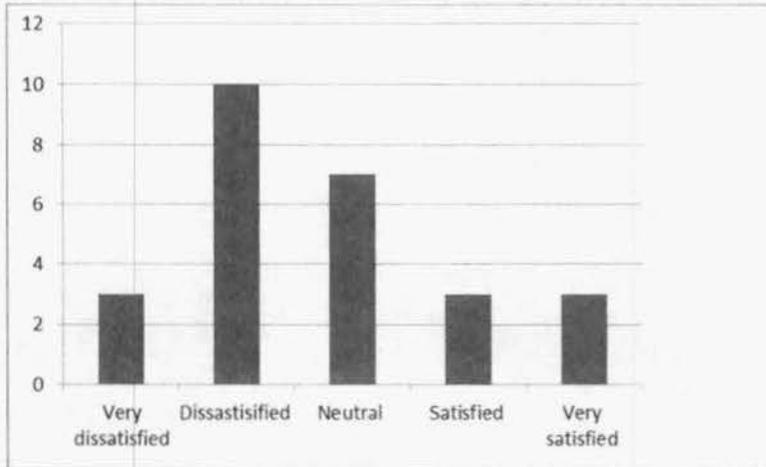
Like · Comment · Share



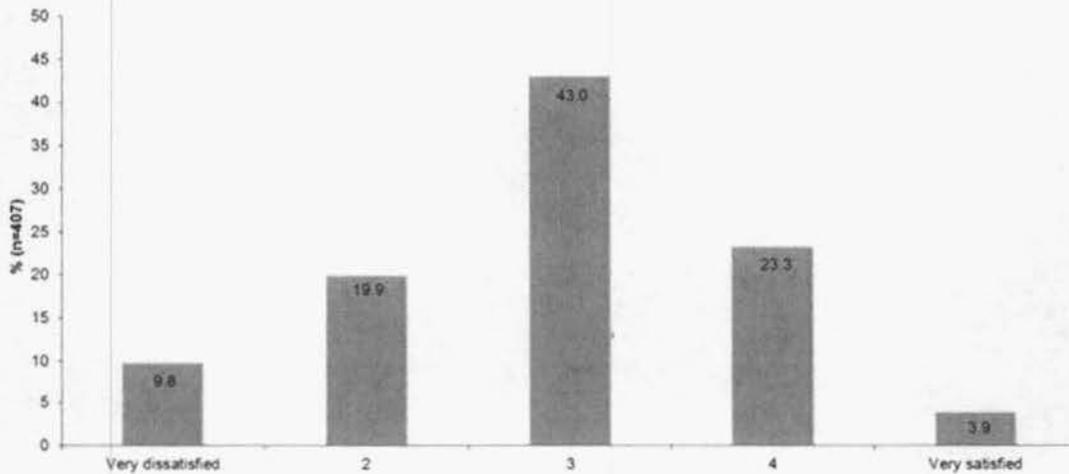
**Bega Valley Views – Special Variation survey – comparison to Deliberative Survey  
conducted December 2012**

**1. How satisfied are you with availability and quality of infrastructure provided by Council**

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

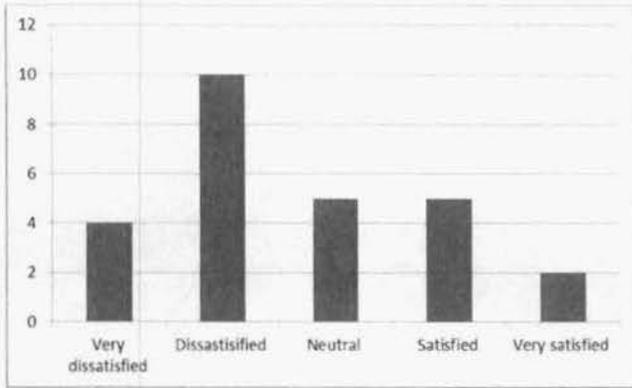


IRIS survey response (n=407)

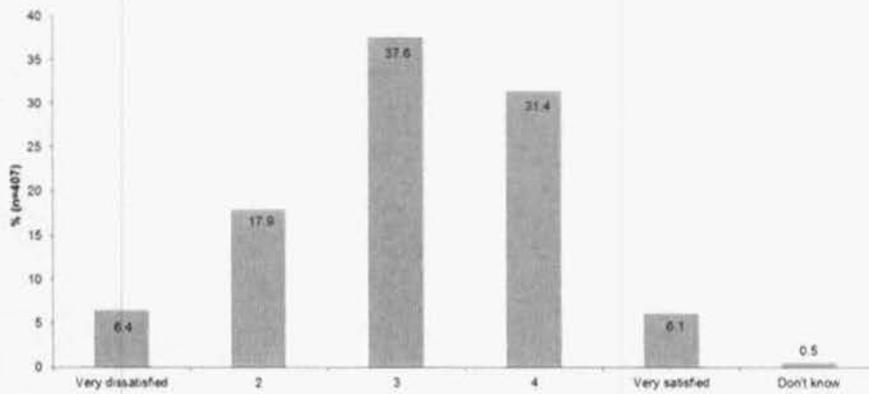


2. How satisfied are you with the range of services for the community provided by Council?

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

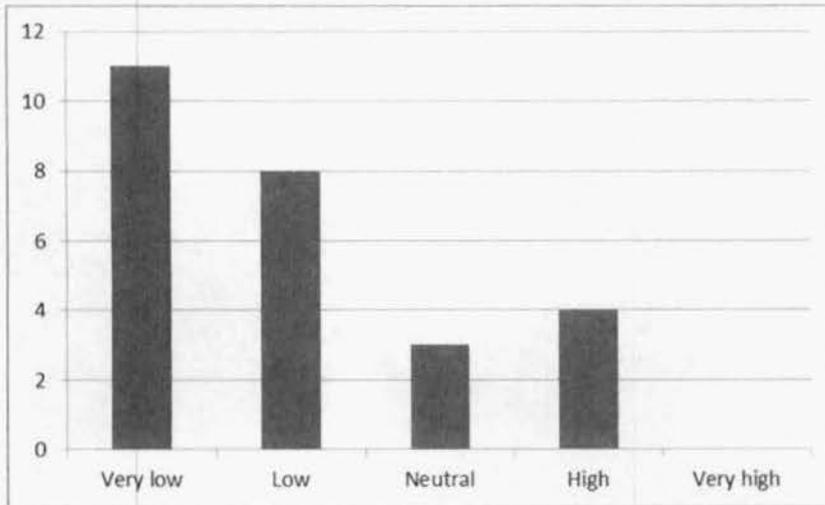


IRIS survey response (n=407)

