



## **Attachment K**

**February 2014 Extraordinary Resolution**

**Report and Annexures-**

**Finalisation of LTFP, including:**

**Annexure D – Public Submissions Received**

**Annexure F – Survey Results**

**Annexure G – Survey Feedback**

After the above “Acknowledgement to Country” had been read, Reverend Lance Jackson opened the meeting with a prayer.

## **2 APOLOGIES**

Moved: Cr Quinn

Seconded: Cr Parsons

### **1.02/14 RESOLUTION**

That Councillor D Newman be granted absence of leave from the Council Meeting.

**CARRIED**

## **3 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS / PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

No disclosure of conflict of interests/pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests were received.

## **4 REPORTS**

### **4.1 Financial Management: Presentation of Scenarios for Long Term Financial Plan: Adoption of a Special Rate Variation**

**REPORT FROM: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Authors: Anna Watt – Director of Corporate and Community Services and  
Eric Brown - Manager of Finance**

Moved Cr Parsons

Seconded Cr Quinn

### **2.02/14 RESOLUTION**

That Council moves into “Committee of the Whole” for the purpose of discussing the item more freely.

**CARRIED**

As part of the discussion, the following motion was moved by Cr Parsons:

### **MOTION**

That Council approves a 10% Special Rate Variation for 2014/15, and limits its borrowings to \$2 million.

Since the motion was not seconded, the motion

**LAPSED**

Also as part of the discussion, Cr Quinn suggested a five percent (5%) increase for 2014/15, followed by a ten percent (10%) increase in both 2015/16 and 2016/17 for the farmland rating category. He further foreshadowed that if a motion was not carried, he might move an amendment to the printed recommendation, as follows:

That the following be added to paragraph 11: "...further that the General Manager presents a report to Council about the pros and cons of an amalgamation of Council with another Council(s)."

That the following paragraph 12 be added: "That at the March 2014 Council Meeting, each Director presents a report to identify savings and efficiencies in their own departments; thereafter that a report be presented each quarter reporting on the savings realised/pursued."

Moved: Cr Graham                      Seconded: Cr Parsons

### **MOTION**

That paragraph 7, and other associated paragraphs of the recommendation as printed, be changed to make provision for an increase of 10% in 2014/15 and a further 5% increase in 2015/16 for both the farmland and residential rating categories.

The voting was determined by show of hands:

FOR – 2  
AGAINST – 4

### **LOST**

The Mayor, Cr Scherf and Cr Schumacher spoke in favour of the need for a Special Rate Variation as communicated to the community, and as printed in the recommendation.

Moved Cr Scherf                      Seconded Cr Quinn

### **3.02/14 RESOLUTION**

That Council moves out of "Committee of the Whole".

### **CARRIED**

Moved: Cr Scherf                      Seconded: Cr Quinn

### **4.02/14 RESOLUTION**

1. That Council notes the information in the body of this report, in conjunction with Annexures A to J, and in particular the extent and results of the community consultation involved with this process.
2. That Council notes the information received in the submissions attached as Annexure D and where sufficient information is available for a response that Council

responds with a posted letter of thanks to the submitters, advising that this report is available for their perusal on Council's website.

3. That Council notes the extent of the community consultation process and acknowledge that the consultation was sufficient for Council to make an informed decision regarding the community's knowledge of the extent and need for a Special Rate Variation.
4. That Council adopts the proposed Asset Management Plan (Transport) after the required time on public display, as the revised Asset Management Plan (Transport).
5. That Council adopts the proposed Delivery Program after the required time on public display, as the revised Delivery Program.
6. That Council adopts Scenario 5 of the Long Term Financial Plan, after the required time on public display, as the revised Long Term Financial Plan.
7. That Council adopts 'Option 2', as identified above, for the Special Rate Variation distribution above the rate pegging in the application to IPART, being:

Category	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Rate Peg	2.3%	3.4%	3.4%
Residential Rates	10%	5%	0%
Farmland Rates	10%	10%	5%

8. That Council adopts the increase identified in paragraph 7 above as a multiyear and permanent increase under section 508(A) of the Local Government Act for both the Farmland and Residential Rates. The increase identified in paragraph 7 above including the rate peg will result in a total increase in permissible general income of 11.21% in 2014/15, 10.02% in 2015/16 and 5.59% in 2016/17.
9. That Council requests the General Manager to prepare and submit an application to IPART by 24 February 2014 detailing the results in this report, and the associated information that has come to light during the Community Consultation period.
10. That Council requests the Director of Corporate and Community Services to review Council's existing Debt Recovery Policy to ensure that the impact of the SRV is mitigated as far as reasonably possible for those ratepayers who are experiencing genuine hardship.
11. That, in the event that the application to IPART referred to in paragraphs 7 to 9 above is unsuccessful, the Director of Corporate and Community Services be requested to prepare a further report to Council.

The voting was determined by show of hands:

FOR – 3

AGAINST – 3

The Mayor, in accordance with the provisions of Section 370(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, used his casting vote to vote in favour of the recommendation.

**CARRIED**

The Meeting closed at 6.13pm.



## **1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY**

"I acknowledge the Ngoorabul people as the traditional custodians of our land.

I give respect to past and present Elders and extend that respect to other Aboriginals present.

I also recognise the role of our early settlers, Celtic and Anglo, in shaping the community that we have become."

