



ANNEXURE 7

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK





Burwood Council Special Rate Variation

Prepared by: Micromex Research
Date: December 2013



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Background



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Sample Size Implications

- Sampling Size Implication
- Random telephone survey with n=400 residents aged 18 y/o +
 - The sample was weighted by age to reflect the 2011 ABS Census data
 - A sample size of 400 residents provides a maximum sampling error of approximately +/- 4.9% at 95% confidence
 - Participants were asked some profiling questions, then specific questions relating to the proposed special rate variation
- Fieldwork was conducted between the 27th & 30th November 2013

A random community sample size of 400 provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 4.9% at 95% confidence.

This means that if the survey was replicated with a new universe of n=400 Burwood residents, that 19 times out of 20 we would expect to see the same results, i.e. +/- 4.9%.

Therefore the research findings documented in this report should be interpreted by Burwood Council and IPART as not just the opinions of 400 residents, but as an accurate and robust measure of the entire Burwood community's attitudes.

The phone survey will provide Burwood Council with a robust and statistically valid measure of community response to the proposed SRV program



- The questionnaire, of approximately 10 minutes in duration, was designed to establish current attitudes and explore community response to the proposed resource strategies

Questionnaire Structure

- Q1. Confirmation that respondent does not work for Council
- Q2. Suburb of residence
- Q3. Satisfaction with the quality of infrastructure currently provided by Council in the local area
- Q4. Satisfaction with the level of service currently provided by Council in the local area
- Q5. Satisfaction with the level of service currently provided by Council in the local area
- Q6. Importance of Council implementing programs to provide better infrastructure and service

READ CONCEPT

- Q7. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this option?

READ CONCEPT

- Q8. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this option?

READ CONCEPT

- Q9. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this option?
- Q10. Rank the three options in order of preference
- Q11. What is your reason for choosing your first preference?
- Q12. Are you currently a Burwood Ratepayer?
- Q13. Age group

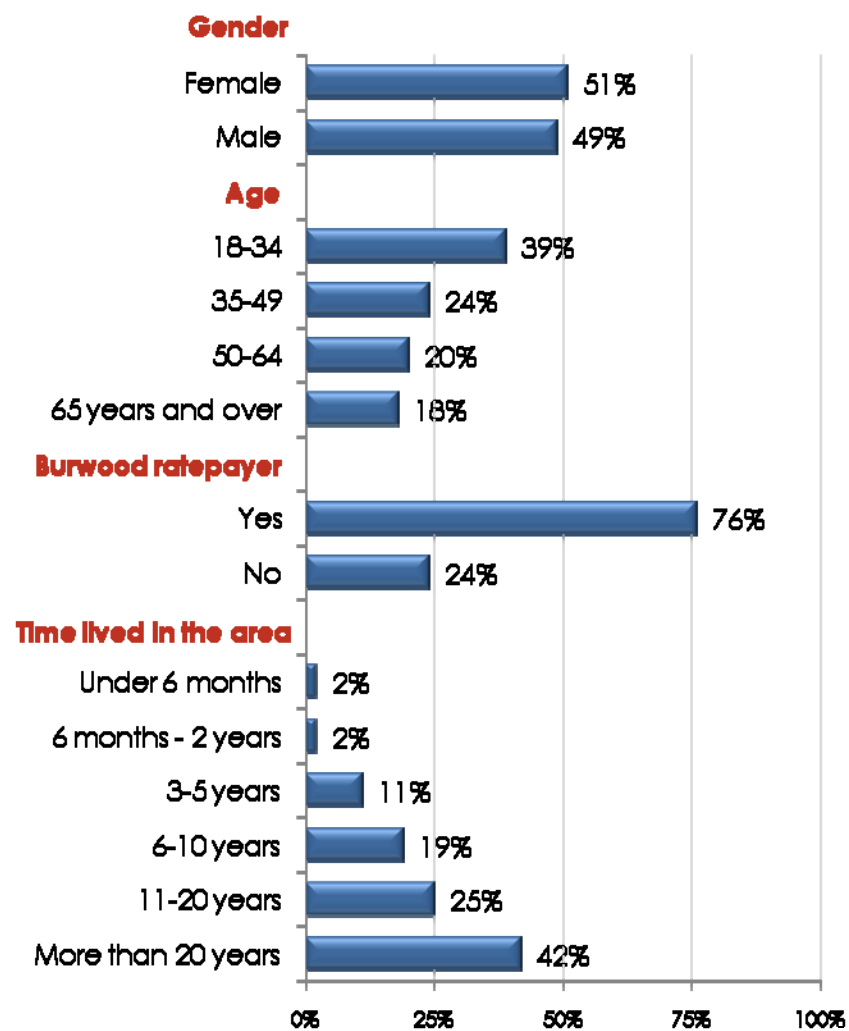


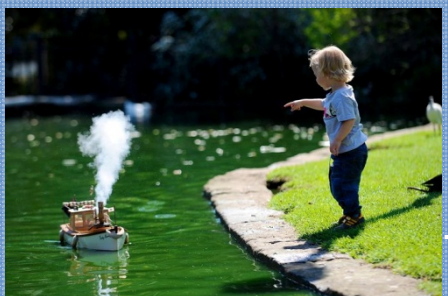
Profile of Sample



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The Detailed Response



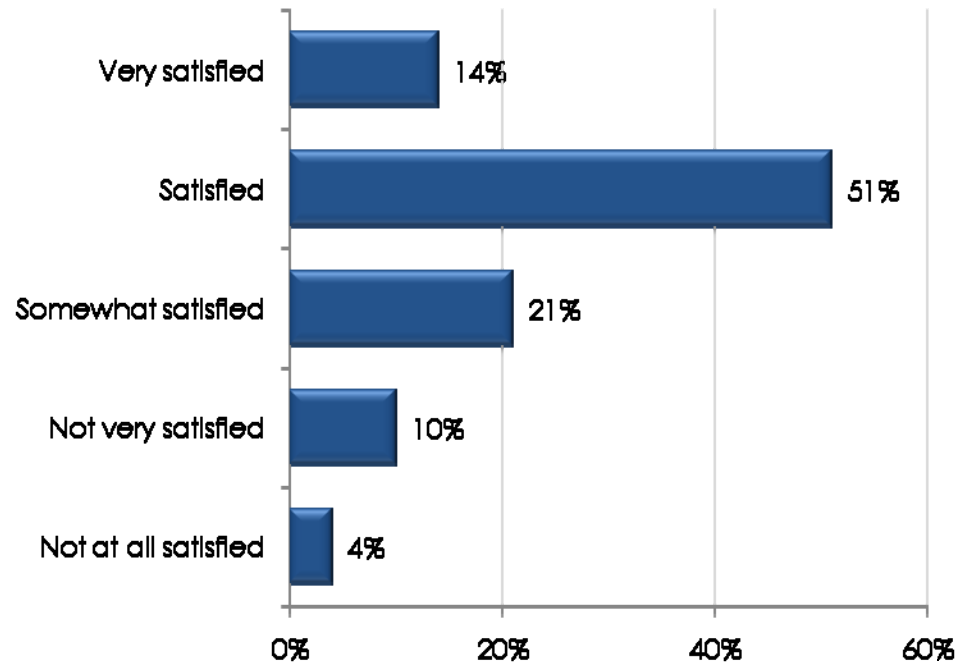
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86% Of Residents Were At Least Somewhat Satisfied With Quality Of Local Infrastructure