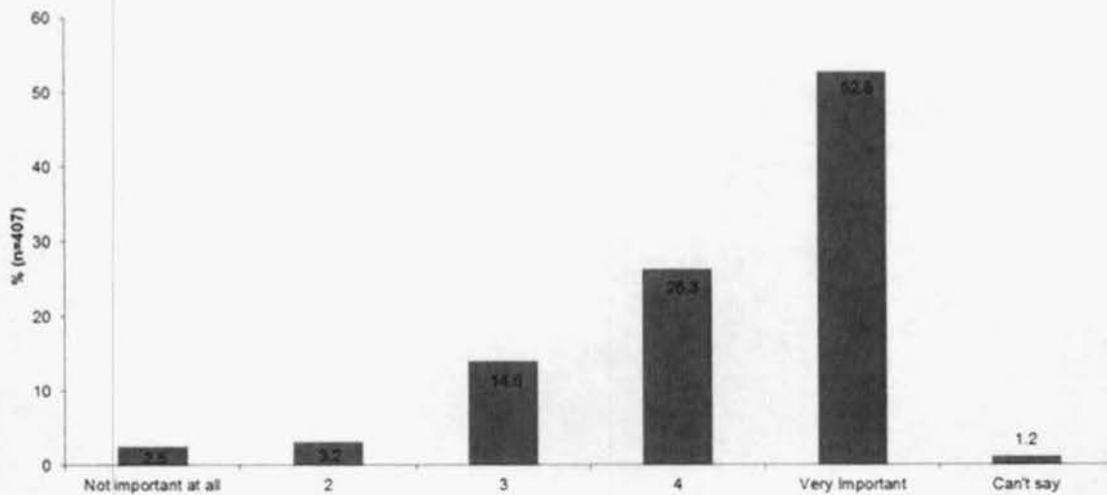


**3. How important is the implementation of programs to provide better infrastructure and services?**

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

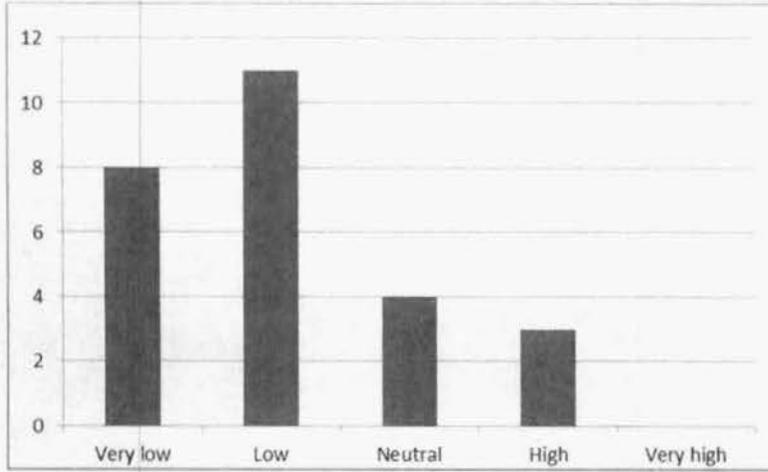


IRIS survey response (n=407)

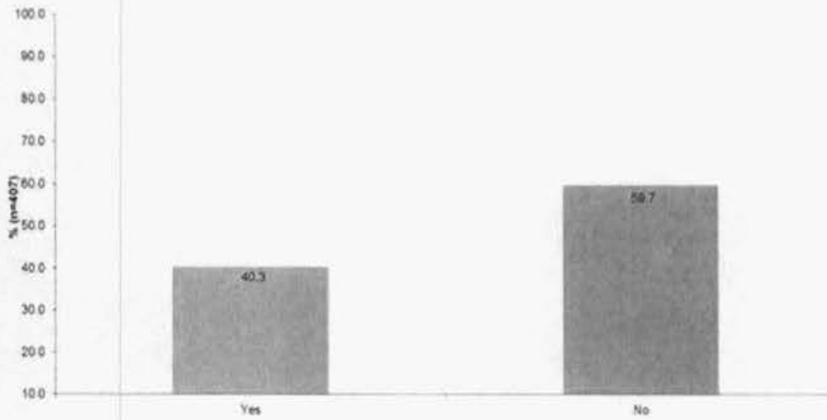


**4. What is your level of awareness of Council's adopted long term plans?**

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

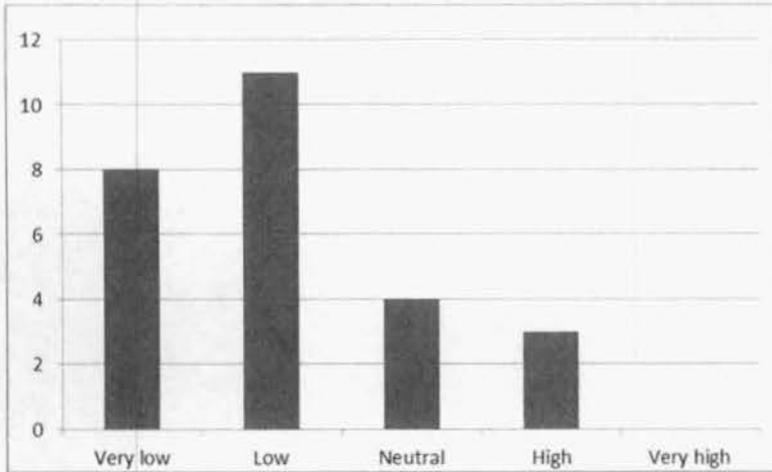


IRIS survey response (n=407) \* note wording reflected 'are you aware of Council's adopted long term plans'

