

Shire of
Gunnedah
 Land of Opportunity

MEDIA RELEASE

Commencement of Special Rates Variation Consultation Process

Monday, 10 December 2012

Gunnedah Shire Council agreed on 21 November to pursue a Special Rate Variation with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal and is now seeking your views on the proposed increase. A series of community forums will be held from now until early February to enable community members to learn more about the process and to share their views. The first forum will occur in Gunnedah this evening from 5.15pm to 6.45pm at The Civic Theatre and whilst attendance was encouraged via the issue of invitations, no one is excluded from attending. If anyone should wish to attend please contact Mrs Olivia Ryder on 02 6740 2100.

The next community forum will occur on the 20th of December at the Smithurst Theatre on Conadilly Street, whilst consultation with the villages will start in the second week of January. A full list of dates and venues is provided below. Should you wish to attend any of these please advise Mrs Ryder three business days beforehand.

Location	Venue	Date	Time
Gunnedah Shire Council officers at Gunnedah Markets	Gunnedah Markets	Sat. 15/12/2012	0800-1000
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Thurs. 20/12/2012	1230-1330
Kelvin Community Forum	Kelvin Hall	Tues. 08/01/2013	0730-0830
Mullaley Community Forum	Mullaley Hall	Thurs. 10/01/2013	1815-1915
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Sat. 19/01/2013	1000-1100
Carroll Community Forum	Carroll School	Thurs. 24/01/2013	1815-1915
Curlewis Community Forum	Curlewis Hall	Tues. 29/01/2013	1800-1900
Breeza Community Forum	Breeza Hall	Tues. 29/01/2013	1930-2030
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Thurs. 31/01/2013	1715-1815
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Thurs. 07/02/2013	1200-1300

Robert Campbell, General Manager, Gunnedah Shire Council urges all residents to have their say, noting that 'Gunnedah Shire Council is aware of the significance of such a rate rise and is not embarking upon this path lightly, we encourage all community members to participate in the process, noting that these assets belong to all of us.'

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MEDIA RELEASE

Former Mayor weighs in on SRV discussions

Thursday, 13 December, 2012

FORMER Gunnedah Shire Mayor Adam Marshall has weighed in on the Special Rate Variation (SRV) application following the council's first SRV community forum on Tuesday night, which was well attended.

Mr Marshall has joined with Mayor Owen Hasler in urging the community to attend future forums, take the opportunity to read the strategic planning documents (Operational Plan and the Strategic Asset Management Plans) and to make contact with council to ask questions or provide thoughts and feedback on the SRV.

"Council has a reputation for being a very strong financial position with a healthy cash balance sheet, a very low debt service ratio and a robust investment portfolio, but this all masks the continuing underspend on asset maintenance and renewal over the past 20-30 years, which was highlighted drastically when the council began its strategic planning process two years ago," Mr Marshall said.

"Council continues to be plagued by the same dilemma every NSW council faces – operational costs outstripping operational revenues year upon year – which over time sees the infrastructure backlog grow.

"The need for a SRV is a symptom of 34 years of rate-pegging in NSW which has seen the bulk of council's revenue increases not keep pace with the real costs of providing services and maintaining infrastructure, and everyone's in the same boat.

Mr Marshall said that while the previous council prepared all the strategic documents and the underpinning long term financial plans, upon which the SRV is based, it is the current council has been left with the task of continuing this process by lodging the SRV and undertaking more intensive community consultation.

"Essentially, this is a continuation of the Integrated Planning & Reporting process which, due to timing and the caretaker period of the September election, the previous council wasn't able to see through to the finish," Mr Marshall said.

"The reality is that council's major costs have been increasing at a rate much higher than the rate pegging limit of 3.6% making it increasingly difficult to balance income and expenditure through the forward estimates.

"Wages, which are set by the State Award, are increasing at between 3.5% to 4%, manufacturing costs from 7% to 8.5%, fuel and bitumen 10% to 13% and steel over 15% in the last few years – and that's before you factor in the flow-on cost of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme.

"That's why the SRV was flagged in the Long Term Financial Plan which underpins the Community Strategic Plan, all of which was placed on public exhibition and the subjects of numerous public workshops earlier this year."

Cr Hasler emphasised the continuing process from the previous council to the present situation.

“The decision made on November 21 was the result of the investigations and conclusions drawn under the Integrated Planning and Reporting process and is the result of a great deal of work by staff in determining asset management and replacement issues.”

“Consequently, it is extremely important for the current community consultation process to be undertaken during which residents and ratepayers will have their chance to have a say on whether to maintain current services and infrastructure projects or see a slow decline in community facilities and assets.”

“In other words, do we want our aging pool complex to be renewed, our roads re-sealed, waste management facilities up-graded to EPA standards, our air-strip re-sheeted, or are we prepared to see these expensive community assets downgraded and allow a future generation to wear the cost of renewal because we are not prepared to do so.”

“There are choices, but they are difficult choices about how we see our future,” Cr Hasler said.

“We are at a critical point of the development and growth of Gunnedah Shire so it’s important that everyone takes the chance to express their view so that we’re all involved in creating a positive future for our community.”

Gunnedah Shire Council is now accepting feedback from the community which can be provided in person or by post at 63 Elgin Street, Gunnedah, by telephone on 02 6740 2100, or email council@infogunnedah.com.au. A report on the consultative process will be provided to IPART and also made available to the public.

Ends.

Media contact: Isabella Raynolds 0439 339 926

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MEDIA RELEASE

**Special Rates Variation
Community
Consultation Forum**

Monday, 17 December 2012

Gunnedah Shire Council resolved on 21 November to pursue a Special Rate Variation with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and is now seeking your views on the proposed increase.

Consultation with the community commences this month. At each forum you will be provided with information on the special rate variation before being asked to provide your views and to have your questions answered. The next community forum will occur on Thursday, 20 December from 12.30 to 1.30pm at the Smithurst Theatre on Conadilly Street, whilst consultation with the villages will now commence in the third week of January. Please note that earlier Gunnedah Shire Council had advised community members that village consultation would occur in the second week of January. Gunnedah Shire Council would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused. A full list of dates and venues will be available on the Council website in the first week of January. Should you wish to attend any of these please RSVP to Mrs Olivia Ryder three business days beforehand.

Gunnedah Shire Council, General Manager, Robert Campbell urges all residents to have their say, noting that 'Gunnedah Shire Council is aware of the significance of such a rate rise and is not embarking upon this path lightly, we encourage all community members to participate in the process, noting that these are the communities assets that are there for the benefit of the community.'

Ends.

Media contact: Isabella Raynolds 0439 339 926

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MEDIA RELEASE

Special Rates Variation Community Forums

Thursday, 3 January 2013

Gunnedah Shire Council resolved on 21 November to pursue a Special Rate Variation with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and is now seeking your views on the proposed increase.

Consultation with the community commenced in December and continues throughout January and February. At each forum you will be provided with information on the special rate variation before being asked to provide your views and to have your questions answered.

Please note that due to the high level of interest shown at the two special rates variation forums already held, times have been extended by one hour to ensure community members have the opportunity to express their views.

It has also been necessary to move the start times of the Mullaley, Carroll, Curlewis and Breeza forums so that the forums do not go too late into the evening.

It is expected that the information part of the forum will go for an hour with an hour provided for questions, should you wish to leave during question time that would be understood.

Gunnedah Shire Council would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Location	Venue	Date	Time
Kelvin Community Forum	Kelvin Hall	Tues. 22/01/2013	0730-0930
Mullaley Community Forum	Mullaley Hall	Wed. 23/01/2013	1800-2000
Carroll Community Forum	Carroll School	Thurs. 24/01/2013	1800-2000
Curlewis Community Forum	Curlewis Hall	Tues. 29/01/2013	1700-1900
Breeza Community Forum	Breeza Hall	Tues. 29/01/2013	1930-2130
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Thurs. 31/01/2013	1715-1915
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Sat. 02/02/2013	1000-1200
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Thurs. 07/02/2013	1200-1400

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MEDIA RELEASE

Council listens to Ratepayers

Friday, 11 January 2013

Gunnedah Shire Council has revised its proposed application for a special variation of rates to IPART and the Division of Local Government. The revised proposal would see a change in percentage increases together with the increase being spread over four (4) years instead of as in the original proposal which saw the increases spread over a three (3) year period. A comparison of the two scenarios is included in the table below, with "total increase" and "increase above rate pegging" shown alongside in brackets.

Scenario	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Cumulative
3 year – current	19% (16)	9% (6)	9% (6)	3.5% (0)	46.4%
4 year – proposed	9.4% (6)	8.5% (5)	9.5% (6)	7.5% (4)	39.7%

Gunnedah Mayor, Owen Hasler said: "I and fellow councillors, having heard the community's concerns raised through the forums held to date, and via correspondence, have given due consideration to the issues raised."

"As a result the proposed SRV has been amended and the proposal now sees the increase as outlined above."

Mayor Owen Hasler further explained that the variation in the proposed increase has been enabled by changing a number of factors, including:

- The spread of the increase over the four years instead of three;
- The change of timing for the swimming pool renewal where, instead of a spending \$6 million, \$1.5 and \$0.5 in 2013/14, 2014/15 & 2015/1 respectively, the expenditure has now been realigned to be \$0.5m in 2013/14, \$1.551m still in 2014/15, and \$6.595m in 2016/17; and
- Leaving Council's General Fund in a deficit operating result situation for the four years, out to and including 2016/17, rather than returning to surplus in 2013/14.

"Whilst this situation of deficit budgets was of concern to a number of councillors," Mayor Hasler indicated, "however that eventuality appeared preferable as expressed by many in the community as opposed to what was considered to be an overly large rate hike of 19 per cent in the first year."

"Given our present loan situation and loan history we are in a position to borrow if necessary should the need arise and this appears to be a preferable option for the community than the large rate rise in year one of the process," explained Councillor Hasler.

"The four year option allows us to spread the burden over an extended period whilst achieving a similar outcome," Councillor Hasler outlined, "and while we may have preferred to reach our goal of long term sustainability as soon as possible I don't believe that an extra year is going to negatively impact on council's operations and, more importantly, it appears to appeal to many ratepayers who had previously questioned the size of the increase in year one of the previous model."

"In addition to the changes to the general fund rates, the impact on ratepayers will be further reduced by amending the proposed increase for Gunnedah Water to a zero increase over each of the four years effected by the SRV."

"This reduces the cumulative impact from 39.7% to **28.1%** on the total rate bill of the average ratepayer which we believe will have significant appeal to the ratepayers as opposed to the first SRV model," commented Councillor Hasler.

The impact of the revised percentage figures can be expressed in terms of an average Gunnedah residential property, assuming the full percentage increase is applied to the category, as follows:

Rate	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total increase	\$ / week increase	Real Increase	\$ / week increase
Gunnedah Residential	707	773	839	919	988	281	\$1.35	178	\$0.86
Gunnedah Water	170	170	170	170	170	0	0	-25	-0.12
Gunnedah Sewer	422	456	492	522	553	131	\$0.63	70	0.34
Domestic & Green Waste	315	330	344	359	376	61	\$0.29	15	0.07
Waste Management Fee	65	65	65	70	70	5	\$0.02	-3	-0.01
Storm water residential	25	25	25	25	25	0	0	-4	-0.02
Total rate bill	1704	1819	1935	2065	2182	478 (28.1%)	\$2.30	231	\$1.11

The Mayor outlined the main benefits from the changed proposal are:

- The size of the increase in the first year is reduced from 19%, or 16% on top of rate pegging, to 9.4% and 6% above rate pegging.
- The increase to the general rate component above rate pegging for the 4 years is now a total of 21% as opposed to 28%, equating to a cumulative general rate increase of 39.7% over the four years instead of 46.4%.
- The additional year allows for greater flexibility and responsiveness to changes such as the possibility of additional revenue from voluntary planning agreements arising from mining development.

Mayor Hasler advised that Councillors will very shortly be having further discussions about how the total proposed rate increases may be distributed across the residential, business, farmland and mining rating categories. This information will then be made available to the public through the further forums taking place after the 21 January and on Council's Special Rate Variation website, <http://yoursaygunnedah.com.au/>

Ends.

Media contact: Isabella Reynolds 0439 339 926


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MEDIA RELEASE

Gunnedah Shire Council Workshops Rate Impact

Wednesday, 23 January 2013

Following a series of successful community forums and a comprehensive community engagement strategy, Gunnedah Shire Councillors met on Tuesday 22 January to further discuss the proposed rate increase.

Councillors present were in broad agreement that the community have really embraced the consultative process and have actively provided their views on the proposed increase.

Mayor of Gunnedah Shire Council, Councillor Owen Hasler, said: 'The views expressed during the consultation period to date have led to Council agreeing that the rate increase should be introduced more gradually, over four years rather than the three as proposed in the first proposal.'

"This has lessened the impact on concerned rate-payers whilst still being able to keep the level of assets and services that we all enjoy in Gunnedah Shire."

"The consultation process has now also assisted Council in further progressing a key aspect of the rates proposal, namely the ratings mix," explained Councillor Hasler. "This is a term which explains the fact that different percentages can, and will, apply to residential, business, farming and the mining sector.'

"At our ratings workshop held on Tuesday it was determined, after several hours of detailed discussion, that the mining sector would contribute a larger component of the total increase than the other three rating categories, namely residential, business and farming," continued Mr Hasler.

"This discussion was facilitated by a presentation by Mr Martin Rush, Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire, a community with a large mining sector and experience of the immediate and ongoing impact of mining," stated Cllr Hasler, "while additional information was also presented on Blayney Shire Council and their ratings system."