Q. How satisfied are you with the quality of local infrastructure currently provided by Council?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	Own	Rent
	3.63	3.57	3.44	4.13
	Overall: 3.60			
	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	3.77	3.52	3.48	3.49

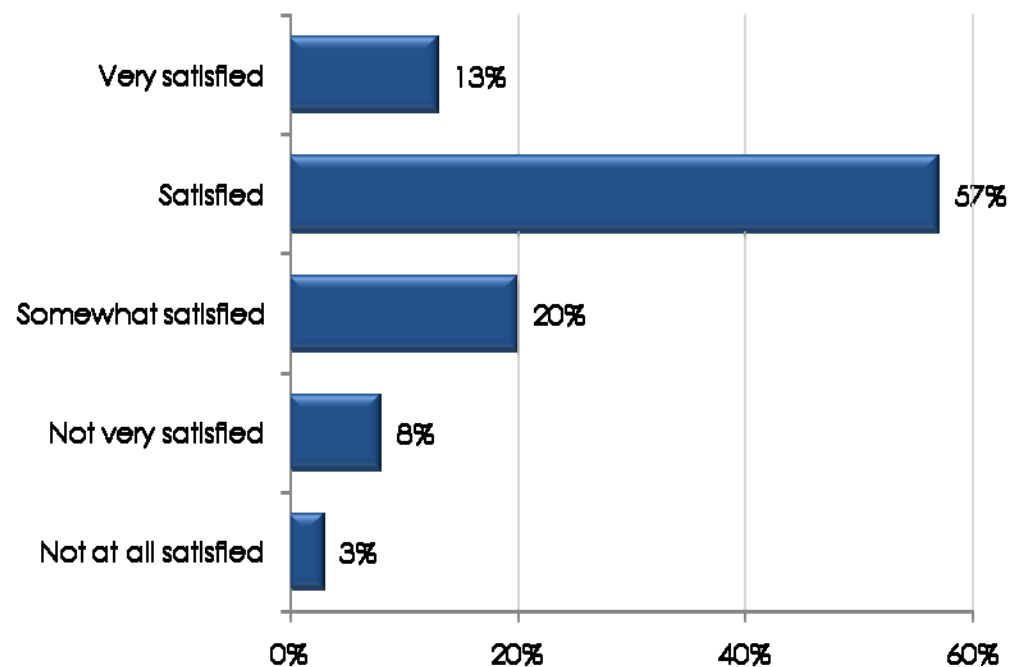
Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

Base: n = 400



90% Of Residents Were At Least Somewhat Satisfied With The Current Level Of Service Provided By Council

Q. How satisfied are you with the level of service currently provided by Council?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	Own	Rent
	3.73	3.65	3.58	4.04
	Overall: 3.69			
	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	3.66	3.68	3.71	3.75

Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

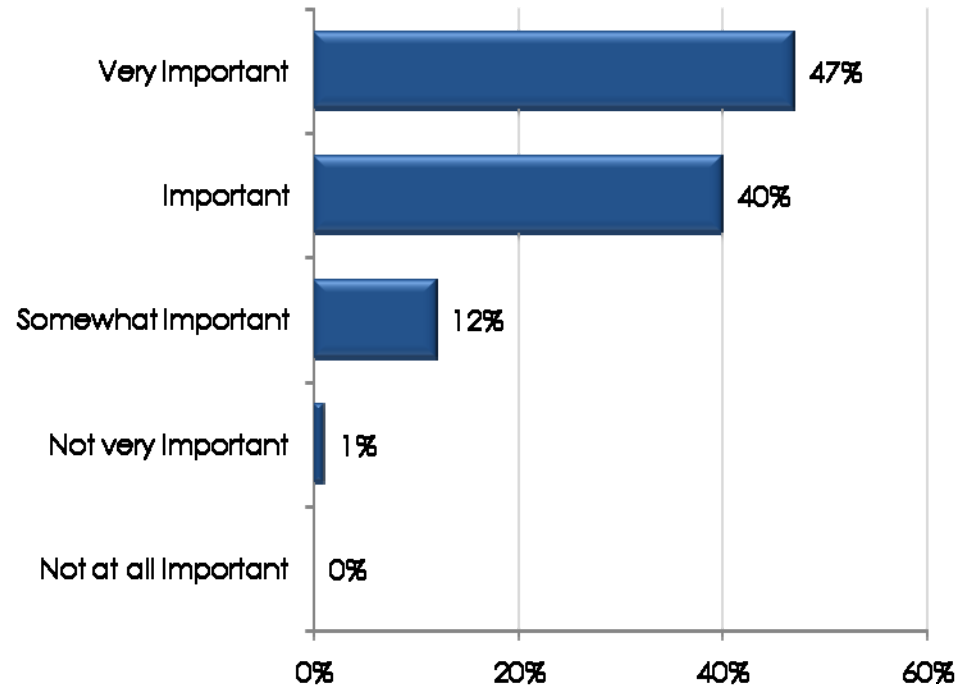
Base: n = 400

Residents were generally positive with regard to service provisions



99% Indicated That It Is At Least Somewhat Important For Council To Implement Programs That Will Provide Better Infrastructure And Service

Q. How important do you believe it is for Council to implement programs that will provide better infrastructure and service?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	Own	Rent
	4.25	4.38	4.36	3.18
	Overall: 4.32			
	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	4.17▼	4.32	4.47▲	4.47▲

Scale: 1 = not at all important, 5 = very important

▲ ▼ = significantly higher/lower level compared (by group)

Base: n = 400



Response to the SRV Concept



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3 Year SRV Concept Statement

Read statement:

As you know, rates are Council's main source of income for delivering services and are capped by the State Government.

Unfortunately, despite Burwood's sound financial position, they won't be able to continue improving infrastructure at the current level, as the rising costs associated with these services are higher than the revenue received through rate payments.

As such, Council is proposing a special rate increase in response to requests for improved services and in order to tackle a backlog in infrastructure.

Council is looking for your help in assessing three options for funding service levels:

- Decline in Service – Rates increase each year by the allowed 'rate peg'
- Maintain Service – Rates increase above rate peg
- Improve Service – Rates increase above rate peg



Option 1 – Decline In Service

Decline in Service. Rates would increase only by the State Government rate cap of approximately 3% per annum.

This would result in a total increase of 23% over the seven years. For the average residential ratepayer this would mean an increase of \$239 over a seven year period.

Service levels will need to be reduced each year to make savings.