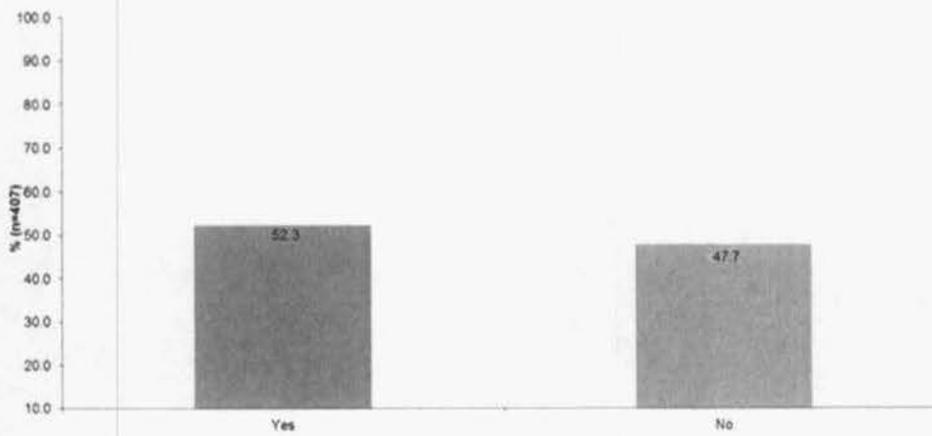


5. What is your level of awareness of Council's financial position?

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

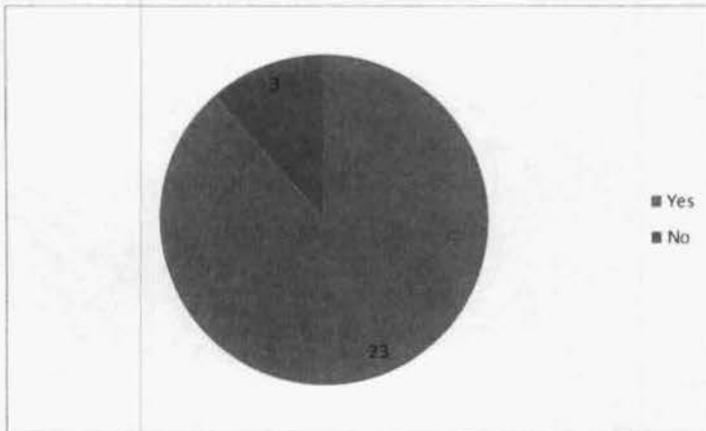


IRIS survey response (n=407) \* note wording reflected 'are you aware of Council's financial position'

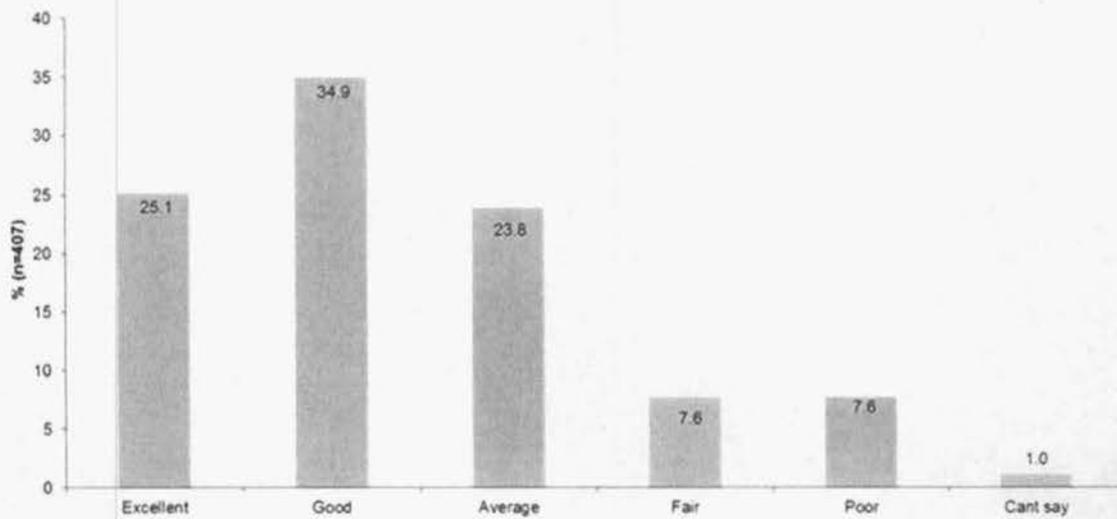


6. Do you understand Council's proposal for a special rates variation?

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

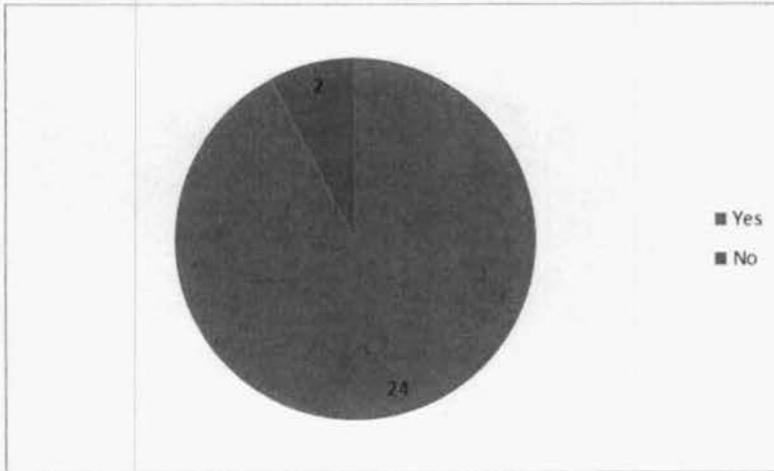


IRIS survey response (n=407) \* note wording reflected 'level of awareness of Council's proposal'