The table below indicates the split and also further details the change in the three to four year scenario. "Total increase" and "real increase", or increase above rate pegging, is shown alongside in brackets.

Scenario	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Cumulative
3 year – previous	19% (16)	9% (6)	9% (6)	3.5% (0)	46.4%
4 year – notional	9.4% (6)	8.5% (5)	9.5% (6)	7.5% (4)	39.7%
Residential	7.4% (4)	7.5% (4)	8.5% (5)	6.5% (3)	33.4%
Business	5.4% (2)	6.5% (3)	7.5% (4)	5.5% (2)	27.3%
Farming	7.4% (4)	7.5% (4)	8.5% (5)	6.5% (3)	33.4%
Mining	35% (31.6)	18.6% (15.1)	18.6% (15.1)	15.8% (12.3)	120%

The impact on the overall percentage contribution to rating revenue by each of the four ordinary categories is represented in the following table.

Category	Residential	Business	Farming	Mining
Contribution now	32.27%	19.09%	40.00%	8.64%
At end of 2016/17	30.81%	17.39%	38.20%	13.60%

Mayor Hasler noted: "Under the circumstances this was thought to be the best mix which takes into account ratepayers ability to pay."

"However, nothing is yet set in stone as yet, we still look forward to further ratepayer input and recognise that , ultimately, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal may reject all, or part, of our proposal," suggested Clr Hasler, " but we believe the community will be receptive to this proposal and can have further input by utilising yoursaygunnedah.com.au on our website."

In addition to the changes to the general fund rates, the impact for ratepayers will be further reduced by amending the proposed increase for Gunnedah Water to a zero increase over each of the four years; reducing the notional cumulative impact from 39.7% to **25.4%** on the total residential rate bill. The impact of the revised percentage figures can be expressed in terms of an average Gunnedah residential property as follows:

Rate	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total increase	\$ / week increase	Real Increase	\$ / week increase
Gunnedah Residential	707	759	816	885	943	236	\$1.13	133	\$0.64
Gunnedah Water	170	170	170	170	170	0	0	-25	-0.12
Gunnedah Sewer	422	456	492	522	553	131	\$0.63	70	0.34
Domestic & Green Waste	315	330	344	359	376	61	\$0.29	15	0.07
Waste Management Fee	65	65	68	70	70	5	\$0.02	-3	-0.01
Storm water residential	25	25	25	25	25	0	0	-4	-0.02
Total rate bill	1704	1805	1915	2031	2137	433 (25.4%)	\$2.08	186	\$0.89

Consultation continues this month and next month with the submission to IPART due on 11 March 2013.

Ends.

Media contact: Isabella Raynolds 0439 339 926

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MEDIA RELEASE

MINING ASSISTS IN REDUCING RATE INCREASE

Tuesday, 29 January 2013

Gunnedah Shire Mayor, Councillor Owen Hasler, explained to Carrol Ratepayers how increased rating of the mining sector would effect other categories during his address at the Carrol Community Consultative meeting held last Thursday evening in the Carrol Public School Hall.

“The fact that Gunnedah Shire Council will be receiving an additional \$900,000 in income over the four year period, an increase of 120% in Mine rate revenue in that period, will allow us to vary the rate in the three other categories,” stated Councillor Hasler.

“Consequently, the business, residential and farming rate will be reduced from the present 19% ,32% and 40% of total rate income respectively, to 17%,31% and 38%.

“This will mean a significant saving to these three sectors and is seen to be justified by council due to the significant impact that the mining industry is having on the local economy, including councils’ operations,” explained Councillor Hasler.

“At our recent forums in Kelvin and Mullaley ratepayers pointed to the increased costs in the operation of their business and farms as a direct result of increased demand caused by extractive industries which is pushing up prices of equipment and other items while some landowners have to now seek service requirements out of town as the local firms cannot cater for their service requirements any longer,” claimed Councillor Hasler.

“Therefore, the increase in the mining rate from 9% to 14% of the total rate by 2016/17 is seen to be a fair outcome reflecting the changing dynamic of the industry base in Gunnedah and Council believe that the general ratepayers in the Shire will see this as a well balanced outcome given the necessity of council to seek a Special Rate Variation of 21% over the rate-pegging limit over the period 2013-2017.”

“The general feedback from the two meetings at Mullaley and Kelvin, the only meetings held since the decision regarding the categories was determined last Tuesday, was that given the proposed increase over the four year period which sees increases above rate-pegging of 6% (2013/14),, 5% (2014/15), 6% (2015/16) and 4% (2016/17), that the council is seen as seriously attempting to reduce the immediate impact of the increases while ensuring the long-term objective of sustainability for the council,” stated Councillor Hasler.

“We believe that this change in the contribution by the mining industry together with the holding of the water supply rate to a zero increase over the four years for residential ratepayers will be seen as a genuine attempt by council to accede to the expressed wishes of the ratepayers by spreading the burden as widely as possible within our rating base,” concluded Councillor Hasler.

Ends.

Contact: Owen Hasler Mobile 0429 686 373

MEDIA RELEASE

**Commencement of
Special Rates Variation
Application**

Tuesday, 4 December 2012

Like many councils in New South Wales, Gunnedah Shire Council is facing significant challenges in continuing to provide the current level of services, facilities and infrastructure across our Shire. This is primarily due to the fact that costs have been increasing faster than the ability of the Council to generate revenue.

It is the view of the majority of Gunnedah Shire Council's elected officials that an increase in rates is essential to ensure this critical situation is addressed. Accordingly at the last Gunnedah Shire Council meeting it was agreed that Council would commence an application with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for an increase in rates to commence in 2013-14. Whether or not Council proceeds with the final step is subject to the views of the community.

The Gunnedah Shire Council Mayor, Councillor Owen Hasler notes that 'unfortunately local government assets have been consistently underfunded over the last twenty to thirty years. Prior to 2012, Gunnedah Shire Council, like many other councils, decided on a number of occasions not to increase rates to the maximum allowed under rate pegging legislation, this lost revenue has been significantly compounded over time and can only be redeemed by a significant rate rise.' Councillor Hasler added 'that whilst Council will continue to examine how to make efficiencies and explore the expansion of user pays services, these gains will never be able to make up the required shortfall. The community will hopefully understand that without an increase there will be further degradation of assets and services.'

The process towards a Special Rate Variation actually commenced much earlier when the community were consulted through the Integrated Planning and Reporting process and the development of a series of plans that were ultimately adopted by Council. The community were presented with a series of layered models ranging from leaving income unchanged, to providing sustainability of current operations to providing new assets and additional services.

The preferred position of the 2008-2012 council was to sustain current operations via a commensurate increase in rates and whilst the Council did adopt a set of plans which required an increase of 20.4% in revenue, or commensurate cuts to costs, it did not act before the September election to pursue an increase in rates, leaving the newly elected Council to deal with the matter.

Upon formation of the new Council elected councillors and senior staff looked immediately at the options before them, which were as follows:

1. Increase annual revenue by the full required amount;
2. Decrease annual expenditure by the full required amount;
3. Pursue a combination of cost reduction and an increase in annual revenue; or
4. Significantly cut expenditure on asset maintenance and renewal, which will significantly reduce the condition of assets (and possibly the failure or closure of

some) passing the problem on to another generation and also leaving Council vulnerable to takeover by a council with a better asset management record.

Having weighed up the options, the present Council, at its meeting of 21 November, decided to proceed with an application for a rate increase. That is a 'real' (above inflation) increase to the general rate component of 16% in year one, and a further 6% per year in the two subsequent years (excluding the compounding effect) equating to 24% should it have been in a single year, but effectively 28% over the three years.

This was an extra 3.6% on top of the proposed 20.4% suggested earlier in the year in order to address a number of extra items of high need identified which had not been factored in previously.

Councillor Hasler has advised that 'It should be noted that this level of increase relates only to the general rate component, and not to Domestic Waste, Water or Sewerage charges. For example, if your total rate bill is \$1,800 and the residential rate is \$803, with the remainder being made up of Water, Sewerage, Waste and Stormwater it is only the \$803 that will be subject to this level of increase.'

Gunnedah Shire Council will now advise IPART that it intends to make a submission for the increase.

December will see the start of extensive consultation with the community in order to explain the process and the reasons for the decision and, to seek community feedback prior to finalisation of the formal application to IPART in March 2013. The consultation may also need to determine which items (operating and capital) will need to be removed from the draft plans to enable Council to balance the budget in the event that Council is unsuccessful in its application or elects not to lodge the final application for the required revenue increase.

Opportunities will be provided to ensure each and every member of the community is able to have their say.

Councillor Hasler concluded that 'This decision is considered to be the best outcome for the Gunnedah Community if we are to maintain service delivery as expected by the community; undertake the necessary maintenance and replacement/upgrade of assets and infrastructure; ensure indebtedness and loans are kept at a manageable level; and ensure the viability of the council into the intermediate and distant future and thereby prevent the threat of hostile or forced amalgamation.'

Ends.

Media contact: Isabella Raynolds 0439 339 926

Namoi Valley Independent

Serving Gunnebah and district

PRINT COST APPROVED - PF 2880000001

Tuesday, November 27, 2012

DATED

EDITORIAL

Finally seeing the elephant

With apologies to former Prime Minister Paul Keating and that memorable quip as we slid into recession back in the 90s ... 'but this is the rate rise we had to have'.

The decision taken by Gunnebah's new council last week to apply for a rate variation of 28 per cent over three years will no doubt receive more criticism than it will plaudits.

Council is to ask the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to allow it to hoist rates for 2013/14 by 16 per cent with a further six per cent in each of 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years.

Rumours have been circulating for a few weeks that council would be looking to go down this path but the size of the initial rate hike will no doubt be a cause of concern - particularly for those on the land who have recently experienced years of drought with

the threat of another ordinary season well and truly on the horizon.

In truth, council has to apply for a rate hike to not only maintain its financial viability but to also ensure the services and infrastructure levels we currently enjoy, continue into the future.

Debate in the chamber last week was robust but measured and intelligent.

But the stark reality is that councils in NSW are doomed to eventually fall under a rate-pegging system that will not allow them to keep pace with the rate of inflation.

IPART yesterday gave councils permission to raise rates 3.4 per cent for the next financial year - a paltry increase given the costs of running a council.

This is far too inadequate to meet the needs of organisations that continually battle cost increases across a wide range of

areas including wages, insurance, fuel, bitumen, cement, steel ... the list goes on.

While councillors argued the toss of whether to ask for a hike, there was one point on which they all eventually agreed, some perhaps more openly than others.

Previous councils failed to take the unpalatable step of asking for a rate rise above and beyond the pegged limit, knowing full well that it had to be done.

Over the past 16 years or so - the life of four councils - the elephant in the room has been rates.

Amazingly, for 16 years no-one saw that elephant and for the first time a council has now aimed up and acknowledged the failings of its predecessors and is to take the required measures.

Full marks to Mayor Owen Hasler and all councillors for finally grasping the nettle.

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

Namoi Valley Independent

SCANNED
11 JAN 2013

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - 1723201000001

DATED

Tuesday, November 27, 2012

Council moves on 28pc rate hike



MAYOR Owen Hasler "... It's time we bit the bullet..."

GUNNEDAH Shire Council has voted to ask for a rate variation that could see rates rise by 28 per cent over the next three years.

Council will lodge its intention with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) by December 13, the cut-off date for applications for 2012/13.

But the decision to hike rates is not set in cement and council will now undertake a comprehensive community consultation process.

Last night's decision signalled council would no longer ignore the need to hike up rates to ensure services and infrastructure are maintained within the shire.

Director Community and Corporate Services, Eric Groth, told last week's monthly meeting that councillors had to consider asking for a special rate rise to ensure the sustainability of the provision of infrastructure and services.

The proposed special rise, if granted, would be above and the beyond the allowed rate pegging of three per cent.

Mr Groth said the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan, Operational Plan, Delivery Plan and Resourcing Plans at the June meeting, meant council needed to raise an additional 20.4

per cent in revenue, or come up with commensurate cuts in projects and services as well as some asset disposal.

He said a number of other items identified for community consultation and not included in the proposed increase had been ear-marked in the financial years 2016/17 to 2021/22, which if adopted total in excess of \$20 million.

Mr Groth said council could seek a single up-front special variation of 24 per cent to fund the works and services identified at the June meeting, totalling 20.4 per cent plus the 3.6 per cent net variance since identified.

However, he suggested that an application under Section 508(A) would spread the equivalent increase over three years with a real increases in 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 of 16 per cent, six per cent and six per cent, respectively.

The issue prompted vigorous debate in the chamber with the recommendation getting up four votes to three.

Councillors Steve Smith, David Quince and Colleen Fuller voted against the recommendation.

Cr Smith said he did not want to see such a heavy rate rise while Cr Fuller said council should look at cutting costs first.

"We need to pull our horns in and support the ratepayers," Cr Fuller said.

Cr Quince said the actual figure would equate to nearly 40 per cent over four years and was "unacceptable".

He said the burden on the rural community in particular, would be enormous.

"We have just had a 10-year drought and we are now facing a very ordinary season," Cr Quince told the meeting.

Cr Gwern Griffen said she supported the recommendation, pointing out that council hadn't had a rate rise beyond the pegged rate for years and it was "time to get back on track".

Cr Gae Swain said it was council's duty to act responsibly for the sake of ratepayers and that is why she supported the recommendation.