Under this option savings would include:

- Reducing the opening hours or possible closure of facilities including pools, libraries, etc.
- Reducing the maintenance of sporting facilities, parks and gardens
- Reducing the maintenance of roads, footpaths, cycleways and drains
- Reducing environmental programs (e.g. weed removal and native vegetation programs)

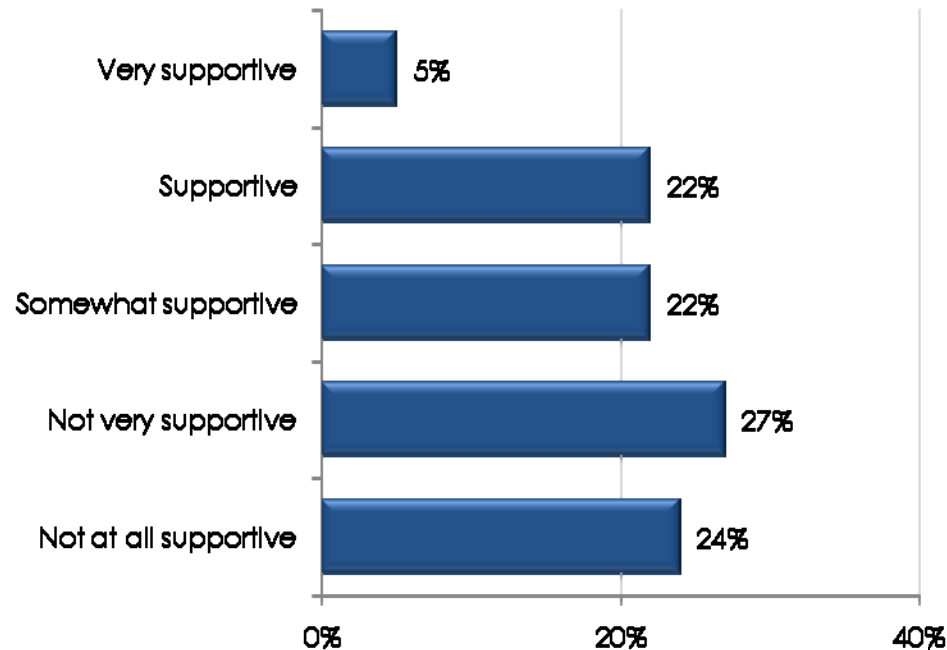
Under this option there will also be:

- Longer processing times for customer requests, applications and permits
- Fewer community events
- Lower level of funds for community sponsorship and economic development
- Larger increases in user fees and charges



27% Of Residents Were Supportive to Very Supportive Of Option 1 – Decline In Services

Q. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this option?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	Own	Rent
	2.77	2.41	2.64	2.42
	Overall: 2.59			
	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	2.61	2.40	2.60	2.79

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = very supportive

Base: n = 400

Only 49% of residents indicated being at least somewhat supportive of this outcome



Option 2 – Maintain Services

Maintain Services. To maintain current service levels, rates would need to progressively rise above the State Government rate cap to 7.5% in 2020/21. (5.5%, 6.5%, 7.0%, 7.5%, 7.5%, 7.5%, 7.5%).

This would be a total increase of 60.6% over the seven years. For the average residential ratepayer, this would mean an increase of \$631 over a seven year period. Of this, \$239 would be the rate cap increase and the remaining \$392 would be a Special Rate Variation.

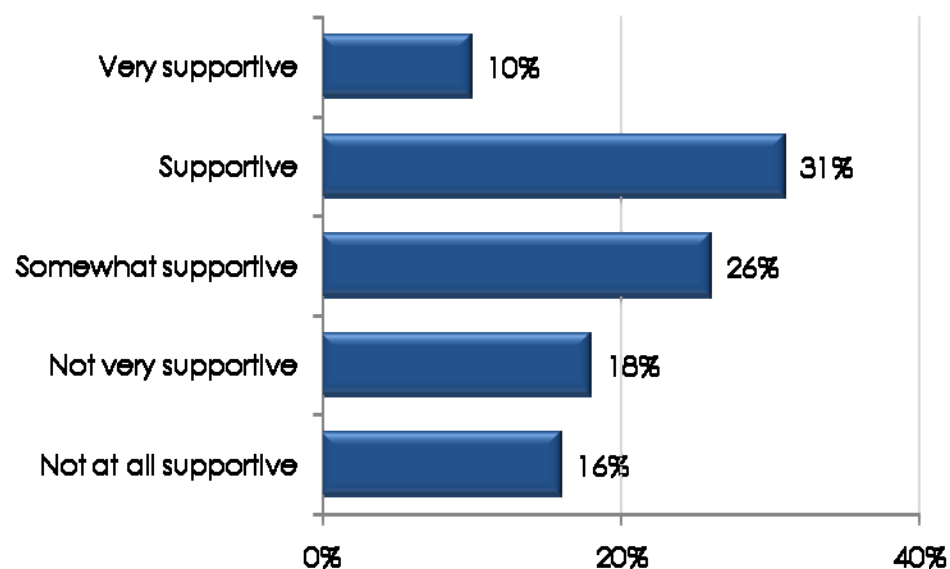
This option would allow Council to continue to maintain current service level across key areas such as:

- The opening hours and programs at pools, libraries, although no new facilities would be constructed
- The maintenance of sporting facilities, parks and gardens would remain as is, with no increase to mowing, planting or maintenance
- The construction of roads, footpaths, cycleways and drains would be maintained
- Current environmental programs would be retained (e.g. weed removal and native vegetation programs)
- Processing times for customer requests, applications and permits would remain the same
- Community events would be maintained, but not expanded
- Funding of community sponsorship and economic development would be maintained



41% Of Residents Were Supportive – Very Supportive Of Option 2 – Maintain Services

Q. How supportive are you with Council proceeding with this option?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	Own	Rent
	2.95	3.04	2.82	3.55
	Overall: 3.00			
	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	2.90	3.17	2.98	3.00

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = very supportive

Base: n = 400

67% of residents indicated being at least somewhat supportive of Option 2



Option 3 – Improve Services

Improve Services. To improve service levels, rates would rise by 7.5% each year for seven years, for a total increase of 65.9%.

For the average residential ratepayer this would mean an increase of \$687 by 2021. Of this, \$239 would be the rate cap increase and the remaining \$448 would be a Special Rate Variation.

In addition to maintaining all current service levels this option would enable Council to provide the community with the following enhancements:

- Re-sheet an extra 32,000 square metres of roads across the LGA over seven years
- Reconstruct an additional 23,600 square metres of footpath above over seven years
- Reconstruct more than 5,500 metres of kerb and gutters

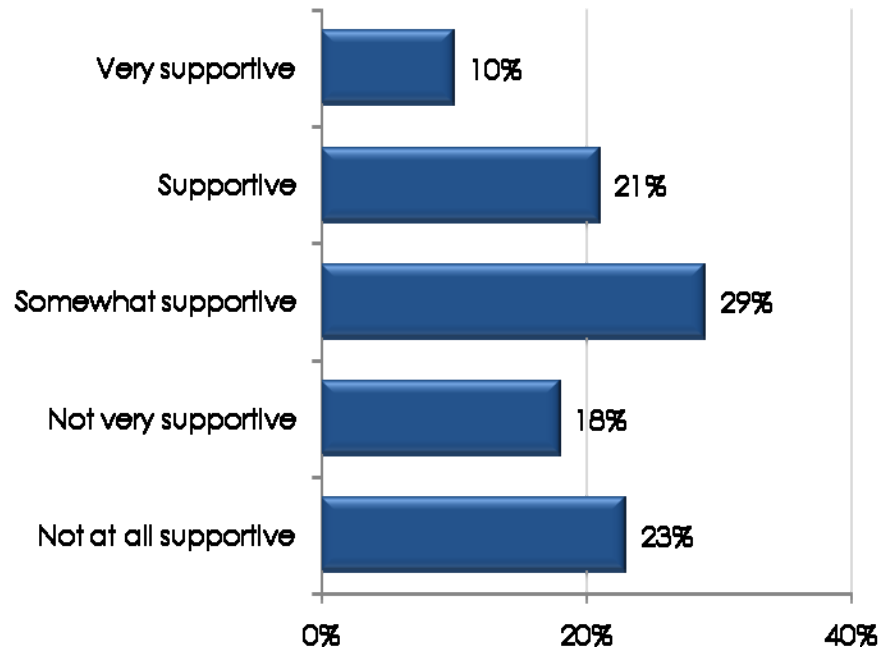
Council will be able to do the following in our local sporting facilities, parks and gardens:

- Install new playgrounds
- Install shade structures
- Upgrade amenity blocks
- Install park exercise equipment
- Install floodlighting for a sportsground
- Install solar lighting
- Upgrade park amenities (BBQ areas and picnic tables)



31% Of Residents Were Supportive – Very Supportive Of Option 3 – Improve Services

Q. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this option?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	Own	Rent
	2.68	2.84	2.56	3.41
	Overall: 2.76			
	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	2.92	2.73	2.64	2.60

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = very supportive

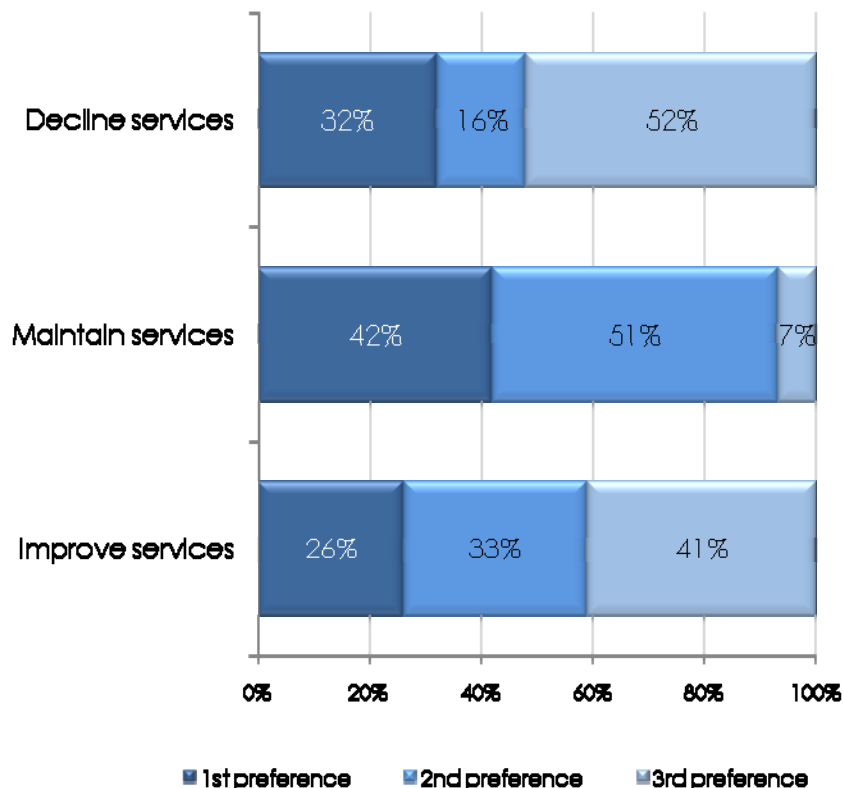
Base: n = 400

60% of residents indicated being at least somewhat supportive of this outcome



In Total, 68% Of Residents Most Preferred An Outcome That Would At Least Maintain Current Service Levels

Q. Please rank the three options in order of preference



Decline in services and maintain rates

Cannot afford a rate increase 10%

Council mismanages funds 7%

Maintain services, increase rates

Services and facilities need to be maintained 26%

Improve services, increase rates

Services and facilities need improvement 8%

The area needs improvement 4%

Infrastructure needs improvement 4%

Base: n = 400

Option 2 was the most preferred outcome



Q. *What is your reason for choosing your first preference?*

*"Currently playing too much for rates already
and cannot afford further increases"*

"Would not mind a reduction in services as many of them at the moment are not entirely needed in their current capacity"

"Not all services we have are needed in the area so I don't believe a rate increase is necessary"

"I don't use a large range of services and facilities and it would not bother me if there was a reduction"

"Rates are already high and Council should look at other alternatives to find extra funding"

"Council should already have enough resources to be able to afford maintaining the area"

"Council needs to look at being more efficient with the funds they do have, as the community cannot afford higher rates"



Q. *What is your reason for choosing your first preference?*

"The services Council already provides are good so I would like to see them maintained"



Q. What is your reason for choosing your first preference?

"There's a low cost difference between maintaining and increasing services that would benefit the community"

"Always room for improvement and everything does keep running down and needing upgrading before it gets worse"

"Services need to expand in accordance with community expectations and I support this option provided Council spends the money efficiently"

"Would like to see progress made in the local area in regards to infrastructure and services"



"Important for the area to move forward rather than backwards"

"Best option for the community as it makes Burwood a better place to live"

"The increase in rates is not that high but will provide better services and facilities in the local area"

"Burwood area needs to continue to improve and this appears to be the only way to do it"



Conclusion



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1. Residents were most supportive of Option 2 – Maintain Services and Increase Rates

- ⇒ *67% of residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Burwood Council proceeding with Option 2 – Maintain*
- ⇒ *60% of residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Burwood Council proceeding with Option 3 – Improve*
- ⇒ *49% of residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Burwood Council proceeding with Option 1 – Decline*

2. Overall, residents preferred Option 2 – Maintain Services and Increase Rates

- ⇒ *42% of residents selected Option 2 as their most preferred option*
- ⇒ *In total 68% of residents did not choose Option 1 – Decline in Services as a first option*



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our funding future



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT SPECIAL RATE VARIATION APPLICATION 2013/14

Prepared by the Media and Communications Team

TRIM Ref: 14/3022



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COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT SPECIAL RATE VARIATION APPLICATION 2013/14

Introduction:

In 2010, Burwood Council spoke with the community in order to determine its priorities for the future. Following extensive consultation, the community's vision was incorporated into the Community Strategic Plan, Burwood2030, forming the blueprint for Council's actions over the next twenty years.

During the consultation it was identified that one of the key priorities residents had was the need to improve and upgrade local infrastructure, including roads, footpaths, kerb and gutters and parks. Since then, Council has carried out an extensive capital works program to address the backlog in infrastructure and improve local amenity in line with the community's vision.

In 2013, Council undertook a community satisfaction survey to gauge whether Council was successfully delivering its services to the community's expectation. The survey revealed that overall residents were satisfied with Council's performance. The results also reaffirmed that residents continue to consider upgrading and maintaining local infrastructure a key priority.