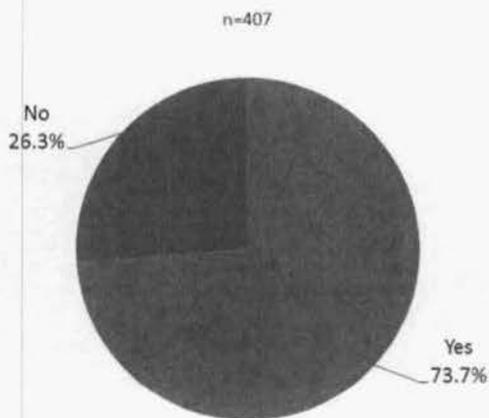


**7. Do you understand that Council's proposal only affects general rates and not waste, water and sewage?**

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

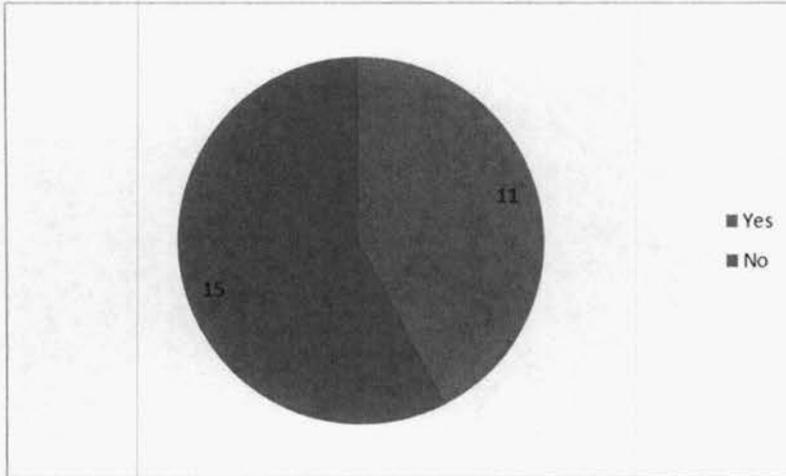


IRIS survey response (n=407)

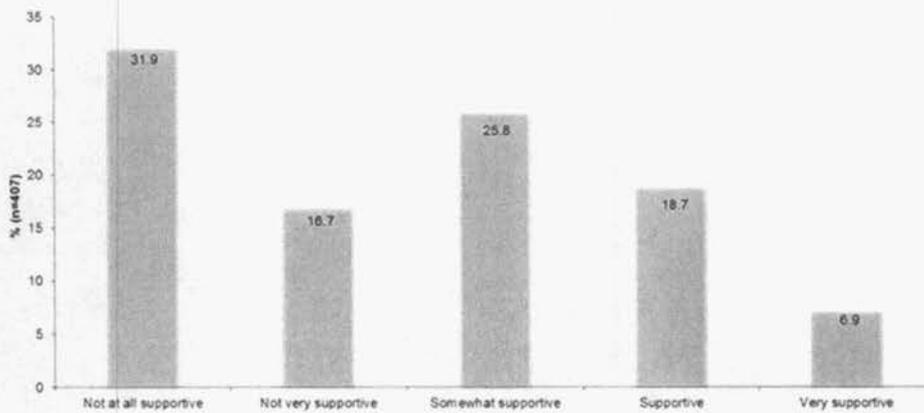


**8. Do you support a small increase of approximately \$20 in your general rates in 2014 and 2016 to pay for improved roads and community buildings?**

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

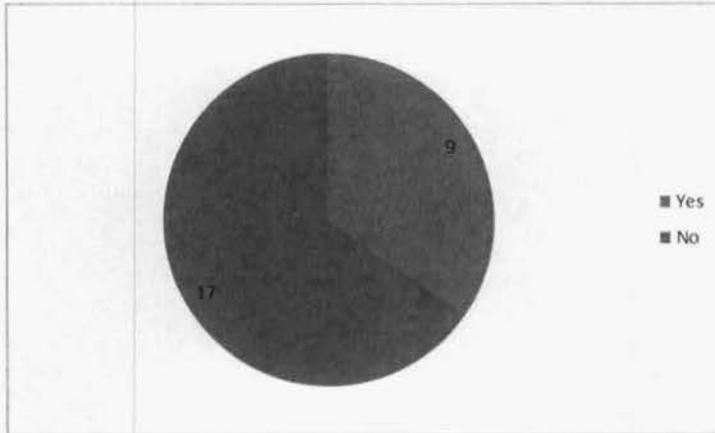


*IRIS survey response (n=407) \* note – level of support questioned in IRIS survey*

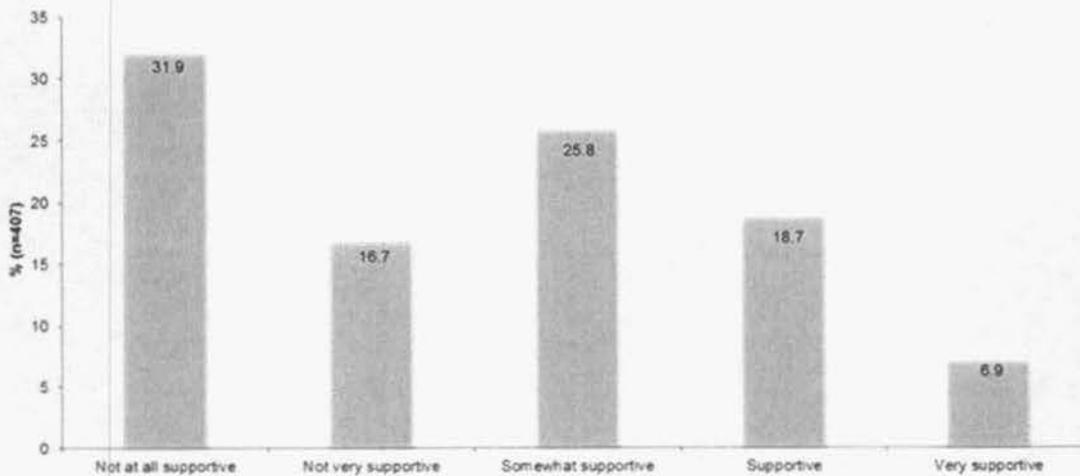


9. Do you support the retention of the existing small increase to your general rates in 2015 to continue the renewal of recreational infrastructure?