"It is not that I want to see a rate increase but we have to ensure that we remain a viable council and that we leave something for our children," Cr Swain said.

"I know farmers have been hit hard, I am from the land, but farmers still expect that their roads are maintained and the services they now receive, continue into the future.



CR Gae Swain "... It's council duty to act responsibly..."

CONTINUED PAGE 2

'Council guilty of side-stepping'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Everyone will be hit, not just farmers but the lower socio-economic group in particular.

"Council has been guilty of side-stepping this issue for many years but we must take the bit between our teeth and put something in place now."

Mayor Owen Hasler said that previous councils and staff had indicated on a number of occasions that council had to proceed with a significant rate rise and it was unfortunate that they didn't do it in their term of office.

"If we don't do this now, we will have to wait another 12 months and then it will be that much harder," Cr Hasler said.

"If we are going to maintain - not even extend, but simply maintain - our infrastructure, we need to do this now."

Cr Hasler cited Moree Shire Council, the recent winner of the Bluet Award which recognises excellence in local government, had hiked its rates by 18 per cent over three years.

"The decision to raise rates was well received by a community that was convinced of the necessity for a rise.

"We simply don't have any alternative."

Crs Swain, Griffen, Tim



CR Hans Allgayer.



CR Gwen Griffen.



CR Tim Duddy.

Duddy and Hans Allgayer supported the recommendation, Cr Rebecca Ryan was absent from the meeting.

Namoi Valley Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 2801000001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

DATED _____

Thursday, November 29, 2012

Rates question

**MICHAEL Sparkes of
Gunnedah writes;**

Short but not sweet.

A question to the councillors of the Gunnedah Shire Council who support the 28 per cent rate rise - would these councillors have publicly stated before the council elections that they would support the 28 per cent rate increase?

I think not.

Perhaps these councillors will bring up the sale of our parks again!

Namoi Valley

Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PPS288100001

Thursday, November 29, 2012

DATED

LGSA welcomes rate pegging decision

THE Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW (LGSA) has welcomed the third independent determination of the rate pegging limit by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW (IPART).

The IPART announced yesterday that it has determined a maximum allowable increase of councils' rate revenue for 2013/14 of 3.4 per cent.

President of the Shires Association of NSW, Cr Ray Donald, said that this year's IPART determination better reflects the real cost movements faced by councils, rather than the simple CPI.

"The LGSA acknowledges IPART's determination of 3.4 per cent today," he said.

"Local Government has faced significant cost increases over the past year, particularly in relation to electricity and construction costs, and it is good to see this reflected in IPART's determination.

"IPART's early announcement provides councils with more certainty as well as a longer notice period and therefore more time to develop strategic plans and budgets.

"This announcement gives councils wishing to submit applications for rate variations in the upcoming financial year more time to prepare their case."

Cr Donald said the LGSA encourages councils to apply for special rate variations where the need exists, such as to cover growth needs, address backlogs, development contribution shortfalls and make catch up adjustments.

"Applications supported by a strong case are generally given favourable consideration," he said.

"We encourage ongoing communication between residents and councils in the budget planning process, to gain a better understanding of what projects and services that increased rate revenue will assist in funding."

President of the Local Government

Association of NSW, Cr Keith Rhoades, said that rate pegging and financial viability of councils remained at the 'top of the list' of council concerns, and that this is being thoroughly addressed by the Local Government Independent Review Panel.

"The LGSA is currently working through the Local Government Independent Review Panel process to achieve greater autonomy and flexibility for councils in determining rates, and this process is tracking very well so far," said Cr Rhoades.

"Ultimately councils in NSW would like to see rate pegging removed - we believe that the adoption of Integrated

Planning and Reporting (IPR) makes rate pegging redundant.

"We would like councils in NSW to be in a position to determine their own rating policies, and to be able to adequately provide for the needs of their communities."

As councils introduce community strategic service and resource plans, Cr Rhoades said they will prove that they're capable of making well-informed decisions, in consultation with their communities, to determine their own level of rates for the services that their communities want.

A fact sheet and information paper on the IPART determination can be found at www.ipart.nsw.gov.au

SCANNED
11 JAN 2013

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 235/1000001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

DATED

it Tuesday, December 4, 2012

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Decision is 'best outcome'

GUNNEDAH Shire Mayor Owen Hasler writes regarding last week's council decision to seek a special rates variation of 28 per cent over the next three years;

Like many councils in New South Wales, Gunnedah Shire Council is facing significant challenges in continuing to provide the current level of services, facilities and infrastructure across our Shire. This is primarily due to the fact that costs have been increasing faster than the ability of the Council to generate revenue.

It is the view of the majority of Gunnedah Shire Council's elected officials that an increase in rates is essential to ensure this critical situation is addressed.

Accordingly at the last Gunnedah Shire Council meeting it was agreed that Council would commence an application with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for an increase in rates to commence in 2013-14.

Whether or not Council proceeds with the final step is subject to the views of the community.

Unfortunately Local Government assets have been consistently underfunded over the last twenty to thirty years.

Prior to 2012, Gunnedah Shire Council, like many other councils, decided on a number of occasions not to increase rates to the maximum allowed under rate pegging legislation, this lost revenue has been significantly compounded over time and can only be redeemed by a significant rate rise.

While Council will continue to examine how to make efficiencies and explore the expansion of user pays services, these gains will never be able to make up the required shortfall. The community will hopefully understand that without an increase there will be further degradation of assets and services.

The process towards a Special Rate Variation actually commenced much earlier when the community were consulted through the Integrated Planning and Reporting process and the development of a series of plans that were ultimately adopted by Council.

The community were presented with a series of layered models ranging from leaving income unchanged, to providing sustainability of current operations to providing new assets and additional services.

The preferred position of the 2008-2012 council was to sustain current operations via a commensurate increase in rates and while the Council did adopt a set of plans which required an increase of 20.4 per cent in revenue, or commensurate cuts to costs, it did not act before the September election to pursue an increase in rates, leaving the newly elected Council to deal with the matter.

Upon formation of the new Council elected councillors and senior staff looked immediately at the options before them, which were as follows:

1. Increase annual revenue by the full required amount;
2. Decrease annual expenditure by the full required amount;
3. Pursue a combination of cost reduction and an increase in annual revenue; or
4. Significantly cut expenditure on asset maintenance and renewal, which will significantly reduce the condition of assets (and possibly the failure or closure of some) passing the problem on to another generation and also leaving Council vulnerable to takeover by a council with a better asset management record.



GUNNEDAH Shire Mayor Owen Hasler

Having weighed up the options, the present Council, at its meeting of November 21, decided to proceed with an application for a rate increase.

That is a 'real' (above inflation) increase to the general rate component of 16 per cent in year one, and a further 6 per cent per year in the two subsequent years (excluding the compounding effect) equating to 24 per cent should

it have been in a single year, but effectively 28 per cent over the three years.

This was an extra 3.6 per cent on top of the proposed 20.4 per cent suggested earlier in the year in order to address a number of extra items of high need identified, which had not been factored in previously.

It should be noted that this level of increase relates only to the general rate component, and not to Domestic Waste, Water or Sewerage charges. For example, if your total rate bill is \$1,800 and the residential rate is \$803, with the remainder being made up of Water, Sewerage, Waste and Stormwater it is only the \$803 that will be subject to this level of increase.

Gunnedah Shire Council will now advise IPART that it intends to make a submission for the increase.

December will see the start of extensive consultation with the community in order to explain the process and the reasons for the decision and, to seek community feedback prior to finalisation of the formal application to IPART in March 2013.

The consultation may also need to determine which items (operating and capital) will need to be removed from the draft plans to enable Council to balance the budget in the event that Council is unsuccessful in its application or elects not to lodge the final application for the required revenue increase.

Opportunities will be provided to ensure each and every member of the community is able to have their say.

This decision is considered to be the best outcome for the Gunnedah Community if we are to maintain service delivery as expected by the community; undertake the necessary maintenance and replacement or upgrade of assets and infrastructure; ensure indebtedness and loans are kept at a manageable level; and ensure the viability of the council into the intermediate and distant future and thereby prevent the threat of hostile or forced amalgamation.

Namoi Valley Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 2350100001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

DATED

it Tuesday, December 4, 2012

'Boom' doesn't justify rate hike

CONCERNED ratepayers, Lionel and Denise Hockley, write concerning the proposed rate hike by Gunnedah Shire Council;

Gunnedah is currently in the grip of the mining boom but does this give the Gunnedah Shire Council the green light to increase the rates by 28 per cent over 3 years.

The revenue from mining does not always flow on directly to every local business and rate payer in Gunnedah Shire.

If you ask most people in the local business community today they will tell you that times are tough with increases in electricity fuel and other costs which in turn are reflected in their daily running costs.

A rate rise of this magnitude as stated in the Namoi Valley Independent, dated Tuesday, November 27, 2012 can not be absorbed into their costs.

Likewise most working people and their families and pensioners are struggling to make ends meet and the last thing we were expecting from our newly elected council is a huge rate increase.

It is also the last thing our farmers need under current conditions with the extended dry period and low commodity prices and the prospect of an average harvest.

We have looked at what this rate increase will mean to us based on the 28 per cent at the end of the three years which is what council are requesting.

The increase will be a staggering \$570.34.

We totally agree with Councillor Fuller and her comment that the council should first look at ways of reducing costs within the council.

Most ratepayers would agree to a moderate rate increase each year providing Council make every effort to keep a tight rein on all costs and wastage across the board.

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 23501000001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

DATED _____

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

First rates consultation tonight

GUNNEDAH Shire Council will host the first of several community consultations to discuss the proposed special rate variation of 28 per cent over the next three years, at the Civic Theatre, from 5.15pm this evening. Gunnedah Mayor Owen Hasler admitted he expects a firey question and answer session at tonight's information and consultation meeting.

The proposed rate increase, worth 28 per cent, over the next three years, has raised the ire of many residents, who believe further cost cutting should be implemented before any rate increases and claim the extra impost is excessive, for businesses and residents who are not seeing the benefits of the mining boom.

Gunnedah Shire Councillors however claim while council will continue to look for cost savings, the rate rise is necessary to keep the council in the black.

They blame successive former councils for not taking the full pegged rate increase when they were able, as well as rising costs for infrastructure and service maintenance.

At the council's November meeting, Councillors voted to commence an application with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for an increase in rates to commence in 2013-14.

The proposal asks for a real average rate increase of 16 per cent in the first year, followed by two smaller 6 per cent increases in the subsequent two years.

Tonight's meeting will include

an overview of the IPART application process from Cr Hasler, as well as reports from council's General Manager Robert Campbell, Asset Manager Wayne Kerr and Financial Manager Damien O'Connor, followed by an open question and answer session, from around 6pm.

The Namoi Valley Independent has received a number of calls complaining that tonight's meeting had not been advertised and had been publicised by invitation only.

Cr Hasler said that while attendance was encouraged via the issue of invitations, no one is excluded from attending.

The next community forum will occur on the December 20, at the Smithurst Theatre on Conadilly Street, whilst consultation with the villages will start in the second week of January.

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 2350100001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013



DATED _____

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HAVE YOUR SAY... Write or email letters to the editor. Email editor@nvi.com.au or write to PO Box 483, Gunnedah, NSW 2380.

Rate increase more than has been reported

BRENDA Heywood writes regarding Gunnedah Shire Council's application for a special rates variation of 24 per cent over three years;

I am writing to express my concern about the council's proposed rate increases over the next three years and to enlist the support of the Namoi Valley Independent (NVI) in providing some accurate and unbiased coverage of this issue for the benefit of the community.

I have already noticed that the figures reported in your paper do not accurately reflect the magnitude of the rate increases being proposed. Senior staff at council have verified that the proposed increases, which would be IN ADDITION to the IPART rate caps, actually equate to an overall increase of approximately 42.98 per cent over the said period.

This is a major expense for ratepayers and is likely to cause extreme hardship across many sectors. While to date, a great deal of coverage has been given to council's justification for the increases, we have not heard from those councillors opposed to the increases or from community members who will be affected by them. I for one would like the NVI to report on both sides of this issue and if possible, undertake some investigations into Gunnedah Council's performance and productivity compared to other Local Government areas.

I would also like to express my disappointment that council's first community forum to consider the proposed rate rises has been scheduled for tonight (Tuesday, December 11) at 5.15pm. This meeting has not been openly advertised and is extended by 'invitation only'. This is a poor start to the community consultation process and does not engender confidence in an open and honest discussion.

Please NVI, let's get some healthy discussion happening. Ratepayers need a better understanding of all the issues involved and an outlet to propose alternative ideas (such as cutting expenditure or addressing endemic inefficiency and waste). This is a fitting time to have a good, hard look at council's operations to ensure we make the right decisions for a prosperous future.

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 23501000001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

DATED

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Are rates spent wisely?

GUNNEDAH resident Ron Burns writes regarding Gunnedah Shire Council's application for a special rate variation of 28 per cent over three years.

The council's proposed massive hike in rates means we have all been living in a fool's paradise by relying on rate pegging to curb local councils' desire to spend.

Apparently in many places the average house rates are around \$800p.a.?

If this is true why are Gunnedah ratepayers paying so much?

Where is all the money going? Is it being spent wisely and more importantly in the interest of ratepayers rather than council?

I know I am already paying over \$2000p.a. to this council for one property and now they want much more.

Making ratepayers responsible for super benevolent super schemes that unions and even top public servants should only be able to dream about still comes to mind!

More recently there is the taking up of parking spaces around the Post Office with fancy brickwork. It all looks fine but impractical and wasteful to me.