Council has made a concentrated effort to improve efficiencies and financial sustainability in recent years to continue delivering a high level of service to the community. This was achieved through implementing various strategies, an organisational restructure, service reviews and development of a Long Term Financial Plan.

In 2013, NSW Treasury Corporation released *Financial Sustainability of the New South Wales Local Government Sector*. Incorporated in the report was the *Financial Assessment and Benchmarking Report* which outlined the asset position of Council and identified a backlog in infrastructure of \$168 million.

Although Council's extensive capital works program is currently tackling this backlog in infrastructure, Council will not be able to maintain this level of service in the current financial environment. This is because the rising costs associated with this service delivery are higher than the revenue Council receives. As a result, Council will be unable to reduce the backlog in infrastructure without seeking additional funding or compromising other services.

Therefore, Council has consulted with the community on its proposal to apply for a Special Rate Variation above the current 'rate peg' to continue to provide services in line with the community's vision for Burwood.

Community Awareness:

Engagement Strategy:

Council actively engages with the local community providing information in a timely, open and transparent nature, to ensure that residents and stakeholders remain well informed. This process is supported by a range of strategies which guide Council's engagement within the community.

The Community Engagement Policy was adopted in 2012, forming the framework of Council's community consultation practices. This policy outlines methods and the manner in which Council should conduct public consultation for key activities such as strategic and financial management plans, changing the basis of rating, policy development, major projects, facility development, changes in services, and community land classification and management.

In addition to this policy, the Multicultural Strategy was adopted in October 2013. This strategy guides Council's work in planning, service delivery and community development for its culturally diverse community.

Consultation:

Key dates:

<u>Launch of community consultation:</u>	Wednesday, 13 November 2013
<u>Notification to IPART:</u>	Submitted Tuesday, 26 November 2013 (W13/2239)
<u>End of community consultation:</u>	Friday, 10 January 2014
<u>First Council Meeting:</u>	Monday, 17 February 2014
<u>Deadline for application to IPART:</u>	Monday, 24 February 2014

As part of the requirements determined by IPART, Council must fully communicate the full impact of the proposed increases to ratepayers and demonstrate an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness and input into the process.

In order to ensure that these requirements were met, Council devised an Engagement Strategy to form the basis of the consultation (see Appendix).

The consultation was named *Funding our Future*, in reference to the need for additional funding to continue to carry out the community's vision for the area, as outlined in the Burwood2030 Plan.

The consultation ran from 13 November 2013 to 10 January 2014, combining both traditional and innovative methods of communication. This strategy was implemented in order to reach both the ratepayer base and target key stakeholders such as residents, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), aged care and disability groups/services, local Chambers of Commerce and local business.

Council presented three different options to the community which included two proposed SRV models and a third option of rate increases only by the approved 'rate peg' amount. Furthermore, Council highlighted two key issues to the community during the consultation; the impact a proposed SRV will have on ratepayers and how Council will use the additional funding from an SRV.

In order to demonstrate the impact an SRV will have on ratepayers, Council provided both a breakdown of the proposed options and the average annual rates over a seven year period under each option.

Figure 2.1 – Three options presented to the public

DECLINE IN SERVICE (Option 1)	Current service levels would be maintained in the short term, but later decline. Rates increase only by approved 'rate peg' amount. Council's capital works program may be compromised and priority will be given to essential infrastructure projects.
MAINTAIN SERVICE (Option 2)	Maintain current service levels and priority infrastructure. Rates will increase progressively each year over seven years commencing 2014/15 at a lower rate than Option 3. Council's capital works program may be compromised.
IMPROVE SERVICE (Option 3)	Improved service levels, new capital projects, upgrading and maintenance of existing infrastructure. This is supported by a special variation each year over seven years. The improvements are outlined in the attached newsletter and detailed on the website.

Figure 2.2 – Annual increase under each option over seven years

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Compounded increase
DECLINE IN SERVICE	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	17.3%
MAINTAIN SERVICE	5.5%	6.5%	7%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	60.6%
IMPROVE SERVICE	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	65.9%

Please note: The Decline in Service option was adjusted from the estimated 3% 'rate peg' to 2.3% following IPART's announcement on 2 December 2013.

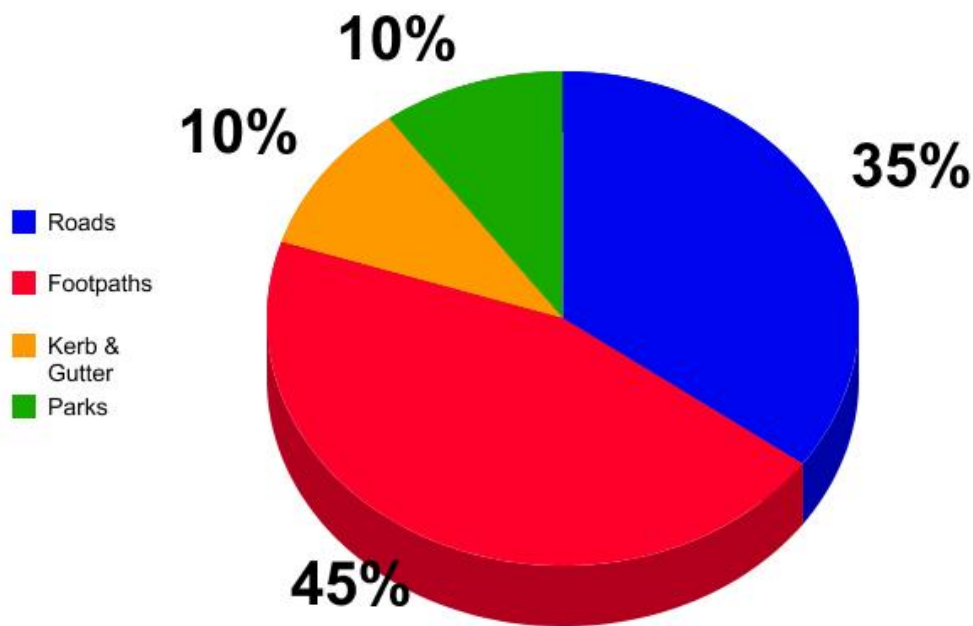
Figure 2.3 – Average rate increase under each option over seven years

	2013/14 Avg. Rates	2014/15 Avg. Rates	2015/16 Avg. Rates	2016/17 Avg. Rates	2017/18 Avg. Rates	2018/19 Avg. Rates	2019/20 Avg. Rates	2020/21 Avg. Rates	Additional payment at the end of 7 years
DECLINE IN SERVICE	\$1,043*	\$1,067	\$1,091	\$1,116	\$1,142	\$1,168	\$1,195	\$1,223	\$180
MAINTAIN SERVICE	\$1,043*	\$1,100	\$1,172	\$1,254	\$1,348	\$1,449	\$1,557	\$1,674	\$631
IMPROVE SERVICE	\$1,043*	\$1,121	\$1,205	\$1,295	\$1,392	\$1,497	\$1,609	\$1,730	\$687

Please note: The Decline in Service average rates are calculated based on the 2.3% 'rate peg' announced IPART

The second key issue Council highlighted during the consultation was where the additional funding obtained from an SRV will be invested. Across all the consultation material, Council emphasised that the funds from an SRV will be used on improving and upgrading local amenity such as roads, footpaths, kerb and gutters and parks, in order to reduce the backlog in infrastructure.