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)

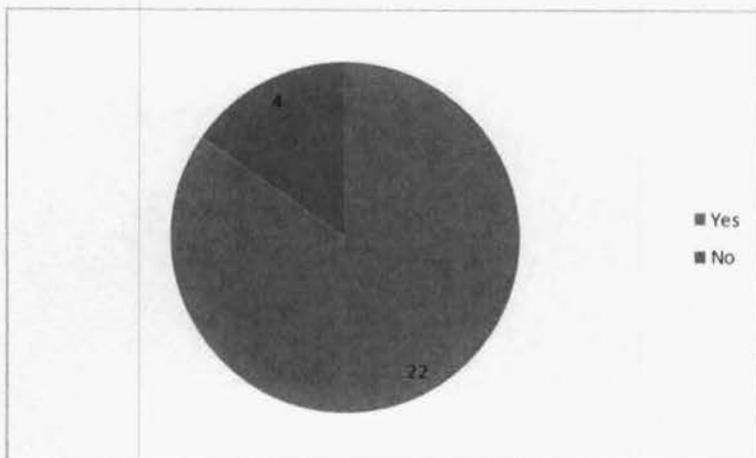


IRIS survey response (n=407) \* note – level of support questioned in IRIS survey



**10. Do you understand the process Council must follow in order to propose and apply for a special rates variation?** *Note this question only asked during Bega Valley Views consultation to gain feedback on our communication*

Bega Valley Views response (n=26)



*we're proposing an increase  
to your rates. here's why.*

A SPECIAL RATES VARIATION EXPLAINED

 © 2000 The Home Depot

## HOW WE WORK OUT YOUR RATES.

WE NEED TO SPEND MORE MONEY ON THE RENEWAL OF VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE, SO WE ARE PROPOSING A SMALL RATE INCREASE.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS.

**LAND VALUATION.** This is the valuation of your land, assessed every four years by the NSW Valuer General's Department.

**CATEGORY.** There are three categories in the Bega Valley Shire: residential, farmland and business. This allows a fair allocation of rates according to land use.

**BASE CHARGE.** This is an amount all landowners pay irrespective of value. This must be less than 50% of the total rate income for a particular assessment type.

**AD VALOREM RATE.** This is an amount paid against the dollar value of your land. Commonly this is only a fraction of a single cent for each dollar of land value.

*For every dollar we earn from general rates...*

*45c is spent on renewing infrastructure*

*37c is spent on infrastructure maintenance*

*18c is spent on infrastructure upkeep/operations*

## YOUR RATES WITH A SPECIAL VARIATION INCREASE.

### YIELDS (WHAT WE RAISE) INCLUDING RATE PEG

2013	\$19.5 MILLION
2014	\$20.6 MILLION
2015	\$21.1 MILLION
2016	\$22.1 MILLION

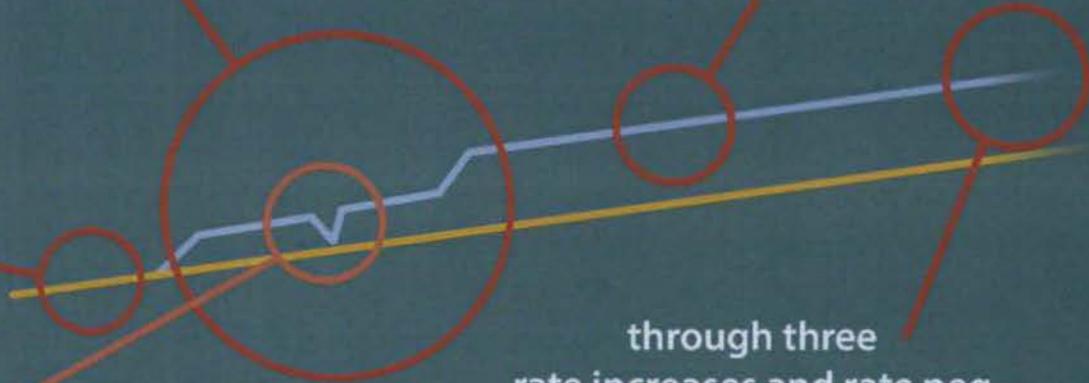
three rises over three  
years of  
2-2.4% above  
the standard 3% rate peg

the increase 'flatlines' after  
the three rises and then  
follows a standard rate peg

your rates now. rising with  
rate peg at about 3% per  
year

a second raise is cancelled  
out by the expiring sports &  
access levy

through three  
rate increases and rate peg  
council reaches  
its target



## WHAT YOU PAY.

---

Work out what the special variation will mean to you in dollars and cents with our online rates calculator.



Scan this QR code with your smartphone or follow these instructions....

## OUR RATES CALCULATOR.

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Go to

[www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

Click on 'find out about'

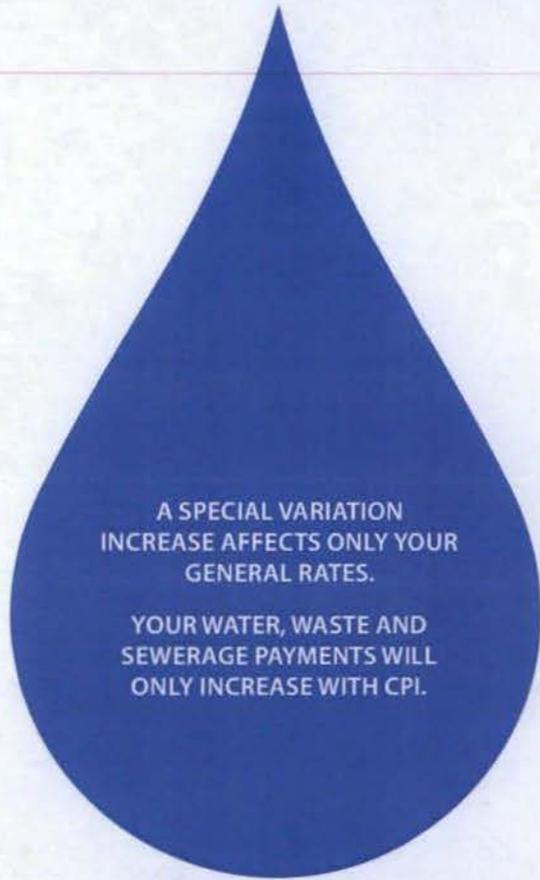
Click on 'rates and charges'

Click on 'calculate you rates online'

Enter your new land valuation and hit enter

YOU WILL NOW SEE THE EXACT FIGURES FOR YOUR PROPERTY WITH AND WITHOUT A SPECIAL VARIATION.

**DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER. NO WORRIES. DROP US A LINE AND WE'LL WORK THEM OUT FOR YOU.**  
02 6499 2222.



A SPECIAL VARIATION  
INCREASE AFFECTS ONLY YOUR  
GENERAL RATES.

YOUR WATER, WASTE AND  
SEWERAGE PAYMENTS WILL  
ONLY INCREASE WITH CPI.

## What will we spend it on?

2013

This increase pays  
for collector road  
infrastructure renewals.



2014

This increase pays  
for recreational  
facilities, renewals  
and upgrades.



THIS REPLACES AN EXPIRING SPECIAL VARIATION, WHICH WILL SEE A MINIMAL INCREASE THIS YEAR. THE PREVIOUS SPECIAL VARIATION WAS THE 2007 SPORTSAND ACCESS LEVY. WE'RE PROPOSING A SECOND SV TO CONTINUE TO PAY FOR THE RENEWAL AND UPGRADE OF OUR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

2015

This increase pays for  
community buildings,  
renewals.



FOR MORE DETAIL ON OUR SPENDING PLANS PLEASE SEE OUR LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN. [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)



## WHY DO IT?

Raising the general rates by 2-2.4% above the standard yearly peg rate for three years will net the shire an extra \$1.3 million p.a. quarantined for spending on a variety of essential infrastructure upgrades and renewals.

Council is permitted to earn interest on these funds meaning we can use the three-year rate increase to pay for maintaining our assets long after the special variation increase has expired. We need the money to renew many of the shire's busy roads, and for the upgrade of buildings and recreational facilities. **Without a special variation you still get safe roads and infrastructure.**

**You always will.** It's realistic, however, to say that we will need to find the money elsewhere, which may impact on timeframes and future projects. We think our proposal will be money well spent. Tell us what you think.

## WE'RE REDUCING COSTS

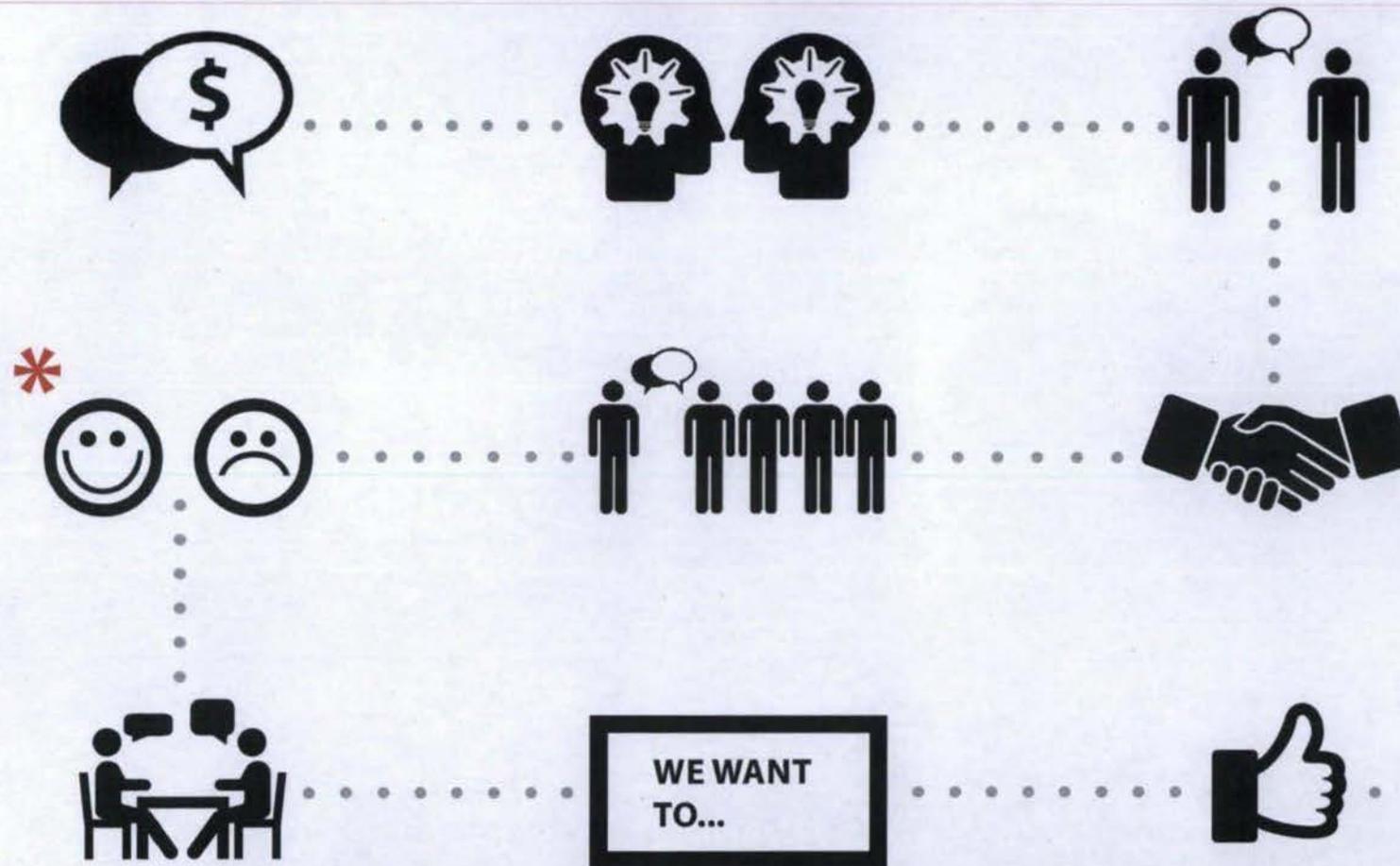
TO KEEP ANY INCREASE AS LOW AS POSSIBLE, WE'RE SAVING MONEY WHERE WE CAN.