Do these cosmetic schemes have to be so grand and is it just to keep a bloated workforce doing something?

Is having a council as one of the largest employers in town desirable?

I'm sorry but I only have to look at the excessive number of politicians in Australia who live so well off the rest of us to wonder about this.

This next year is shaping as an extra difficult time for everyone and this proposed massive increase in rates is certainly not going to help anyone except the council. The council if allowed to get away with this will be encouraged to continue on its merry way.

Most of us realise successive governments are partly to blame for raking in mining royalties from this area and failing to return a fair proportion. It appears all we get is an overpass we wouldn't really need without the coal boom and as usual the rest will be poured into that black hole called Sydney?

Nevertheless why are ratepayers expected to cover this? Surely this should be a fight between council and the state government?

However I could bet the ratepayers will be the scapegoats again because that is the easy way.

Maybe a compromise will be reached much the same as unions do who strike for a 20 per cent payrise and gleefully accept a 10 per cent rise instead? The council will gain and the ratepayers will be placated?

Finally I am very interested in when this council did not pass on the maximum allowable pegged rate increases in previous years?

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 2362100001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

DATED

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Rates meeting Thursday

GUNNEDAH Shire Council resolved on November 21, to pursue a Special Rate Variation with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and is now seeking your views on the proposed increase.

Consultation with the community commences this month.

At each forum you will be provided with information on the special rate variation before being asked to provide your views and to have your questions answered.

The next community forum will occur on Thursday, December 20, from 12.30 to 1.30pm at the Smithurst Theatre on Conadilly Street, whilst consultation with the villages will now commence in the third week of January.

Please note that earlier Gunnedah Shire Council had

advised community members that village consultation would occur in the second week of January.

Gunnedah Shire Council would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused.

A full list of dates and venues will be available on the Council website in the first week of January.

Should you wish to attend any of these please RSVP to Mrs Olivia Ryder on 02 6740 2100 three business days beforehand.

Gunnedah Shire Council, General Manager, Robert Campbell urges all residents to have their say, noting that 'Gunnedah Shire Council is aware of the significance of such a rate rise and is not embarking upon this path lightly, we encourage all community members to participate in the process, noting that these are the communities assets that are there for the benefit of the community.'

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 2380100001

DATED

Tuesday, December 18, 2012



GUNNEDAH Mayor Owen Hasler addresses last Tuesday's meeting over council's special rate variation application, with Deputy Mayor Gae Swain and council senior staff looking on.

Cost savings won't change rate hike

WHO will pay, and exactly how much, were high on the agenda at last Tuesday's first community consultation over Gunnedah Shire Council's application to IPART for a special rate variation of 28 per cent over three years.

A number of farmers raised concerns they would be asked to shoulder a disproportionate burden as part of the rate increase, while business owners also expressed concerns at what amounts to a 42 per cent increase on current rates in three years time.

While council's General Manager Robert Campbell explained such a decision on differential rate increases would be decided further down the track, he did acknowledge the question would be a large part of consultation meetings planned in the new year.

The NVI understands, a recommendation was put to council to reduce the rate increases for rural landholders to the 3 per cent per annum already allowed by IPART, while the balance of the burden would be placed on mining classified land.

As Mr Campbell stated however, that recommendation and any decision on differential rate increase was deferred until after the community consultation was conducted.

Mr Campbell said such a move would result in an approximate increase to nine rates of 50 per cent, while "it is important also to remember that mine rated land has already borne the full allowed increase over the past three years, while other rates have remained steady".



ABOUT forty ratepayers attended last Tuesday's meeting to hear from council on the rate rise.

Mick Hennessey asked council senior staff whether further savings could not be made in the area of staff allocations, questioning whether other council workers could pick up the workload of a road-side garbage collector vacancy advertised in the Namoi Valley Independent that day.

Mr Campbell said that every time a position became vacant, council staff investigated whether the duties could not be redistributed, and had to make a case for the re-employment of that role.

"Council are always looking for further cost savings and efficiencies," Mr Campbell said.

"It is a continuous process and should be at the top of our minds at every step.

"But the sort of cost savings to make a significant difference to the council's bottom line have already been made."

Following the meeting, the NVI asked Mr Campbell whether further savings could not be made by reducing the amount of middle management at council.

Mr Campbell said while there would always be a perception of 'too many shiny bums' at council, those staff members were already "pushed to their limits" with the current workload.

"There is always that perception, but the reality is that if you get rid of a manager, those duties have to be passed on to other staff and those wages increased accordingly," Mr Campbell said.

Nonetheless, Gunnedah Mayor Owen Hasler said he would be seeking an external review of council staffing in the new year to identify where any further savings could be made.

"That will cost money too, but there is a need to be completely transparent about staffing and to give the ratepayers and the council the assurance that we are as efficient as possible," he said.

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - P123601000001

DATED

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Residents told rate hike just 13% on top of normal inflation

GUNNEDAH rate-payers were presented with an hypothetical rate variation information sheet showing only a 'modest' increase above inflation, at today's Special Rates Variation community consultation meeting, as Council senior staff and Mayor Owen Hasler fielded questions from concerned residents over the size and need for a 41.38 per cent rate hike over the next three years.

Council was questioned on how Gunnedah's rates would compare to other councils in the region, following the rate increase, however senior staff explained such extrapolation was difficult to provide with absolute certainty.

Former Mayor Adam Marshall sat quietly through the meeting as a current ratepayer, but told the Namoi Valley Independent he hoped residents understood the long term effects of past rate decisions both by the last council and its predecessors.

He said in the past term of council, the full impost of pegged rate increases had been placed on mining classified land alone, but agreed it would not be practical to put all the proposed rate hike on mining companies in coming years.

He said this in effect had reduced the dollar amount of the current special rate variation being sought.

Mr Marshall added that the cumulative impact of 9 per cent of rate increases forgone by council in the early 1990's accounted for approximately half of the currently proposed rate increase.

He said that in effect, the community is now being asked to pay for the cumulative effect of rate-pegging over 32 years.

"If we had paid an extra 1 per cent a year, the compounding impact would have been more than the current need for a special rate variation.

He said the time had finally come for ratepayers to make some hard decisions on how much they wished to pay for the continued level of services and infrastructure within the shire.

Mr Marshall said the community and current council needed to engage in further discussion on just who would carry the burden of the differential



FORMER Mayor Adam Marshall "found it interesting" to attend today's special rate variation meeting solely as a ratepayer.

rate increases, but that he hoped a path could be found, that would help the worst effected ratepayers.

The Independent's own calculations, based on the Comparative Information on NSW Local Government Councils 2010/11 shows Gunnedah's average residential rate would be higher than that of Narrabri Shire Council, and lower than residential rates in Moree.

The below figures include Moree's 9 per cent rate rise per year over three years and Tamworth Regional Council's one-off 14.6 per cent rate hike,

Residential rate increases	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Narrabri	798.96	826.12	850.91	876.43
Moree	905.98	936.79	964.89	993.84
Tamworth	843.92	872.61	898.79	925.75

*These figures are extrapolated from the Comparative Information on NSW Local Government Councils 2010/11 and are a guide only.

however only the 3 per cent rate pegging increases for Narrabri.

The NVI however understands that Narrabri Shire Council is currently developing an application for a its own special rate variation to be submitted to IPART next year.

Read the Namoi Valley Independent online at www.nvi.com.au for more coverage of this event and other news during the Christmas New Year period. Be sure to share your views and comments on the website.

Amount rates would have increased under rate pegging

Total Rates breakdown	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Total increase over 3 years	% Increase over 3 years
Residential Gunnedah	707	732	758	785	\$78	11%
Gunnedah Water	170	177	184	191	\$21	12%
Gunnedah Sewer	422	458	497	517	\$95	23%
Domestic and Green Waste	315	329	344	359	\$44	14%
Waste Management Facility Fee	65	65	70	70	\$5	8%
Stormwater Residential	25	25	25	25	\$0	0%
Total rate bill	1704	1786	1878	1947	\$243	14%

Net impact of increase above rate pegging

Total Rates breakdown	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Total increase over 3 years	% Increase over 3 years
Residential Gunnedah	707	816	866	922	\$215	30%
Gunnedah Water	170	170	170	170	\$0	0%
Gunnedah Sewer	422	422	422	422	\$0	0%
Domestic and Green Waste	315	315	315	315	\$0	0%
Waste Management Facility Fee	65	65	65	65	\$0	0%
Stormwater Residential	25	25	25	25	\$0	0%
Total rate bill	1704	1613	1863	1913	\$215	13%

Example of effect of proposed General rate increase on-an average residential rates bill

Total Rates breakdown	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Total increase over 3 years	% Increase over 3 years	\$ Increase due to inflation	\$ Real increase (net-inflation)	% Real increase (above inflation)
Residential Gunnedah	707	841	917	1000	\$293	41%	\$78	\$215	30%
Gunnedah Water	170	177	184	191	\$21	12%	\$21	\$0	0%
Gunnedah Sewer	422	458	497	517	\$95	23%	\$95	\$0	0%
Domestic and Green Waste	315	329	344	359	\$44	14%	\$44	\$0	0%
Waste Management Facility Fee	65	65	70	70	\$5	8%	\$5	\$0	0%
Stormwater Residential	25	25	25	25	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	0%
Total rate bill	1704	1865	2057	2162	\$461	27%	\$243	\$218	31%

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PRINT POST APPROVED - (P) 23601000001

SC 11

11 JAN 2013

DATED

Thursday, January 3, 2013

Rates a question of need rather than want at forum

GUNNEDAH'S second public consultation on the proposed 28 per cent special rate variation application to IPART was once again well attended, as residents and councillors discussed the dilemma of "want versus need" in a tight financial situation.

Several residents demanded council set its sights lower in terms of amenities and asset upgrades in order to pair back the 41.38 cumulative rate rise, while council staff and Mayor Owen Hasler reiterated the proposed rise would "just barely" maintain services and infrastructure at current levels over the next 10 years.

Cr Hasler said 30 years of rate pegging meant all NSW residents paid rates that were more than 20 per cent lower than in other states, which could not sustain current services for the next generation.

He assured residents, if the community did not support the rate hike, IPART would not agree to the variation, but warned council would then be forced to start cutting assets.

"Council took the view that our aim should be to maintain the current level of assets and services for the next generation, which would require a rate increase of 42 per cent over the next three years," Cr Hasler said.

The Gunnedah Shire pool, airport and library were all raised at different points in discussions, however, staff and Cr Hasler all denied any assets had been slated for disposal.

"If the community is opposed to the rate increase, or if IPART rejects part or all of the variation, then we will have to look at what

Rate rise in focus at forums

GUNNEDAH Shire residents will have their chance to ask questions and have a say about a series of Special Rate Variation (SRV) community forums coming up in different locations in the shire.

Councillors and staff will present the background information, answer questions and gather feedback from the community about the Special Rate Variation.

Gunnedah ratepayers will have three chances to ask questions, with meetings also planned for most villages.

Forum Dates

• Tuesday, January 22: Kelvin Hall (7.30am-8.30am).

• Wednesday, January 23: Mullaley Hall (6.15pm-7.15pm).

• Thursday, January 24: Carroll Public School (6.16pm-7.15pm).

• Tuesday, January 29: Curlewis Community Hall (6pm-7pm).

• Tuesday, January 29: Breeza Community Hall (7.30pm-8.30pm).

• Thursday, January 31: Gunnedah Community Forum, Smithurst Theatre, (5.15pm-6.15pm).

• Saturday, February 2: Smithurst Theatre (10am-11am).

• Thursday, February 7: Smithurst Theatre (noon-1pm).

services and assets we are willing to forgo," Cr Hasler said.

Gunnedah Shire Council Director Planning and Environmental Services, Mike Silver, told residents a number of scenarios had been considered through the Integrated Planning and Strategic Management process, with the rate variation addressing only those expenses considered critical over the next 10 years.

He said some projects, especially certain roads and drainage works had to happen within that time frame, or they would pose a public health and safety risk, while others, still critical, had been pushed back even further in the asset management plan to save money.

Residents, however, raised further concerns over who would carry the burden of the rate variation, with Mullaley farmer Xavier Martin presenting Australian Bureau of Statistics data to the meeting, showing grower returns averaged around 1.6 per cent of land value.

"This rate rise, if placed on farmers will quite literally take that away," Mr Martin said.

Cr Hasler said the discussion over differential rate rises (who would pay what) would occur in coming months, however, at the close of the meeting, former Mayor Adam Marshal said this was a discussion "which should be held now".



GUNNEDAH Shire Mayor Owen Hasler addresses the second rate variation consultation meeting at the Smithurst Theatre on December 20

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - EP 2301000001

Tuesday, January 8, 2013

DATED _____

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

Rate forums extended

DUE to the high level of interest shown at the two special rates variation forums already held, Gunnedah Shire Council has announced it will be extending the time at all future forums by one hour to ensure community members have the opportunity to express their views.

As a result, the council has advised it has also been necessary to move the start times of the Mullaley, Carroll, Curlewis and Breeza forums so that the forums do not run too late into the evening.

It is expected that the information part of the forum will go for an hour with an hour provided for questions

Kelvin: Kelvin Hall, Tuesday, January 22, 7.30-9.30am

Mullaley: Mullaley Hall, Wednesday, January 24, 6-8pm

Carroll: Carroll School, Thursday, January 24, 6-8pm

Curlewis: Curlewis Hall, Tuesday, January 29, 5-7pm

Breeza: Breeza Hall, Tuesday, January 29, 7.30-9.30pm

Gunnedah: Smithurst Theatre, Thursday January 31, 5.15-7.15pm.