Figure 2.4 – Where the additional funding will be spent



Prioritisation of Works:

In 2012, Council undertook an extensive audit of all the roads, footpaths, kerbs and gutter in the LGA. Quad bikes and vans, fitted with state-of-the-art cameras, surveyed the area collecting vital data to help identify which infrastructure required the most urgent attention.

Each footpath, road, kerb and gutter was given a category ranking from 1-5 based on their condition, forming the basis of Council's long term capital works management strategy

Last year, Council was successful in receiving \$2 million in loans from the State Government in two rounds of the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS). Although Council is currently applying for an additional \$2m in the third round of the LIRS, these loans will not be a sustainable long term funding option to tackle a backlog in infrastructure.

Without a SRV, Council will only be able to upgrade roads, footpaths, kerbs and gutters that are considered a high priority and other important Council services may likely be compromised in order to fund infrastructure upgrades

Methods of Communication:

Council carried out numerous methods of communication during the consultation period to raise awareness in the community of Council's intention to apply for an SRV.

Overall, there were two different approaches; providing streamline information to all ratepayers, and targeted information delivered to key stakeholders. In addition, all material was branded under the *Funding our Future* theme to provide an effective and clear message to the public.

During the consultation, Council encouraged residents to join the conversation and provide feedback on the proposal.

Information kit to elected representatives and Council staff

Timeframe:

Distributed 12 November 2013

Action:

An information kit was designed to inform staff and elected representatives on the application process and provide information on SRVs, why Council is seeking to apply for an SRV and how the additional funding would be used.

The kit was distributed to elected representatives and various Council departments including Customer Service, Finance, Community Service and Land, Environment, Infrastructure. Staff members were also briefed on the consultation and application process.

Outcome:

This method ensured that staff and elected representatives were equipped to respond to any feedback or query from the community.

Phone Survey

Timeframe:

Wednesday, 27 November – Saturday, 30 November

Action:

The phone survey was the most comprehensive method of engagement undertaken by Council during the consultation period.

Council undertook a random telephone survey with 400 residents aged 18 and over. The statistically valid sample size interviewed is an accurate and robust measure of the attitude of the entire Burwood community.

The survey outlined the three different options available, including alternatives to an SRV. In addition to asking residents which option they preferred, the survey also asked residents for feedback on Council's services.

Outcomes:

In total, 99 per cent of respondents indicated that it is at least somewhat important for Council to implement programs that will provide for better infrastructure and service.

These results reaffirm the priorities identified by residents and ratepayers in prior consultations were still relevant and that infrastructure maintenance and renewal is considered highly important.

During the survey, an outline was given on each funding option and residents were asked how supportive they were for Council to proceed with the option. The results were as follows:

- **67% of residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Burwood Council proceeding with Option 2 – Maintain**

Figure 3.7 – Most used phrases when commenting on Option 2



- **60% of residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Burwood Council proceeding with Option 3 – Improve**

Figure 3.8 – Most used phrases when commenting on Option 3



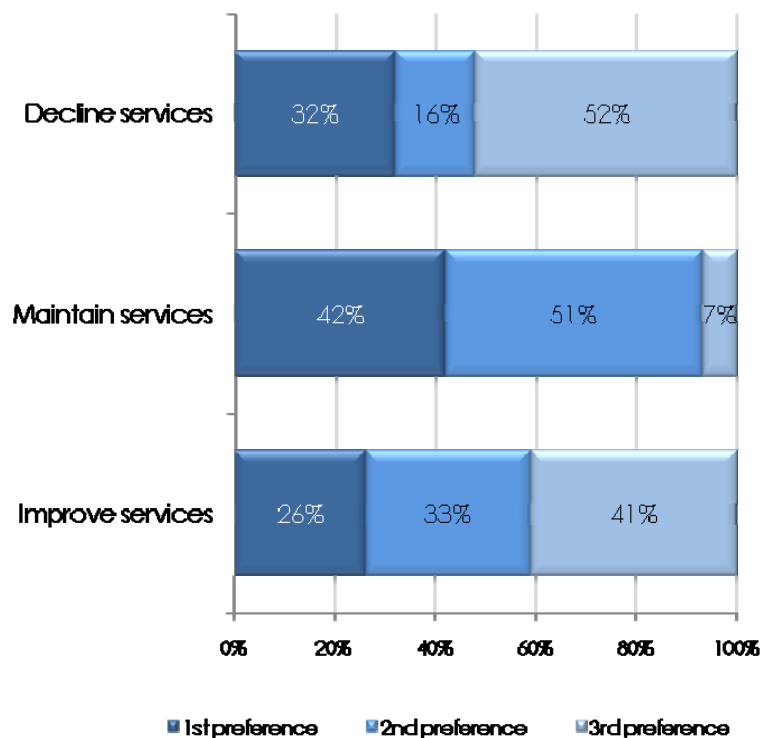
- 49% of residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Burwood Council proceeding with Option 1 – Decline

Figure 3.9 – Most used phrases when commenting on Option 1



After providing their level of support for each option, residents were asked to list the funding options in order of preference.

Figure 3.10 – Preferences of funding options



Overall, a majority of residents were in favour of some form of SRV to address Council's backlog in infrastructure and maintain the current level of service.

Website

Timeframe:

13 November 2013 – 10 January 2014

Action:

A dedicated *Funding our Future* webpage was officially launched on Wednesday, 13 November 2013 with clear links on Council's homepage. The website served as the hub of information for the consultation and included the following pages:

Figure 3.1 – Funding our Future pages

PAGE	INFORMATION
<i>Funding our Future homepage</i>	Background information and links to pages
<i>What you've asked for?</i>	Outline of priorities identified by residents during prior consultations
<i>What is an SRV?</i>	Information on rate pegging and SRVs, why Council is applying for an SRV, what Council is currently spending, where the additional funding will go
<i>How we've improved</i>	Efficiencies made, NSW TCorp Report on LG Sustainability, infrastructure backlog
<i>Our infrastructure</i>	Actions undertaken to address the backlog in infrastructure including the 2012 infrastructure audit and a breakdown of capital works that can be carried out under each proposed option over a seven year period
<i>How will this affect you?</i>	Average rates per household under the three options over a seven year period. Council's Rates and Charges Hardship Assistance Policy 2013 was also available in this section
<i>What difference will an SRV make?</i>	Conditions of roads, paths, kerb and gutter under each proposed option over a seven year period
<i>Online Survey</i>	Online survey embedded on page
<i>Have your say</i>	Information on how to provide feedback to Council including contact details

Outcome:

During the consultation period, Council's website received 122,698 views. Below is a breakdown of the *Funding our Future* section of the website during the period:

Figure 3.2 – Views on Funding our Future pages

PAGE	VIEWS
<i>Funding our Future</i> (home page)	369
Have your say	262
<i>Funding our Future</i> news item (Council's home page)	239
Online Survey page	239
What have you asked for?	168
What is an SRV?	159
How will it affect you?	154
How we've improved	148
Our infrastructure	143
What will happen without an SRV?	102
Total page views for <i>Funding our Future</i> consultation	1,983

Mayoral Letter to ratepayers

Timeframe:

Lodged 26 November 2013

Action:

Mayoral letters were sent to all ratepayers informing them of Council's proposal to apply for an SRV and encouraging them to join the discussion.