- INCREASING STAFF PRODUCTIVITY
- USING EFFICIENT TECHNOLOGY
- INCREASING LEASE RETURNS
- JOINT REGIONALISATION OF SERVICES
- JOINT REGIONALISATION OF TENDERS
- IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES
- OUTSOURCING SERVICES
- IMPROVED PROCUREMENT
- COMBINED GRANT APPLICATIONS

THAT SAVES ABOUT **\$300,000** EVERY YEAR

SINCE 2010 ABOUT **\$2 MILLION** HAS BEEN SAVED

# A SPECIAL VARIATION IN 10 STEPS



WE TALK ABOUT INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

WE RESEARCH AND PLAN A RATES INCREASE TO PAY FOR ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

WE PROPOSE A RATES INCREASE TO COUNCIL

COUNCIL AGREES TO ASK THE COMMUNITY

WE TALK TO YOU

YOU HAVE YOUR SAY

YOUR FEEDBACK IS REPORTED TO COUNCIL

COUNCIL DECIDES IF IT SHOULD APPLY FOR THE INCREASE. IF AGREED TO, AN APPLICATION IS SENT TO IPART

IPART DECIDES

WE DELIVER THE GOODS IF IPART SAY YES



\* YOU ARE HERE. TIME TO HAVE YOUR SAY.

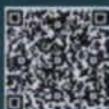
## WE DID A LOT OF THINKING.

FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS WE GATHERED INPUT FROM HUNDREDS OF COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES.

THE RESULT: OUR COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN. THESE DOCUMENTS OUTLINE IN DETAIL OUR LONG TERM AIMS FOR THE SHIRE, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED RATES INCREASE.

**YOU CAN FIND OUR COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN ON OUR WEBSITE. [WWW.BEVALLEY.NSW.GOV.AU](http://WWW.BEVALLEY.NSW.GOV.AU)**

*click on 'a leading organisation' and then on 'community strategic plan'...or if you have a smartphone, you can scan this qr code.*



## THE BOTTOM LINE

**YOUR COUNCIL RAISES ABOUT \$90 MILLION PER ANNUM IN RATES, GRANTS, FEES AND CHARGES.**

**OF THIS, \$20 MILLION COMES FROM YOUR GENERAL RATES.**

**WE CAN MANAGE THE AMOUNT WE SPEND IN THE FUTURE ON INFRASTRUCTURE BY INVESTING IN OUR ROADS, BUILDINGS AND SPORTS FACILITIES TODAY.**

## **QUESTIONS ANSWERED.**

**Where did this come from?**

**Council's Long Term Financial Plan which was developed after considerable consultation with the community and independent sustainability reviews over the period 2009 - 2011.**

**Who decides and approves this?**

**Council decides to discuss the proposal with the community. IPART consider the application and determine.**

**We've heard about a survey, what was that?**

**Council undertook two surveys; the community importance and satisfaction survey, and a specific survey on the rates proposal. We are also conducting this same specific survey online at Bega Valley Views 2030. [www.begavalleyviews2030.com.au](http://www.begavalleyviews2030.com.au)**

**You've made up your minds already.**

**The final decision will not be made until reviewing all the community has to say at a Council meeting on 7 March.**

**Why is the money needed?**

**To maintain roads, sports and recreation facilities and community buildings to an acceptable standard which meets the needs of the community.**

**What will money be spent on?**

**We are bound by law to spend money raised in an SV on the projects outlined in our application. If we apply, these will be the collector road network in 2013, recreational facilities in 2014, and community buildings in 2015. We will be audited and report on those funds.**

**What does it mean to me?**

**You can calculate your rates online or using the simple hard copy sheet attached.**

**You say this is a small increase but what about our water, sewer, waste?**

**A special variation rate increase applies only to your general residential, business or farming rates. Charges associated with water, sewer and waste are not affected. These increase with CPI only.**

**How can I make a submission?**

**Submissions can also be made by fax (02)6499 2200 or by email [council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au) Comments are welcome on the Bega Valley Views discussion page and will be considered with submissions. Submissions must be provided to Council by COB 6th March, 2013.**

## **WHAT ABOUT LAND VALUES?**

**Land values have gone down in the shire. Shouldn't my rates go down as well?**

**Put simply, the common notion of a lower land valuation leading to a guaranteed drop in rates is a myth.**

**If your land value changes by less than the shire's average increase, you will pay more. If your land value lowers by more than the average decrease, however, your payments will go down.**

**What ratepayers need to bear in mind, therefore, is that movement in land value does not necessarily reflect movements in rates charged.**

**Changes in land values causes the redistribution of what individual properties pay in rates with the total general yeild. The total general rate yield does not changes as a result of changes to land valuations.**

**This system ensures the distribution of rate payments remains fair and equitable. It has no effect on the amount we raise from our rates, just the restructuring of payments based on up to date land valuations.**

**We realise that ratepayers want to know what this means in dollars and cents, so to accompany an explanation of rates in relation to land value and our proposed special variation we now have an interactive rates calculator on our website.**

## **WHAT IS COUNCIL DOING TO SAVE MONEY?**

**The first thing we did when considering a special variation rates increase was to think about how we can save money and improve efficiencies.**

**IN THREE YEARS WE HAVE SAVED MORE THAN \$2 MILLION IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS.**

### **CONTRACTORS. \$440,000.**

**We've drastically reduced the amount we spend on contracting out work to external sources. This saving represents \$440,000 usually spent on the 'middle man'.**

### **STRATEGIES. \$180,000.**

**We've boosted our skills base and research for the forming of strategies is conducted increasingly inhouse and with the community. This saves money on the use of external services.**

### **LEGALS. \$120,000.**

**Through performance increases we have been able to make savings in our legal fees.**

### **HR PROGRAMS. \$600,000.**

**We've made this substantial saving through improving employment practices and spending on staff productivity and training. The result is a better performing and more efficient workforce.**

### **WORKER'S COMPENSATION. \$750,000.**

**We've made large savings by investing in making the workplace a safer and healthier place. The result is fewer worker's compensation claims and payouts.**

### **TECHNOLOGY. \$200,000.**

**The world of information technology is changing at a fast rate. We do our best to keep up and take advantage of the efficiencies technology can offer.**

### **STATIONARY & POSTAGE. \$40,000.**

**We are all moving increasingly towards a paperless world. This means less use of pens, paper and postage in the workplace. The result is better communications, dollars saved and environmental gains.**

**ALL THIS ADDS UP TO A LOT OF ONGOING SAVINGS BEING CHanneled INTO OUR INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS. WE EXPECT TO MAKE EVER MORE SAVINGS THROUGH BETTER PROCUREMENT, PROJECT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT UP TO AROUND \$200,00 EACH YEAR, THIS MEANS WE ARE PROPOSING TO INCREASE YOUR RATES BY A SMALLER AMOUNT.**

WORK OUT YOUR  
EXACT RATES ON  
OUR ONLINE  
CALCULATOR.