Gunnedah: Smithurst Theatre, Saturday February 2, 10am-noon

Gunnedah: Smithurst Theatre, Thursday, February 7, noon-2pm.

Namoi Valley Independent

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 2360100001

Tuesday, January 8, 2013

DATED

Comparative data gives clearer picture of rates

GUNNEDAH Shire business owners pay the second highest average rates within similarly classified Local Government Areas, while farmers pay significantly less than neighbouring shires and residential ratepayers pay also well below the state average.

Gunnedah Shire Council staff presented a brief overview of comparative information on NSW Councils to December's meeting of council, however stressed the information was in many areas skewed by unidentified geographic and demographic differences.

For the purposes of Local Government comparison, Gunnedah Shire Council is classified as Rural Agricultural Very Large, in Group 11, alongside Moree and Narrabri, but also other council areas such as Leeton, Nambucca and Bellingen.

Such classifications are based on primary industry, geographic spread, population numbers and density, as well as land values and services on offer, however even within the groups, variation can be significant.

Director Community and Corporate Services, Eric Groth explained the indicators are designed to assist council, the community and the state department in judging whether council's performance is satisfactory and improving.

"The information assists greatly in benchmarking and gives a clear indication of where further investigation is required, but there is obviously other information council also uses as a comparison," he said.



COUNCIL'S Director Planning and Environmental Services Mike Silver and Financial Director Damien Connor confer, with Director Infrastructure Services Wayne Kerr looking on, at last month's second rate meeting.

Within the comparative information, Gunnedah residential ratepayers were charged an average \$597.28 compared to a group average rate assessment of \$612.50 and the state average of \$811.52.

Gunnedah's average farmland rate is above the group average of \$2,349 and well above the state average of \$1,968.79, but well below the Moree Plains Shire average farmland assessment of \$7,248.55, due in part to significantly fewer landholders owning larger land areas.

Gunnedah rated slightly above Narrabri's average assessment of \$2,914.79, while Liverpool Plains, a Group 10 council, recorded an average farmland assessment of \$3,519.37 for the same financial year.

It was Gunnedah's business rates however, which stood out ahead of the group, at an average cost of \$3,079.37, almost double the group average and behind only the Cooma-Monaro Local Government Area at \$3,411.06 among the 20 councils within Group 11. The state average business rate assessment is \$4,305.09.

Mr Groth said council's rating mix was considered during the operational plan process and rates are levied for categories accordingly.

"An objective has been to analyse the apportionment of general rates across the various categories, taking into consideration these comparisons as well as the ability to pay and likely hardship caused," he said.

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PR 2350100001

SCANNED

11 JAN 2013

DATED

Thursday, January 10, 2013

Have your say online

GUNNEDAH Shire Council has today launched a special temporary website dedicated to explaining and taking feedback on the planned special rate variation application to IPART.

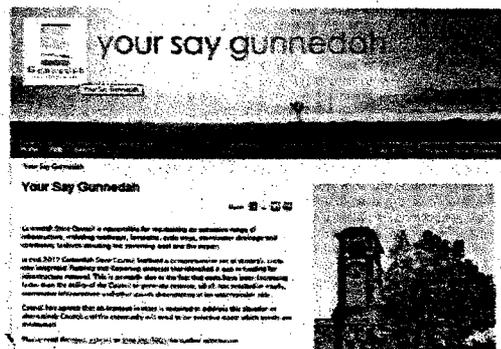
Residents can now visit www.yoursaygunnedah.com.au to access a range of detailed information on the council's current financial considerations, the reasoning behind the special rate variation application and even what council expenditure is and is not included in the council's forward estimates for the next four years.

The website includes a Frequently Asked Questions section, a range of resources provided by IPART and the Department of Local Government, explaining the application process and a number of fact sheets pertaining to the financial situation of Gunnedah Shire Council as well as rate-pegging, and all councils within the state.

Ratepayers can complete an online survey about what assets and services they feel are most important to the community as well as a quick poll on whether they are for, or against the rate rise.

There is also the opportunity to post a specific question, which will be answered in due course by council staff, or make a more detailed submission via the website guestbook.

Gunnedah Mayor Owen Hasler said the website was just one part of an extensive consultation planned to



A screenshot of the new [yoursaygunnedah](http://yoursaygunnedah.com.au) website.

continue over the coming months, and included dates and times for upcoming community forums, where residents can ask questions directly of council staff and himself.

Although not uploaded yet, the website will soon feature a rates calculator, where residents can input information from their last rates bill and receive an estimate of the impact of the special rates variation on their own rates bill.

Gunnedah shire seeks rates hike

FORUMS SCHEDULED

By Wendy Spooner

PUBLIC interest in Gunnedah Shire Council's proposed special rates variation of 28 per cent over three years has meant upcoming community forums on the issue will start earlier than planned so everyone's views are heard.

About 100 people attended two forums held at the Smithurst Theatre in Gunnedah in December – about 50 at each forum, council's manager, Customer Service and Communication, Isabella Raynolds said.

Miss Raynold said all but one of the councillors were present at each meeting, which saw plenty of feedback from ratepayers.

She said farmers, in particular, were worried about how they were going to absorb the higher-than-normal rates.

"There was some concern from farmers: they've got rising costs and can't really pass those on," Miss Raynolds said.

She said that council staff were "looking at the rating mix" and that this was the point of the community forums – to ascertain what people thought about their proposed rate increase, across commercial, residential and rural areas within the shire.

"People were willing to listen. There's a lot more consultation that we need to do," Miss Raynolds said.

"But, by the end of the forums (held in December) people were coming away with an understanding of our situation."

Because of the high level of public interest, the times for all upcoming special rates variation forums have been extended by one hour to ensure the community has the opportunity to express its views.

The forums will be held at Kelvin Hall on Tuesday, January 22; 7.30am-9.30am); Mullaley Hall on January 23, 6pm-8pm; Carroll School on January 24, 6pm-8pm; Curlewis Hall on January 29, 5pm-7pm; Breeza Hall on January 29, 7.30pm-9.30pm; Smithurst Theatre, Gunnedah on January 31,

5.15pm-7.15pm, Smithurst Theatre, Gunnedah, on February 2, 10am-noon; Smithurst Theatre, Gunnedah, on February 7, noon-2pm.

The council will apply for its special rates variation to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal in March and should have its response from that body by June.

Gunnedah shire mayor Owen Hasler said that, like many local councils over the years, theirs had not applied for the maximum allowed under rate-pegging legislation, so the problem of lost revenue had compounded over time.

Cr Hasler said it was now at a point that "without an increase there will be further degradation of assets and services".

He explained that if a ratepayer's total rate bill was \$1800 and the residential rate was \$803, with the remainder being made up of water, sewerage, waste and stormwater, that only the \$803 was subject to the level of the increase.

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PF 2330100001

SCANNED

17 JAN 2013

DATED

15 January 2013

Council rethink on rate increase plan

BY CAMPBELL WALKER

GUNNEDAH Shire Council has revised the proposed special rate variation application to IPART, reducing the total rate hike and also planning to spread the increases over four years instead of three.

Gunnedah Mayor, Owen Hasler said the revised proposal would spread the burden of the rate hike, allowing residents more time to adjust to a smaller up-front increase.

"I and fellow councillors, having heard the community's concerns raised through the forums held to date, and via correspondence, have given due consideration to the issues raised," Cr Hasler said.

"As a result the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) has been amended and the proposal now sees the increase as outlined above."

Cr Hasler said the variation in the proposed increase had been enabled by a change of timing for the swimming pool renewal where, instead of allocating the bulk of the spending in 2013/14, pushing it back to the final year in a three-year renewal.

So instead of spending \$6 million in the first year, the expenditure has now been realigned to be \$500,000 in 2013/14, \$1.5 million in 2014/15 and \$6.95 million in the third year.

Council will now continue an operating deficit for the four years, through reducing cash reserves and borrowing, out to and including 2016/17, rather than returning to surplus in 2013/14.

"While this situation of deficit budgets was of concern to a number of councillors, that eventuality appeared preferable as expressed by many in the community as opposed to what was considered to be an

Cr Hasler believes the main benefits from the changed proposal are:

- The size of the increase in the first year is reduced from 19 per cent, or 16 per cent on top of rate pegging, to 9.4 per cent and 6 per cent above rate pegging.

- The increase to the general rate component above rate pegging for the four years is now a total of 21 per cent as opposed to 28 per cent, equating to a cumulative general rate increase of 39.7 per cent over the four years instead of 46.4 per cent.

- The additional year allows for greater flexibility and responsiveness to changes such as the possibility of additional revenue from voluntary planning agreements arising from mining development.



overly large rate hike of 19 per cent in the first year," Cr Hasler said.

"Given our present loan situation and loan history we are in a position to borrow if necessary should the need arise and this appears to be a preferable option for the community than the large rate rise in year one of the process," explained Councillor Hasler.

"While we may have preferred to reach our goal of long term sustainability as soon as possible, I don't believe that an extra year is going to negatively impact on council's operations and, more importantly, it appears to appeal to many ratepayers who had previously questioned the size of the increase in year one of the previous model," Cr Hasler said.

"In addition to the changes to the general fund rates, the impact on ratepayers will be further reduced by amending the proposed increase for

Gunnedah water to a zero increase over each of the four years effected by the SRV.

"This reduces the cumulative impact from 39.7 per cent to 28.1 per cent on the total rate bill of the average ratepayer which we believe will have significant appeal to the ratepayers as opposed to the first SRV model."

Cr Hasler said councillors would be having further discussions about how the total proposed rate increases may be distributed across the residential, business, farmland and mining rating categories.

"This information will then be made available to the public through the further forums taking place after January 21 and on council's Special Rate Variation website."

Gunnedah residents can read more and comment at <http://your-saygunnedah.com.au>

Namoi Valley Independent

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PR 2250100001

SCANNED

25 JAN 2013

DATED Thursday 24th January 2013

Council looks to new plan on rates hike

GUNNEDAH Shire Council has come up with a new proposal it hopes will allay community fears over the proposed rate hike.

A meeting held on Tuesday moved for any rate increase to be spread over four years, instead of the suggested three years, with the revised ratings mix to see the mining sector contribute a larger component than the other rating categories - residential, business and farming.

Council caused a furore at its November ordinary meeting when it proposed to go to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) seeking a rate increase of 28 per cent above rate pegging.

A series of community consultative meetings were held during December which saw ratepayers express anger and concern at the proposed hike.

On Tuesday, council agreed to lessen the impact on ratepayers with a new strategy.

Mayor Owen Hasler said the new proposal would enable council to keep the level of assets and services currently enjoyed by shire ratepayers.

"The views expressed during the consultation period ... have led to council agreeing that the rate increase should be introduced more gradually, over four years rather than

the three years as proposed at the November meeting," said Cr Hasler.

"This has lessened the impact on concerned ratepayers while still enabling council to provide the level of assets and services that we all enjoy in Gunnedah Shire.

"At Tuesday's workshop it was determined, after several hours of detailed discussion, that the mining sector would contribute a larger component of the total increase than the other three rating categories.

Under the new proposal, the cumulative rate increase (inclusive of rate pegging of 3.5 per cent per annum) in the four years, would be 39.7 per cent - comprising 9.4 per cent in 2013-14, 8.4 per cent in 2014-15, 9.5 per cent in 2015-16 and 7.5 per cent in 2016-17.

Over the four-year period the cumulative residential increase would be 33.4 per cent; business (27.3 per cent); farming (33.4 per cent) and mining 120 per cent.

The impact on the overall percentage contribution to rating revenue by each of the four ordinary categories over this period will see significant drops for residential (32.27 per cent now - 30.81 per cent at the end of 2016-17), business (19.09 per cent - 17.29 per cent) and farming (40 per cent - 38.29 per cent), while mining's percentage contribution to rating

revenue will increase from 8.64 per cent now to 13.60 per cent by the end of 2016-17.

"Under the circumstances this was thought to be the best mix which takes into account ratepayers' ability to pay," Cr Hasler added.

"However, nothing is yet set in stone and we still look forward to further ratepayer input and recognise that, ultimately, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal may reject all, or part, of our proposal.

"But we believe the community will be receptive to this proposal and you can have further input by utilising yoursaygunnedah.com.au on our website."

In addition to the changes to the general fund rates, the impact for ratepayers will be further reduced by amending the proposed increase for Gunnedah Water to a zero increase over each of the four years; reducing the notional cumulative impact from 39.7 per cent to 25.4 per cent on the total residential rate bill.

Forums are still to be held at Curlewis Hall on January 29 from 5pm to 7pm and Breeza Hall from 7.30pm to 9.30pm and the Smithurst Theatre in Gunnedah on January 31 from 5.15pm to 7.15pm, on February 2 from 10am to noon and February 7 from noon to 2pm.

NEWS LEADER

Ratepayers' concerns lead to less painful approach

GUNNEDAH Shire Council has reconvened discussions on the town's proposed rate increase after multiple community consultations were held on the issue in the last month.

This week, councillors met and were in broad agreement that the community really embraced the consultative process.

Council originally planned to raise rates by 28 per cent over the next three years, with a majority of the community expressing concerns. Councillors found the community

actively provided their views on the proposed increase.

Gunnedah mayor Owen Hasler said the views made them decide the rate increase would be introduced more gradually.

The rate increase will be brought in over four years rather than the three proposed in the first proposal.