The letter included the following information:

- Three different funding options with an alternative to an SRV
- Average yearly rates under each option over a seven year period
- Compounded increase under each model
- Information on how ratepayers could provide feedback and join the discussion
- A six page newsletter was attached with further information

Outcome:

In total, 12,411 letters were sent to the 8 different rating category groups:

- Residential
- Town Centre – Residential
- Town Centre – Business
- Business
- Business B
- Business C
- Business D
- Mixed Development

Special Newsletter

Timeframe:

Lodged 26 November 2013 (included in Mayoral letter mail out to residents). Also available at Council facilities and online from 26 November 2013 to 10 January 2014

Action:

Council distributed a six page newsletter to ratepayers to expand on the information provided in the Mayoral letter.

The newsletter was made available the following ways:

- Distributed as part of the Mayoral letter to all 12,411 ratepayers
- On display at Council Chambers, Burwood Library and Enfield Aquatic Centre
- Distributed to Local Chambers of Commerce
- Made available electronically online and on social media
- Sent to CALD, aged care, seniors and disability groups online



*Burwood Update:
Special Edition*

The newsletter included the following information:

Figure 3.3 – Content in Newsletter

TITLE	INFORMATION
Mayor's Message	Mayor's message to residents/ratepayers on why Council is proposing an SRV
What is a Special Rate Variation?	Frequently Asked Questions on rate pegging and SRVs
Local infrastructure	Background on Council's infrastructure audit and backlog
What are we currently spending?	Breakdown of Capital Works budget from 2012/2013

What you've asked for?	Feedback from residents from previous community consultations undertaken
How we've improved	Outline of efficiencies made by Council over the past few years to improve services
How will it affect you?	Average annual rates for ratepayers in Burwood under each scenario over the next seven years
Where will the money go?	Breakdown on where the additional funding received from SRVs will go
Roads	Conditions of roads under each scenario over the next seven years
Footpaths	Conditions of footpaths under each scenario over the next seven years
Kerb and gutters	Conditions of kerb and gutters under each scenario over the next seven years
Parks	Upgrades to parks that can be carried out under the proposed SRV
Have your say	Information on how residents can provide feedback and join the discussion
Translations	Translation assistance in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Greek and Italian
Councillors & Contacts	Contact information for Council and elected representatives

Outcomes:

The electronic version of the Newsletter was viewed 53 times online.

Media Releases

Timeframe:

13 November – 10 December

Action:

A series of media releases were distributed to local media outlets. In total three media releases were distributed:



Article published in Burwood Scene

Figure 3.4 – Media releases distributed during consultation

Date	Title	Description
13/11/2013	<i>Funding our Future: It's time to have your say</i>	Launch of campaign
22/11/2013	Find out all you need to know about Special Rate Variations (SRVs)	Promotion of public information sessions
10/12/2013	Take part in a live Twitter session with Burwood Council	Promotion of live Twitter session

Outcome:

The media releases generated coverage in the Burwood Scene in both print and online editions.

Email to e-news subscribers

Timeframe:

27 November 2013

Action:

Emails were distributed to subscribers of Council's e-news service with information on SRVs which linked to the *Funding our Future* home page.

Outcome:

In total, 83 people received the correspondence.

Email to survey focus groups

Timeframe:

26 November 2013

Action:

Emails were distributed to Council's focus group which consists of 20 members. The group was established in March 2013 following Council's customer satisfaction survey.

Outcome:

The recipients were given information on SRVs and were personally invited to attend one of the public information sessions.

Letters to Chamber of Commerce

Timeframe:

2 December 2013

Action:

The Burwood LGA comprises four town centres: Burwood, Strathfield, Croydon and Croydon Park which play a large role in the local economy.

Letters were sent to presidents of the local Chambers of Commerce, encouraging them to notify their members of Council's proposed application for an SRV. The six page newsletter was included with the letter.

Outcome:

The following Chambers of Commerce received the letter:

- Burwood Business Chamber
- Croydon Park Chamber of Commerce
- Strathfield Chamber of Commerce

Emails to community groups

Timeframe:

9 December 2013

Action:

Emails were sent to local community groups, including aged care, welfare, CALD, seniors and disability groups, informing them of Council's proposal and encouraging them to share the important information with their clients and members.

Community organisations were chosen in consultation with Council's Community Service department in order to provide information to members of the public who may have difficulty accessing or understanding the information.

The email included an electronic copy of the newsletter and Council's Rates and Charges Hardship Assistance Policy 2013.

Outcome:

The email was sent to the following community groups:

Figure 3.5 – Local community groups

Community Organisation	Service provided
Australian Korean Welfare Association (AKWA)	Federally funded non-government organization which provides settlement services to the Korean community
Burwood Community Welfare	Provides support to disadvantaged, vulnerable and at risk members of the community. Primarily for people dealing with poverty, distress or misfortune
Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS)	Provides welfare services and assistance to Chinese-speaking people to settle and integrate into Australian society
Co.As.It Sydney	Co.As.It provides a wide range of services to the Italian-Australian community including aged care, youth and family, mental health and problem gambling
Greek Orthodox Community of NSW	One of Australia's oldest Greek organisations providing a wide range of migrant related social services
Navitas Burwood	English language service providers offering tuition and settlement services to migrants and refugees

Local paper advertising

Timeframe:

13 November – 11 December 2013

Action:

Council carried out a series of advertisements in the local publication Burwood Scene. The ads included an outline of Council's proposal, why an SRV is needed, contact details and information on how people could provide input into the discussion.

The following advertisements were published:

- 1 x half page advertisement – 13 November 2013
- 1 x half page advertisement – 27 November 2013
- 1 x quarter page advertisement – 11 December 2013



Example of advertisement in Burwood Scene

CALD media advertising

Timeframe:

25-29 December 2013

Action:

Council advertised in CALD media publications in order to provide language specific information to members of the community. Overall, Council carried out advertisements in Arabic, Chinese, Italian and Greek publications. The decision was based on the highest represented cultures in the local area.

Ancestry in Burwood Council area (based on Census 2011):

- Chinese – 25.2%
- Italian – 9.3%
- Lebanese – 4.9%
- Greek – 3.9%

Outcome:

The advertisements ran the week of 25 November 2013 in the following publications:



Advertisements in CALD publications

- El Telegraph – Arabic (approximate circulation: 34,000)
- La Fiamma – Italian (approximate circulation: 30,000)
- Noes Kosmos – Greek (approximate circulation: N/A)
- Sing Tao – Chinese (approximate circulation: 25,000)

Public Information Sessions

Timeframe:

Wednesday, 4 December 2013 – 11am – 12.30pm

Thursday, 5 December 2013 – 6pm – 7.30pm

Action:

Council held two public information sessions in order to expand on the information circulated in the community and to address questions raised by ratepayers/residents.

There were two sessions, a morning session and an evening session to allow all members of the community an opportunity to attend.