SCAN THIS CODE OR VISIT

[WWW.BEVALLEY.NSW.GOV.AU](http://WWW.BEVALLEY.NSW.GOV.AU)

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OR TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ON FACEBOOK  
[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BEVALLEY.SHIRECOUNCIL](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BEVALLEY.SHIRECOUNCIL)

A SPECIAL  
RATES  
VARIATION PROPOSAL  
EXPLAINED



Bega Valley Shire Council

A Special Rates Variation has been proposed to enable Council to spend more money on the renewal of vital infrastructure

Tonight is your opportunity to hear about what this means for you, and for the community of Bega

Most importantly, tonight is an opportunity to



A SPECIAL VARIATION  
INCREASE AFFECTS ONLY YOUR  
GENERAL RATES.

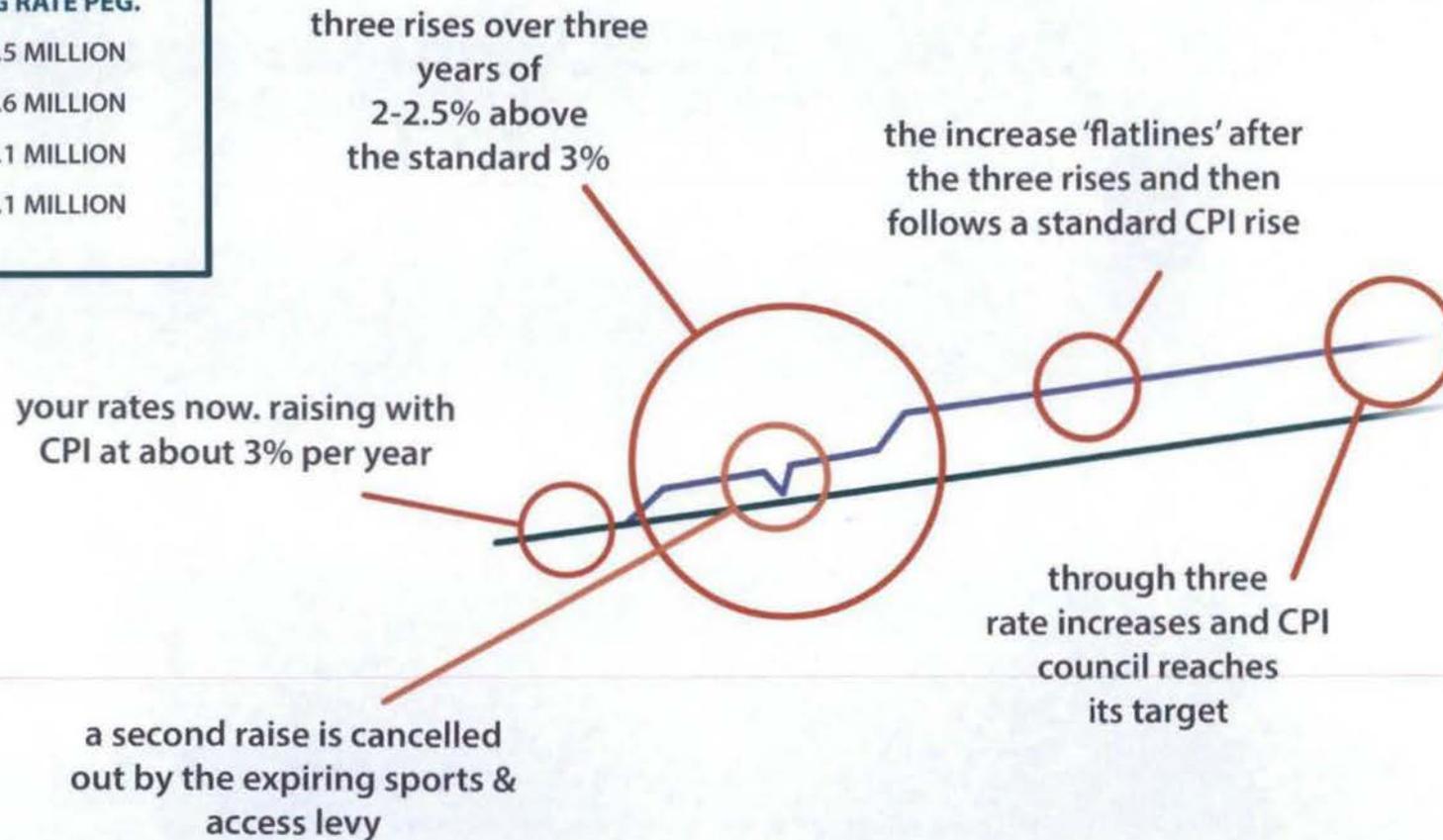
YOUR WATER, WASTE AND  
SEWERAGE PAYMENTS WILL  
ONLY INCREASE WITH CPI.

# The Special Variation Proposal

## YIELDS (WHAT WE RAISE) INCLUDING RATE PEG.

2013	\$19.5 MILLION
2014	\$20.6 MILLION
2015	\$21.1 MILLION
2016	\$22.1 MILLION

## YOUR RATES WITH A SPECIAL VARIATION INCREASE.



## Proposed rate collection in 2013-14 including a Special Variation proposal and 3.4% rate peg

Rates with 2% SV plus LGCI (3.4%)						
Category	Ad valorem Amount¢ in dollar	Base rate \$	Base Rate %	No. of ass	Rate yield \$	Yield%
Residential	0.003770	426.65	44.85	17,304	16,460,978	80.71
Farmland	0.003770	426.65	23.34	998	1,828,040	8.96
Business	0.007059	426.65	17.31	855	2,106,993	10.33
Mining	0.007059	426.65	0.00	0	0	0
Total					20,396,011	