"This has lessened the impact on concerned ratepayers whilst still being able to keep the level of assets and services that we all enjoy in Gunnedah Shire," Cr Hasler said.

He said the consultation process had also assisted council to progress a key aspect of the rates proposal; the ratings mix.

"This is a term which explains the fact that different percentages can, and will, apply to residential, business, farming and the mining sector," Cr Hasler said.

"It was determined, after several hours of detailed discussion, that the mining sector would contribute a larger component of the total increase than the other three rating

categories, namely residential business and farming."

Visiting Muswellbrook mayor, Martin Rush, headed the discussion as he represents a community with a large mining sector.

Despite all their discussions, Cr Hasler said nothing was set in stone.

"We still look forward to further ratepayer input and recognise that, ultimately, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal may reject all, or part, of our proposal," he said.

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 23501 00001

SCANNED

31 JAN 2013

DATED Tuesday January 29 2013



SPECIAL RATES VARIATION

Gunnedah Shire Council resolved on November 21 to pursue a Special Rate Variation with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and is now seeking your views on the proposed increase.

Your views will assist us in determining whether a rate increase is supported or whether we need to examine alternative paths, such as choosing which assets are maintained to the required standard.

At each forum you will be provided with information on the special rate variation before being asked to provide your views and to have your questions answered.

The table below provides dates and venues for all upcoming forums. Should you wish to attend please RSVP to Council on 02 6740 2100.

LOCATION	VENUE	DATE	TIME
Curlewis Community Forum	Curlewis Hall	Tue: 29/01/2013	5-7pm
Breeza Community Forum	Breeza Hall	Tue: 29/01/2013	7.30-9.30pm
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Thurs: 31/01/2013	5.15-7.15pm
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Sat: 2/2/2013	10-noon
Gunnedah Community Forum	Smithurst Theatre	Thurs: 7/2/2013	Noon-2pm

REVISED PERCENTAGE

Following a series of successful community forums and a comprehensive community engagement strategy, Gunnedah Shire Councilors met on Tuesday, January 22 to further discuss the proposed rate increase.

Councillors present were in broad agreement that the community have really embraced the consultative process and have actively provided their views on the proposed increase.

Mayor of Gunnedah Shire Council, Councillor Owen Hasler said "The views expressed during the consultation period to date have led to Council agreeing that the rate increase should be introduced more gradually, over four years rather than the three as proposed in the first proposal."

"This has lessened the impact on concerned rate-payers whilst still being able to keep the level of assets and services that we all enjoy in Gunnedah Shire."

"The consultation process has now also assisted Council in further progressing a key aspect of the rates proposal, namely the ratings mix," explained Councillor Hasler.

"This is a term which explains the fact that different percentages can, and will, apply to residential, business, farming and the mining sector."

"At our ratings workshop held on Tuesday it was determined, after several hours of detailed discussion, that the mining sector would contribute a larger component of the total increase than the other three rating categories, namely residential, business and farming," continued Mr Hasler.

"This discussion was facilitated by a presentation by Mr Martin Rush, Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire, a community with a large mining sector and experience of the immediate and ongoing impact of mining," stated Cllr Hasler, "while additional information was also presented on Blayney Shire Council and their ratings system."

The table below indicates the split and also further details the change in the three to four year scenario. "Total increase" and "real increase", or increase above rate pegging, is shown alongside in brackets.

SCENARIO	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	CUMULATIVE
3 year - previous	18% (16)	9% (6)	9% (6)	3.5% (0)	46.4%
4 year - notional	9.4% (6)	8.5% (5)	9.5% (6)	7.5% (4)	39.7%
Residential	7.4% (4)	7.5% (4)	8.5% (5)	6.5% (3)	33.4%
Business	5.4% (2)	6.5% (3)	7.5% (4)	5.5% (2)	27.3%
Farming	7.4% (4)	7.5% (4)	8.5% (5)	6.5% (3)	33.4%
Mining	35% (31.6)	18.6% (15.1)	18.6% (15.1)	15.8% (12.3)	120%

The impact on the overall percentage contribution to rating revenue by each of the four ordinary categories is represented in the following table.

CATEGORY	RESIDENTIAL	BUSINESS	FARMING	MINING
Contribution now	32.27%	19.09%	40%	8.64%
At end of 2016/17	30.81%	17.39%	38.20%	13.60%

Mayor Hasler noted: "Under the circumstances this was thought to be the best mix which takes into account ratepayers ability to pay."

"However, nothing is yet set in stone as yet, we still look forward to further ratepayer input and recognise that, ultimately, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal may reject all, or part, of our proposal," suggested Cllr Hasler, "but we believe the community will be receptive to this proposal and can have further input by utilising www.yoursaygunnedah.com.au on our website."

In addition to the changes to the general fund rates, the impact for ratepayers will be further reduced by amending the proposed increase for Gunnedah Water to a zero increase over each of the four years; reducing the notional cumulative impact from 39.7% to 25.4% on the total residential rate bill. The impact of the revised percentage figures can be expressed in terms of an average Gunnedah residential property as follows:

RATE	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	TOTAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE	REAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE
Gunnedah Residential	707	759	816	865	943	236	\$1.13	-133	0.64
Gunnedah Water	170	170	170	170	170	0	0	-25	-0.12
Gunnedah Sewer	422	456	492	522	553	131	\$0.63	70	0.34
Domestic and Green Waste	315	330	344	359	376	61	\$0.29	15	0.07
Waste Management Fee	65	65	68	70	70	5	\$0.02	-3	-0.01
Storm water residential	25	25	25	25	25	0	0	-4	-0.02
Total rate bill	1704	1805	1915	2031	2137	433 (25.4%)	\$2.08	186	\$0.89

The table below indicates the effect on farmland rates

I.V. \$200,000	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	TOTAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE	REAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE
Farmland	665	714	767	833	897	222	\$1.07	\$97	\$125.04
Waste Management Fee	65	65	68	72	75	10	\$0.05	\$13	-\$3
Total rate bill	729.60	778.78	835.31	904.53	961.64	232	\$1.12	\$122.04	\$0.59

I.V. \$500,000	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	TOTAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE	REAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE
Farmland	1662	1784	1918	2061	2217	555	\$2.67	\$243	\$312
Waste Management Fee	65	65	68	72	75	10	\$0.05	\$13	-\$3
Total rate bill	1727	1849	1986	2153	2292	565	\$2.72	\$309.10	\$1.49

I.V. \$700,000	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	TOTAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE	REAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE
Farmland	2326.10	2498.24	2685.81	2913.89	3103.29	777.19	\$3.74	\$341	\$436.19
Waste Management Fee	65	65	68	72	75	10	\$0.05	\$13	-\$3
Total rate bill	2391.10	2563.24	2753.81	2985.89	3178.29	787.19	\$3.78	\$433.19	\$2.08

I.V. \$755,000	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	TOTAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE	REAL INCREASE	\$ / WEEK INCREASE
Farmland	3239.98	3479.70	3740.68	4056.81	4322.42	1082.49	\$5.20	\$475	\$607.49
Waste Management Fee	65	65	68	72	75	10	\$0.05	\$13	-\$3
Total rate bill	3304.93	3544.70	3808.86	4130.61	4397.42	1092.49	\$5.25	\$604.49	\$2.91

781 assessments out of a total of 1,100 assessments in farmland are on the average rate or below.

Consultation continues this month and next month with the submission to IPART due on March 11, 2013. Please visit www.yoursaygunnedah.com.au where you will find some great resources to help you understand the proposed rate increase and to have your say. You can do this in a number of ways including by completing a quick poll, or a survey, or simply by leaving your anonymous comment. Check out the guestbook to see how easy it is.

Namoi Valley Independent

SCANNED

01 FEB 2013

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 2350100001

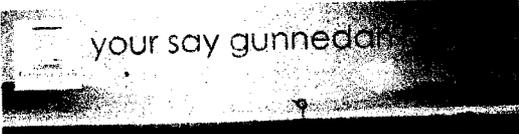
DATED Thursday 31st January 2013



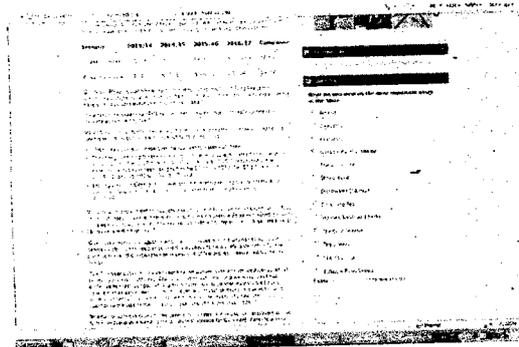
SHIRE COUNCIL NEWS

JANUARY 2013

SPECIAL RATES VARIATION



Please visit www.yoursaygunnedah.com.au where you will find some great resources to help you understand the proposed rate increase and to have your say. You can do this in a number of ways including by completing a quick poll, or a survey, or simply by leaving your anonymous comment. Check out the guestbook to see how easy it is.



Remember this is all about assets and what you want or don't want. Let us know your opinion. Do you want to keep our parks and sporting facilities, are our roads important to you?

Here's just a sample of projects, please see www.yoursaygunnedah.com.au for more information.

SERVICE AREA	ASSET	\$ 2012/13	\$ 2013/14	\$ 2014/15	\$ 2015/16	\$ 2016/17
Bridges	Simpsons Bridge replacement				1,370,000	
Kerb and Gutter	Kerb and gutter renewal program	360,000	371,000	382,000	393,000	405,000
Urban Roads	Pavement renewal Bloomfield Street	490,000	657,500	490,000	490,000	887,000
Urban Roads	Pavement renewal Little Barber Street				140,500	
Urban Roads	Pavement renewal Linka Road					229,000
Urban Roads	Bitumen resealing	508,055	623,297	538,996	555,165	571,820
Urban Roads	Gravel reseedling	38,351	40,532	41,747	43,000	44,290
Regional Roads	MRFSS reconstruction	227,244				
Regional Roads	Bitumen resealing	138,500	142,800	147,000	151,000	155,883
Regional Roads	Gravel reseedling	216,500	223,000	230,000	236,500	243,673
Sealed Rural Roads	Bitumen resealing	725,057	746,808	769,213	792,288	818,058
Sealed Rural Roads	Bluevale Road reconstruction	450,000	483,500	477,000	491,500	506,479
Sealed Rural Roads	Pavement renewal					1,025,000
Sealed Rural Roads	Gula Road reconstruction	220,000	250,000		220,000	

ARTS AND MUSIC ON THE STREET

Gunnedah Shire Council runs an excellent school holiday program and a particular highlight of the 2012/13 summer program was a collaboration between the participants, the Gunnedah Conservatorium of Music and local artist Martine Moran and her daughter Tessie.

The parties worked together to design and paint a piano, which will be placed on the footpath for anyone passing to step and knock out a tune.

Along with the painting of the piano the children also donated their time in painting a mix of trees, houses and people to assist local resident Mr Don McDonagh and his front yard train display.

The morning was a great success with all the children enjoying their time painting and each other's company.

For further information regarding Youth Programs please contact, Peter Woolven Youth Development Officer or Lisa Warren Community Hub Worker on 6740 2276

LOCAL SUBCONTRACTORS REQUIRED FOR NBN

Council has received information on a number of Subcontracting opportunities offered by Silcar Communications to provide services as part of the local NBN roll-out, including:

- Excavation and installation of pit and pipe
- Construction and installation of man-holes
- Trenchless technology construction (directional drilling/grundomat)
- Civil construction
- Rod, rope and prove fibre optic cables
- Cable hauling (12Fibre up to 864Fibre)
- Ribbon fibre splicing and testing
- Pot holing and non-destructive excavation

Information on the twelve required subcontracting services can be found at www.gatewayicn.org.au by searching from the orange 'Project Search' tab after typing 'Silcar' in the Keyword box. Then click on View Full Details and scroll down the page.

If interested, it is important you register on the website using either the green 'Register' button or via the blue 'Company Profile' tab.

When the NBN roll-out is programmed for our region, forums will be held to further explain the opportunities presented.

For further information please contact Council's Economic Development Officer, Chris Frend on 6740 2147.

GUNNEDAH COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND - CHARITY GOLF DAY

On Sunday, January 20, 2013 a field of 53 players turned out for the Gunnedah Community Scholarship Fund charity golf day, which raises money to assist our local students who are undertaking tertiary studies this year, the event raising close to \$1,500.

The "Supreme Team Challenge" was won by Prime Engineering consisting of Wayne English, Paul Jaeger, Paul Smith and Todd Kingdom with second place going to Gunnedah Rotary 2360 consisting of Lauren Ewing, Belinda Pryor, Matt Davis and Don Whiteman.

Thank you to all the participants who played on the day and a big thank you to

all the following sponsors of the Gunnedah Community Scholarship Fund:-

Ardill Payne and Partners, Ausure Insurance Brokers Gunnedah, Autosmart D.A.C.S (Detailing Cleaning Supplies), BHP Billiton - Caroon Coal Project, Commonwealth Bank, Etcetera Skin Therapy and Beauty, Forsyths Paul and Brett Services, G Montage Designs and Fogarty Fotos, Gunnedah Golf Club, Gunnedah Hot Bread Shop, Gunnedah RSL Sub Branch, Gunnedah Serviced Apartments, Gunnedah Services and Bowling Club, Gunnedah Shire Council, Hawkins Coach Lines, Lorraine Boyce Solicitors, GA & TJ McIlveen, Mobile Miracle Maids, Morning-

ton Butchery, Namoi Catchment Management Authority, Namoi Valley Bricks Pty Ltd, Namoi Valley Independent, National Australia Bank, North West Monogramming and Screen Printing, Old Bank Gallery, Olivia Brown Catering, Parkview Hotel, Pegasus Business Services, Petries Mitre 10, Prime Engineering and Pumping Solutions, Riley's Furniture and Carpets, Rotary Club of Gunnedah, Rotary Club of Gunnedah West, Ryco Hydraulics Pty Ltd, Santos Limited, Mrs Dianne Short, Terry's Pizza, Tim Duffy Optometrist, USA Namoi Inc, Mrs Heather Vernon and Mr Peter Vernon.