The session was conducted by an independent facilitator in conjunction with Council staff.

The following information was discussed during the information sessions:

- Background on Council's previous community consultations
- Current state of local infrastructure
- TCorp Report findings on Local Government sustainability and infrastructure backlog
- IPART application process and Council's proposed options
- Condition of local infrastructure over seven years roads under each option
- Next steps Council will undertake



Information sessions were held to provide additional information

The public sessions were promoted in the Mayoral letter to all ratepayers, newsletter, advertisements in Burwood Scene, signage at Council Chambers, Burwood Library and Enfield Aquatic Centre, social media and Council's website.

Outcome:

In total, 33 people attended both information sessions:

- Wednesday session – 16 in attendance
- Thursday session – 17 in attendance

During the sessions, attendees were given the opportunity to provide comments and raise questions regarding Council's proposal. In addition, attendees were given a survey form to provide further feedback. The primary issues raised by residents during the information sessions were:

- Over development in Burwood
- Increase in developments should generate more income for Council
- Poor conditions of current infrastructure
- Traffic and parking
- Council inefficiencies
- Option for Council to improve efficiencies without an SRV

In the second meeting, 14 attendees voted against an SRV in favour of Council identifying ways to become more efficient.

Overall, a majority of the attendees were in favour of no SRV (Decline option).

Article in Burwood Update Newsletter

Timeframe:

9 December 2013

Action:

The Burwood Update Newsletter is distributed quarterly to 14,000 households and businesses in the Burwood LGA and includes the latest Council news and information.

The Summer 2013 Burwood Update was distributed on the week commencing 9 December 2013. The back page of the newsletter included information on Council's application for an SRV with further information on how to provide input.



Back page of Burwood Update
– Summer 2013

Online advertising

Timeframe:

Ongoing

Action:

Council undertook an advertising campaign on the Burwood Scene website with 4 ads in total visible on the site's homepage and other pages. The ads linked back to the *Funding our Future* homepage on Council's website.



Example of online
advertisement in Burwood
Scene

Social Media

Timeframe:

Ongoing

Action:

Burwood Council has one of the largest social media audiences of councils in the Inner West of Sydney, with more than 1,000 users engaging with Council's accounts. Over the past few years, Council has used social media to effectively communicate with members of the public aged 13-34 who do not engage with Council as frequently as older age groups.

For the *Funding our Future* consultation, Council carried out an extensive Social Media campaign on Facebook and Twitter in order to engage with the community.



Council's Facebook profile during
the consultation

Outcome:

During the *Funding our Future* consultation content associated with Council's Facebook page reached 14,493 unique users.

This was achieved through a mixture of posts and advertising, which allowed Council to directly target residents in Burwood, Strathfield and Croydon areas based on the information provided on their profile.

Below is a breakdown of each post relating to the consultation and the views received:

Figure 3.6 – Views of Social Media posts associated with *Funding our Future*

DATE	TOPIC	VIEWS
20/11/2013	Launch	1064
21/11/2013	What residents asked for	135
21/11/2013	Cover photo	29
25/11/2013	Information letter and have your say	68
26/11/2013	Burwood Update Special Newsletter	61
27/11/2013	Online survey	559
10/12/2013	Live Twitter session	852
17/12/2013	Live Twitter session	138
10/01/2014	Consultation conclusion	47
Total view of <i>Funding our Future</i> related posts		2953

Static Displays

Timeframe:

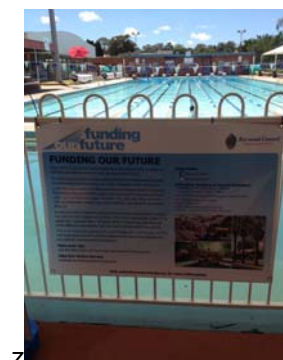
Ongoing

Action:

Information signage was on display at the following Council facilities:

- Council Chambers
- Burwood Library
- Enfield Aquatic Centre

These facilities receive a high level of traffic throughout the day. In particular, during the past financial year, Council received 12,000 visitors to Council Chambers.



Signage on display at Council facilities

Online Survey

Timeframe:

Ongoing

Action:

Council offered an opt-in online survey for ratepayers and residents who did not participate in the comprehensive phone survey.

The online survey was modelled around the phone survey and was made available from 13 November 2013 to 10 January 2014.

Outcome:

A total of 115 residents participated in the survey.

The results were as follows:

- 49.6 per cent of respondents were in favour of the decline option
- 31.6 per cent of respondents were in favour of an SRV

Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide comments. Below is a 'word tag' of the most used phrases by respondents; the larger the size, the more frequent the phrase was used.

Figure 3.11 – 'Word tag' from online survey

Able Afford Burwood Council Council Fee Councils
in NSW Evidence Facilities Greater Revenue High Rise Impact Improve
Income IPART Increase Maintain Money Option
Pay Rate Payers Reduced Think

Live Twitter Session

Timeframe:

17 December 2013

Action:

'Live Twitter session' is a term used to refer to an allocated time period in which a user makes themselves available to respond to tweets posted by other users. Essentially, these sessions are a live forum/Q&A which uses Twitter as the facilitator.

A half hour Q&A session was held on Twitter on 17 December 2013 from 12.30pm – 1.00pm. The intention of the session was to provide residents with an opportunity to ask questions relating to Special Rate Variations and receive an immediate response in an informal setting.

Outcome:

Council was able to respond to questions put forward during the allocated time.

Mayoral Column

Timeframe:

26-27 November 2013

Action:

Council carries out a full-page advertisement in local publications on a fortnightly basis, which includes a Mayoral Column and the latest news and information.

Information on Council's proposed application was included in the Mayor's message and as a separate news item in the advertisement on the week commencing 25 November 2013.

The information included why Council is proposing an SRV, where the additional funding will go and how people could provide input in the discussion.

Outcome:

The Mayoral column was published in the following local publications:

- Burwood Scene (approximate circulation: 50,000)
- Inner West Courier (approximate circulation: 100,000)



Mayoral Column

Community Feedback

During the consultation Council actively encouraged ratepayers and residents to join the discussion and provide feedback on each option.

Ratepayers/residents could provide input and feedback the following ways:

- Email
- Fax
- Telephone
- Mail
- In person
- Social Media
- Online survey
- Public information session and survey

Below is a breakdown of all the feedback received by Council during the consultation.

Figure 4.1 – Feedback received during *Funding our Future* consultation

Method	Total	Decline (1)	Maintain (2)	Improve (3)	Did not specify	Information request or comment	Other Council matters
Phone survey	400	128	168	104	N/A	N/A	N/A
Online survey	112	59	25	12	16	N/A	N/A
Email	35	9	N/A	1	N/A	25	5
Fax	2	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Phone	5	2	1	N/A	N/A	2	N/A
Mail	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Information session survey	17	12	2	2	1	N/A	3
Petition (56 households with 64 signatures)	64	56	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	636	269	196	119	17	27	9

Next Steps:

The application will be presented at the Council Meeting of 17 February 2014 for Council's endorsement. If endorsed, a formal application will be lodged to IPART prior to the 24 February 2014 deadline.

Council will continue to provide information to residents and ratepayers during the process.

END OF REPORT