EXCESS VEGETATION



With the ongoing high temperatures of summer residents of Gunnedah, Curlewis, Mullaley, Tambar Springs, Carroll and Breeza are reminded and encouraged to tidy their yards and reduce the risk of fire, vermin and snakes. If you would like further information regarding what can be done to reduce the risk of fire and vermin on your property please contact Council's Planning & Environmental Services Department on 6740 2100.

Namoi Valley

Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - RP1 250100001

DATED Thursday 31st January 2013

It's about managing for future generations

BY KEITH MILLERD

GUNNEDAH'S new Shire Council met last night to consider a raft of plans and strategies aimed at taking the shire into the next decade.

The extraordinary meeting was called to allow council to consider a number of plans and policies - the Community Strategic Plan, the Strategic Asset Management Plan, the Long-Term Financial Plan, the Workforce Plan, the Draft Delivery Program and Draft Operational Plan and Organisational Review.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) "Your Say, Our Future" was developed by the previous council and adopted in 2012. The current council needs to endorse the CSP within six months of its election to office.

Gunnedah Shire Council General Manager, Robert Campbell, said the plan is considered to be a reflection of the community's aspirations.

He said the new model for rates being proposed by council has been built into the Long-Term Financial Plan and incorporated into the four-

year Delivery Plan and the one-year Operational Plan.

He said the Strategic Asset Management Plan was of crucial importance.

"Council is responsible for assets with a replacement value of more than \$450 million," Mr Campbell said.

"Of that figure the shire's roads network accounts for \$250 million. Roads are a big ticket item.

"In essence, council is responsible to sustaining, managing and maintaining these assets so that the community can realise totally the expected life of these assets. We are not talking new, shiny objects, but simply stating that if we don't intervene at the right time the assets' deterioration accelerates and the financial burden of fixing or replacement of those assets become even greater into the future."

Mr Campbell said council staff had given hundreds of hours to determining the condition of its assets and devising the best way to sustaining those assets for ratepayers.

"The Workforce Plan has an underlying purpose of delivering service by utilising our assets to their maximum. The Development Plan and Operational Plan are currently out on exhibition for public comment for a mini-

mum of 28 days and of course council is still going through the community consultation process.

"I encourage the community to have a look at these plans and if they have any issues or enquiries, contact council staff or Google 'haveyoursay' and give us you feedback."

Mr Campbell said community engagement is a most crucial element.

"We will also be conducting a telephone survey in the near future and details will be publicised.

"It is important that we have community feedback before we take our plans to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) which has stringent guidelines."

Mr Campbell said council faced two options - go with the rate increase proposal or reduce expenditure and drop services.

"If we go the latter route it will have an affect on the condition of our assets and their deterioration and we will pass the problem on to future generations.

"I applaud council for having the courage to face the reality of a need for asset management and for introducing measures which will ensure their sustainability."

SCANNED

01 FEB 2013

Namoi Valley Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - 92 250100001

DATED Thursday 31st January 2013

Rates DVD on big screen causes stir

BY KATE RAMIEN

GUNNEDAH Shire Council has responded to criticism over a short film spruiking its proposed rate increase that is being shown before movies at The Civic.

The DVD, which runs for five minutes, shows interviews with Mayor Owen Hasler and General Manager, Robert Campbell, who outline the reasons why council believes the hike is necessary and the importance of maintaining the town's assets and infrastructure.

Moviegoers are then asked to fill out a three question survey, after which they will receive a two-for-one video voucher.

Ratepayers have funded the DVD, with council employing Iamworth-based production company GoCross Media to film the interview segments at a cost of \$2865.

Other vision used in the film was file footage from a local government DVD that was shot for the Institute and Public Works Engineering Australia and the National Asset Management Committee in 2007, and features towns and councils across Australia.

Some residents have voiced their disappointment at the segment, claiming it is a blatant push of council's rate agenda.

General Manager Robert Campbell said it was not council's intention to be bias or unbalanced, however the DVD is just one way of filtering information about the rate proposal to the community.

"The idea was to inform people as to what the problem is in relation to asset management," Mr Campbell said.

"I certainly understand in relation to rating, rate distribution and rating levels it is going to be debated and questioned and rightly so, but it's a bit of a catch in a sense that if you don't provide adequate information, people won't understand why we're doing this.

"People are asking for more and more information and that information is highly factual, very credible and gives reasons why we're going through the process."

Mr Campbell said council has decided to use various methods to inform people as to what the issues are, and the challenges it is facing with funding and the maintenance and replacement of assets.

"We are trying to tell the story as experienced by a lot of councils across the country," he said.

"It's just one way we're communicating and you have to try to communicate with as many members of the community as possible."

Mr Campbell said he believed showing the DVD at The Civic is appropriate.

It is not being screened before children's movies, any film with a PG or G rating or movies shown before 4pm.

The DVD can also be seen on the Your Say Gunnedah website at www.yoursaygunnedah.com.au

SCANNED

01 FEB 2013

Namoi Valley

Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 22601000001

SCANNED

14 FEB 2013

DATED

Namoi Valley Independent Tuesday, February 12, 2013

Shire of

Gunnedah

Land of Opportunity

APOLOGY - SPECIAL RATES VARIATION COMMUNITY MEETING

Gunnedah Shire Council had originally advertised that a special rates variation community meeting would be held on Thursday, February 7 from noon until 2pm. This meeting has now been postponed until noon, Friday, February 22.

Gunnedah Shire Council apologises for the fact that the postponement of the February 22 meeting was not appropriately advertised previously.

Robert Campbell
General Manager

Namoi Valley Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP 22601000001

SCANNED

14 FEB 2013

DATED

Namoi Valley Independent Tuesday, February 12, 2013



GUNNEDAH Mayor Owen Hasler, left, and General Manager Robert Campbell, listen to ratepayers at a recent public meeting on rates.

Council a no show

A NUMBER of Gunnedah ratepayers were not impressed when they turned up at the Smithurst Theatre last Thursday for the community meeting and found the building empty.

One resident said she had arrived a little late for the meeting, but there was not even an explanatory note on the door so she checked the Town Hall and The Civic in case she had made a mistake.

After confirming that the time and venue were indeed correct, the aged pensioner was left quite frustrated to find out eventually that the meeting had been postponed but

no-one had thought to pin a note to the door.

"As a pensioner, I am very concerned about the rate increase and to find out that I couldn't have my say on that day was very disappointing," she said.

A spokesperson at Gunnedah Shire Council said that council had postponed the meeting and was sorry for not informing the public.

"This was an unfortunate oversight due to staff error and Gunnedah Shire Council apologises for the inconvenience caused," the spokesperson said.

The next meeting will be held on February 22.

Namoi Valley Independent

Serving Gunnedah and district

PRINT POST APPROVED - PR 2260100001

SCANNED

14 FEB 2013

DATED

Namoi Valley Independent Tuesday, February 12, 2013

Ratepayers question council on rate hike

RESOURCES for Regions, airport maintenance costs and council wages were all issues of concern raised at one of council's recent community meetings on its proposed rate hike.

General Manager Robert Campbell, Mayor Owen Hasler, council's Director Community and Corporate Services Eric Groth and Director of Environmental and Planning Services Michael Silver were among those that fronted around 20 ratepayers at the Smithurst Theatre just over a week ago.

They were given an outline of council's current costs and rate plan, and how the proposed revenue will be spent.

"We're not looking at building new shiny objects, new buildings, infrastructure, new entertainment centres. We're looking at fundamentally replacing what we have," Robert Campbell said.

"Doing that maintenance service but not loading costs on future generations."

Michael Silver listed a number of council assets that will suffer should the increase not go ahead.

He said sporting grounds would be among those where if the rate increase isn't implemented, things like line marking, ground layout, wicket preparations and goal posts, would all be purely the responsibility of sporting groups.

"None of those works would be undertaken by council," Mr Silver said.

"It would mean increasing fees and charges, the closure of assets and the disposing of assets."

One member of the forum questioned council about how much it pays staff.

Mayor Owen Hasler said the full time equivalent wages total \$12 million, however concerns surrounding this issue by the public has led to an

operational review to begin later this month.

"The organisational review will look at numbers," Mr Hasler said.

"If we are overstaffed, we believe that will be identified, or we could be found to be understaffed.

"Our intent would be to implement the findings if at all possible."

Geoff Hood was among those public ratepayers who asked council about money for local services, including roads. He also questioned council over funding from Resources for Regions - a program where money is expected to flow from State Government coffers into mining areas.

"We will have a mining overpass but it will do nothing for our rural roads and services. Are there avenues for that?"

He also said council needs to continue maintaining important assets like Porcupine Reserve.

Gunnedah Shire Council is currently carrying out community information forums to help the public better understand its proposed hikes.

Its new proposal has the increase spread over four years, instead of the suggested three years, with the revised ratings mix to see the mining sector contribute a larger component than the other rating categories - residential, business and farming.

Council caused an upset at its November ordinary meeting when it proposed to go to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) seeking a rate increase of 28 per cent above rate pegging.

Under the new proposal, the cumulative rate increase (inclusive of rate pegging of 3.5 per cent per annum) in the four years, would be 39.7 per cent - comprising 9.4 per cent in 2013-14, 8.4 per cent in 2014-15, 9.5 per cent in 2015-16 and 7.5 per cent in 2016-17.

Over the four-year period the cumulative residential increase would be 33.4 per cent, business (27.3 per cent), farming (33.4 per cent) and mining 120 per cent.



CONCERNED ratepayers question council at the Smithurst Theatre about its plans to increase rates.

Special Rates Variation Community Consultation Feedback Form

Name :	Phone:
Email:	Address:

Council values your comments and feedback regarding the Special Rates Variation (SRV). Please fill out the below form and return it to council@infogunnedah.com.au, the feedback will be collated and submitted to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for their consideration.

1)	I agree the SRV is necessary and support the proposed rate variation <input type="checkbox"/>
	I accept the SRV is necessary but believe proposed variation is too high <input type="checkbox"/>
	I reject the need for any SRV <input type="checkbox"/>

2)	Do you own property within Gunnedah Shire Council? If yes:
	Business <input type="checkbox"/>
	Residential <input type="checkbox"/>
	Rural <input type="checkbox"/>
	Mining <input type="checkbox"/>

3)	If you do not support the rate increase which assets would you ask Council to no longer maintain?
----	---

4)	If you do support the rate variation, which assets/infrastructure would you like to see Council maintain?
----	---

5)	Please list any additional comments.
----	--------------------------------------



**Special Rates Variation
Request Council to Present
At Committee / Organisation Meeting**

Please register your interest for Council representatives to attend your Committee or Organisation Meeting to discuss the proposed Special Rate Variation.

Organisation: _____

Contact name: _____ Position: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Meeting Date and Time: _____

Meeting Venue: _____

Council will liaise with your nominated contact to confirm the most suitable time to attend.

Gunnedah Shire Council
63 Elgin Street, PO Box 63 GUNNEDAH NSW 2380
Administration Tel: (02) 6740 2100. Fax: (02) 6740 2119
E-mail: council@infogunnedah.com.au
Web: www.infogunnedah.com.au



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Summary of Capital Projects included in Operational Plan

Service Area	Asset	\$ 2012/13	\$ 2013/14	\$ 2014/15	\$ 2015/16	\$ 2016/17
- Renewal of assets						
Financial Management	Workspace reconfiguration	30,000	-	-	-	-
Procurement	Fleet replacement program	397,559	267,031	532,659	269,140	316,167
Saleyards	Canteen air-conditioning	7,000	-	-	-	-
Saleyards	Scanner	-	10,000	-	-	-
Saleyards	Scales	-	-	50,000	-	-
Saleyards	Nightwatchman building	-	-	-	20,000	-
Saleyards	Cattle crush	-	-	-	22,000	-
Information Technology	Computer replacement program	41,800	90,000	110,000	105,000	61,500
Information Technology	Peripheral replacement program	119,300	40,000	20,000	6,500	74,700
Information Technology	Telecommunications system	65,000	65,000	-	-	-
Information Technology	File System	-	-	-	30,000	-
Information Technology	Business enterprise suite	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	-
Information Technology	Operating systems	20,000	-	-	-	-
Information Technology	Records Information Management System upgrade	128,000	7,500	7,500	7,500	37,500
Information Technology	Customer Request Management System	37,000	-	-	-	-
Information Technology	Enterprise Software - System upgrade	29,100	-	-	-	-
Information Technology	Civica Authority Upgrade	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	11,300
Information Technology	Enterprise Helpdesk Software	2,500	-	-	3,000	-
Information Technology	Interplan Management Reporting system (upgrade)	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Information Technology	Budget Management Reporting System (upgrade)	-	8,600	-	-	20,000
Information Technology	Computer Cloning System (upgrade)	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
Information Technology	Spatial Mapping (upgrade)	13,500	-	-	-	-
Integrated Planning	Community Strategic Plan Update	-	-	-	30,000	-
The Civic	Digital Cinema Conversion	88,000	-	-	-	-
The Civic	Carpet Replacement	-	-	-	-	18,000
Domestic Waste	Overtopping and preparation of new waste cell	215,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Leachate/Stormwater Management Works	185,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Landfill Remediation - progressive	50,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Gunnedah Region Waste Management Strategy	35,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Filling/Capping Designs for EPA	30,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Update LEMP	30,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Recyclit Fencing	19,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Landfill Remediation	-	50,000	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Convert Carroll Tip to Transfer Station	-	-	250,000	-	-
Domestic Waste	Landfill Remediation - progressive	-	-	50,000	-	-
Domestic Waste	New Cell - Curlewis Tip	-	-	50,000	-	-
Domestic Waste	Landfill Remediation - progressive	-	-	-	50,000	-
Domestic Waste	New Cell and Water Diversion past Southern Boundary	-	-	-	-	400,000
Domestic Waste	Extend Leachate Collection & Surface Water Systems	-	-	-	-	200,000
Domestic Waste	Landfill Remediation - progressive	-	-	-	-	75,000
Administration Buildings	Air-conditioner replacement program	15,500	15,500	15,500	15,500	17,500
Administration Buildings	Internal painting	35,000	-	-	-	-
Administration Buildings	Carpet replacement	-	80,000	-	-	-
Administration Buildings	Community Care Building - Carpet & Painting	-	60,000	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Town Hall Upstairs	100,000	-	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Structural works	23,000	-	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Chair replacement program	14,000	14,000	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Smithurst Theatre	-	-	-	100,000	-
Swimming Pools	Pool complex	-	500,000	1,551,000	6,595,000	-
Parks & Reserves	Park furniture replacement program	11,000	11,300	11,600	12,000	12,300
Parks & Reserves	Playground equipment replacement	40,600	41,800	43,000	44,300	45,700
Parks & Reserves	Griffiths Hall refurbishment	-	-	20,000	-	-
Parks & Reserves	Council storage shed	-	20,000	-	-	-
Infrastructure Management	Traffic Counter replacement	3,850	4,000	4,100	4,200	-
Infrastructure Management	Laser Level Replacement	-	-	-	-	2,900
Airport	Cone & Gable replacements	4,880	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,400
Airport	Runway - Surface realignment	87,000	-	-	-	-
Airport	Master Plan	-	50,000	-	-	-
Airport	Fence Replacement	-	22,000	-	-	-
Airport	Taxiway Resealing	-	-	-	68,000	-
Airport	Reseal - Runway 11-29	-	-	-	-	458,300
Airport	Heavy Patching Apron B	-	-	-	-	26,600
Depot	Pavement rehabilitation	-	-	-	15,000	-
Depot	Refuelling facility upgrade	-	108,000	60,000	83,000	-
Depot	Fuel Tank Replacements	-	-	-	90,000	-
Depot	Pavement Rehabilitation	-	-	-	15,000	-
Depot	Ice machine replacement	-	-	-	1,500	-
Depot	Refuelling Facilities Rehabilitation	-	-	-	-	200,000
Depot	Bitumen Reseal	-	-	-	-	141,000
Bridges	Simpsons Bridge renewal - SID	-	40,000	-	-	-
Bridges	Simpsons Bridge replacement	-	-	-	1,370,000	-
Kerb & Gutter	Kerb & gutter renewal program	360,000	371,000	382,000	393,000	405,000
Urban Roads	Pavement renewal Bloomfield St	490,000	857,500	490,000	490,000	387,000
Urban Roads	Pavement renewal Little Barber St	-	-	-	140,500	-
Urban Roads	Pavement Renewal Links Rd	-	-	-	-	229,000

Summary of Capital Projects included in Operational Plan

Service Area	Asset	\$ 2012/13	\$ 2013/14	\$ 2014/15	\$ 2015/16	\$ 2016/17
Urban Roads	Bitumen resealing	508,055	523,297	538,996	555,165	571,820
Urban Roads	Gravel resheeting	39,351	40,532	41,747	43,000	44,290
Regional Roads	MR55 reconstruction	227,224	-	-	-	-
Regional Roads	Bitumen resealing	138,500	142,600	147,000	151,000	155,883
Regional Roads	Gravel resheeting	216,500	223,000	230,000	236,500	243,673
Sealed Rural Roads	Bitumen resealing	725,057	746,809	769,213	792,289	816,058
Sealed Rural Roads	Bluevale Rd reconstruction	450,000	463,500	477,000	491,500	506,479
Sealed Rural Roads	Pavement Renewals	-	-	-	-	1,025,000
Sealed Rural Roads	Quia Rd reconstruction	220,000	250,000	-	220,000	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Kelvin Rd reconstruction	360,000	200,000	-	-	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Preston Rd reconstruction	-	578,000	-	-	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Wondobah Rd reconstruction	-	-	280,000	100,000	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Ghooli Rd reconstruction	-	-	300,000	-	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Rangari Rd reconstruction	-	-	-	150,000	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Clifton Rd reconstruction	-	-	-	250,000	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Ross Rd reconstruction	-	275,000	275,000	-	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Wean Rd reconstruction	-	-	171,000	-	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Blackjack Rd reconstruction	-	-	-	100,000	-
Sealed Rural Roads	Black Stump Way reconstruction	-	-	-	206,000	-
Unsealed Rural Roads	General resheeting program	632,996	651,986	671,545	691,692	1,050,096
Unsealed Rural Roads	Resheet Pullaming Rd	150,000	154,500	-	-	-
Unsealed Rural Roads	Resheet Trinkey Forest Rd	150,000	-	-	-	-
Unsealed Rural Roads	Resheet Mystery Rd	-	154,500	-	-	-
Unsealed Rural Roads	Resheet Wondobah Rd	-	-	159,000	-	-
Unsealed Rural Roads	Resheet Clifton Rd	-	-	159,000	-	-
Unsealed Rural Roads	Resheet Bulunbulun Rd	-	-	-	163,900	-
Unsealed Rural Roads	Resheet Normans Rd	-	-	-	163,900	-
Carparks	Carpark reseal - Main Pool	-	33,300	-	-	-
Carparks	Carpark reseal - Kapreotis	-	-	10,300	-	-
Carparks	Carpark reseal - Athol Gallen	-	-	-	2,800	-
Stormwater	Pit renewals	28,000	-	-	-	-
Stormwater	CCTV Data	-	-	-	-	15,000
Plant	Plant replacement program	1,650,000	1,900,000	2,000,000	1,800,000	1,755,000
Plant	Two-way radio replacement	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	-
Water	Main replacement program	-	440,000	413,000	446,800	440,800
Water	Main replacement - Palmer Cres	53,000	-	-	-	-
Water	Main replacement - Barber St	193,000	-	-	-	-
Water	Main replacement - Lt Hunter St	43,000	-	-	-	-
Water	Main replacement - Eighth Division Dr	80,000	-	-	-	-
Water	Main replacement - Conadilly St	67,500	-	-	-	-
Water	Main replacement - Quia Rd	-	-	-	155,000	-
Water	Water service replacements	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,900
Water	Roof replacement Links Rd Reservoir	300,000	-	-	-	-
Water	Links Road No.2 Reservoir	-	125,000	-	-	-
Water	No.7 Bore replacement	-	170,000	-	-	-
Water	No.2 Bore replacement	-	-	-	206,500	-
Water	Telemetry upgrade	-	-	-	166,500	-
Sewer	Curlewis Sewer Pond Augmentation	-	107,000	-	-	-
Sewer	Main relining	260,000	267,800	275,800	284,100	292,600
	Asset renewal sub-total	<u>9,266,272</u>	<u>10,209,555</u>	<u>10,595,460</u>	<u>17,386,286</u>	<u>10,094,466</u>
- Asset Upgrade						
Saleyards	Holding pens - shading	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
Saleyards	Double loading ramp	-	-	80,000	-	-
Information Technology	Disaster recovery implementation	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
Information Technology	Website integration & expansion	-	-	15,000	-	15,000
Information Technology	Asset Management System	-	-	-	110,000	-
Library	Gunnedah Library Books	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	25,000
Events	Gunnedah Event Signage	-	45,400	-	-	-
Administration Buildings	Administration Building Alterations	-	350,000	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Acoustic Treatment Town Hall	53,750	-	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Town Hall Renewal Works - Two Storey Section	-	300,000	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Smithurst Theatre Upgrade	-	-	40,000	-	-
Parks & Reserves	Showground lighting upgrade	40,000	-	-	-	-
Parks & Reserves	Showground grandstand upgrade	40,000	-	-	-	-
Parks & Reserves	Blackjack Creek mitigation works	-	-	1,510,000	1,510,000	-
Sporting Fields	Extension of Donnelly Fields Amenities Block	-	20,000	-	180,000	-
Depot	Noxious Weeds washdown bay	-	172,000	-	-	-
Depot	Security enhancement	-	30,500	21,000	21,000	21,000
Cemeteries	Burial Beam	7,000	-	-	-	8,000
Cemeteries	Security fencing	-	30,000	-	-	-
Regional Roads	MR357 culvert construction	-	206,000	-	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Marquis Street Paving - Conadilly to Lt Barber (W)	-	79,000	-	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Marquis Street Paving - Conadilly to Lt Barber (E)	-	-	73,000	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Chandos Street Paving - Conadilly to Lt Barber (E)	-	-	-	73,000	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Elgin Street Paving - Conadilly to Lt Conadilly (W)	-	-	-	-	77,000
Plant	Total Station upgrade	27,000	-	-	-	-
Sewer	Treatment Plant design	-	200,000	-	-	-
Sewer	Treatment Plant construction	-	-	-	6,000,000	-
	Asset upgrade sub-total	<u>190,250</u>	<u>1,475,400</u>	<u>1,761,500</u>	<u>7,916,500</u>	<u>166,000</u>

Summary of Capital Projects included in Operational Plan

Service Area	Asset	\$ 2012/13	\$ 2013/14	\$ 2014/15	\$ 2015/16	\$ 2016/17
- New Assets						
Governance	Risk Management System	25,000	-	-	-	-
Governance	Project Management System	-	25,000	-	-	-
Saleyards	Holding yards	-	300,000	-	-	-
Saleyards	LED Display	17,000	-	-	-	-
Saleyards	Av-Data Entry Gates	25,000	-	-	-	-
Community Development	Grant Officer - Office set-up	-	10,000	-	-	-
Cultural Development	Gunnedah Community Live Plan	-	35,000	-	-	-
The Civic	Push Around Scissor Lift	-	10,000	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Deposition Centre	305,000	-	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Heavy Equipment Storage Shed, Wash Bay & Fuel Bun	-	200,000	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Liquid Waste Management Facility	-	100,000	-	-	-
Domestic Waste	Bobcat Acquisition	-	-	60,000	-	-
Domestic Waste	Asbestos Disposal Area	-	-	-	75,000	-
Building Control	Vehicle - Proposed Building Control Officer	-	35,000	-	-	-
Halls & Community Centres	Motor Vehicle - Proposed Building Maintenance Officer	-	23,000	-	-	-
Parks & Reserves	Blackjack Creek - Private Land Acquisition	-	150,000	-	-	-
Sporting Fields	Namoi Playing Fields - Multi-purpose Use	-	-	-	40,000	-
Sporting Fields	Sport Relocations to Donnelly Fields	-	-	-	20,000	-
Sporting Fields	Parklands Sporting Precinct Roadworks	-	-	432,000	-	-
Sporting Fields	Parklands Sporting Precinct - Development	-	37,000	250,000	-	-
Commercial Property	Purchase Walkway - 178 Conadilly Street	-	100,000	-	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Cycleway - View Street - Showground to South Street	-	64,000	-	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Footpath - Barber Street - Rosemary to Warranbungle	-	24,700	-	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Cycleway - New Street - Railway Crossing to Barber Str	-	-	52,000	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Cycleway - New Street - Railway Crossing to South Stre	-	-	23,500	-	-
Footpaths & Cycleways	Wandobah Cycleway Loop Stage 2 - George to McAndr	-	-	-	-	126,500
Carparks	Zantiotis Car Park - Land Purchase	-	-	-	400,000	-
Stormwater	Carroll St Drainage Line	75,000	178,000	38,000	-	-
Stormwater	Stock Road Interallotment Drainage	126,000	-	-	-	-
Stormwater	George Street Drainage Line	-	-	-	533,000	-
Stormwater	Low Flow Ashfords Watercourse	-	-	-	50,000	-
Stormwater	Stock Road Drainage Line	-	-	-	-	55,000
Stormwater	Links Road Drainage Line	-	-	-	-	50,000
Quarries	Investigate new quarries	-	30,000	30,000	30,000	-
Plant	Grader control unit	-	-	-	12,000	-
Water	New Reservoir - Apex Rd	-	2,200,000	-	-	-
Water	Drinking Water Quality Framework	-	50,000	-	-	-
Sewer	Flow Meter	30,000	-	-	-	-
Sewer	Pump design - Bloomfield St	62,000	-	-	-	-
Sewer	Pump Construction	-	260,000	-	-	-
	New asset sub-total	665,000	3,831,700	885,500	1,160,000	231,500
	Total capital projects	10,121,522	15,516,655	13,242,460	26,462,786	10,491,966

Renewal: Replacement of existing asset with one of equivalent service level capacity or performance capability

Upgrade: Replacement of existing asset with one of a greater service level capacity or performance capability

New: Acquisition or creation of a new asset to increase service level capacity or performance capability