## **2 APOLOGIES**

## **3 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS / PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

## **4 REPORTS**

### ***4.1 Financial Management: Presentation of Scenarios for Long Term Financial Plan***

**REPORT FROM: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
**Authors: Anna Watt – Director of Corporate and Community Services  
and Eric Brown - Manager of Finance**

**ANNEXURES A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I AND J**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to present Councillors with the opportunity to finalise the reviewed Long Term Financial Plan (including a Special Rate Variation (SRV)), Asset Management Plan and Delivery Program. The final adoption of these documents requires Council to approve an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for the SRV. All three (3) aforementioned plans target financial sustainability in the long term combined with a focus on addressing the state of infrastructure in the Glen Innes Severn Area. Therefore the proposition to Council is progressive, aimed at ensuring the sustainability of Council's assets for future generations.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is in the process of being reviewed. Since the previous LTFP was approved, Council has received information regarding the variability of Grant Funding into the future, met with the NSW Grant Commission, been reviewed by NSW Treasury (TCorp) and requested that the reviewed plan achieves an operating surplus within three (3) years.

At the November 2013 Ordinary Council Meeting a report and discussion paper were presented, with five (5) scenarios for Council to consider. Council adopted scenario 5 as its preferred option for consultation with the Community, as this scenario (in part) addressed the concerns that had been raised. This scenario included a section 508(A) special rates variation, resulting in a stepped increase that remains in the rate base. The suggested variation was over three (3) years for farmland and one (1) year for residential properties.

The additional money that would be raised is aimed firstly at balancing the budget and secondly at assisting Council to address the infrastructure backlog (\$29.5 million as at 30 June 2012), which in the past it has been unable to do due to insufficient funding. That, along with the resultant improvement in TCORP ratios, is its sole purpose.

Scenario 5 also included Council applying for a further Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) loan of four (4) million dollars. This loan would enable large projects that have previously been too costly to be approved, and other major road infrastructure projects that are scheduled into the future to be brought forward, for example replacing bridges in urgent need of repair.

Feedback from the extensive Community Consultation process resulted in a situation where Council was argued to be inequitable in its application of the distribution of the SRV. As a result the Mayor in terms of Section 226 of the *Local Government Act, 1993* exercised the policy-making function of the governing body in-between meetings of Council, and requested the General Manager prepare another distribution under Scenario 5, where the burden of additional rate revenue is spread differently the original proposal.

The request had specific emphasis on alleviating some of the burden of Farmland ratepayers and redistributing this to Residential rate payers. The net effect of this was to transfer five percent (5%) of the farmland increase in year three (3) to residential ratepayers in year two (2). This is the distribution that is being recommended to Council.

## **BACKGROUND**

At the November 2013 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council was presented with a report and Long Term Financial Plan – Discussion Paper for Councillors, to revise Council's financial plan for the next ten (10) years. The Discussion Paper had a particular focus on ensuring financial sustainability into the future, and achieving an operating surplus within three (3) years as requested by Council at its Ordinary Council Meeting in May last year. The plan also addressed the current state of road infrastructure. The Discussion Paper presented five (5) scenarios for Council to consider.

Council carried resolution 9.11/13, which in principle adopted Scenario 5 of the Long Term Financial Plan as its preferred option for consultation with the Community. Scenario 5 addressed the concerns that had been raised by Council; it included a section 508(A) Special Rates Variation and applying for a further Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) loan of four million dollars (\$4 million). Further resolutions in the report included:

4. *That Council requests the General Manager to notify IPART of the intent to apply for a Special Rates Variation by 13 December 2013; recognizing that a process of Community Consultation will follow after this mentioned date.*

Council notified IPART of the intent to apply for a Special Rates Variation on 10 December 2013.

5. *That Council requests the Director of Corporate and Community Services to make the necessary arrangements for Community consultation sessions throughout the Local Government Area towards the end of January and beginning of February 2014, to properly inform the Community of the effect and extent of the proposed Special Rates Variation.*

Six (6) community consultation forums were held in the Local Government Area. The outcomes and attendance are discussed further in the report.

The meeting times (primarily the 7am meetings) were scheduled after feedback from the Operational Plan community consultation sessions held last year.

6. *That Council requests the Director of Corporate and Community Services to amend Council's Delivery Program in order to reflect the effect of the proposed Special Rates Variation in this document.*

An amended Delivery Program was presented to Council on 19 December 2013 and was adopted for Community consultation (Resolution 4.12/13).

7. *That Council requests the Director of Infrastructure Services to revisit and revise Council's Road Infrastructure Asset Management Plans for the December 2013 Ordinary Council Meeting – identifying the effect of the proposed Special Rates Variation, on these plans.*

An amended Asset Management Plan was presented to Council on 19 December 2013 and was adopted for Community consultation (Resolution 4.12/13).

9. *That Council requests the Director of Infrastructure Services to prepare an application for round three (3) of the Local Infrastructure Renewal Program for \$4 million to address the state of Council's local bridge infrastructure.*

An application for round three (3) of the LIRS program was lodged on 23 December 2013.

At this point in time the actions requested by Council have been completed. Council now needs to consider the information presented here-in and consider whether or not to apply to IPART for a SRV.

**(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework**

This item links to Council's Operational Plan Objective GCL 3.1 "To be recognised as a well managed Council and an employer of choice", and also Objective GCL 2.1 "Glen Innes Severn LGA will keep its local autonomy and Local Government has achieved Constitutional Recognition".

**(b) Financial Considerations**

The financial considerations are discussed in the LTFP in detail. The considerations are significant and will dictate the course of Council for the next twenty years. It is critical for Council to consider the impact of the additional revenue on Council infrastructure, and in particular the reduction in backlog by 2033.

**COMMENTARY**

The commentary has been broken down into the following headings:

- Methods of Public/Community Consultation;
- Results of Consultation and Council response to major arguments;
- Summary of argument for, and the effect of, the SRV;
- Discussion regarding alternative proposals on the breakdown of the SRV increase;
- Conclusion and recommendations.

**METHODS OF PUBLIC/COMMUNITY CONSULTATION:**

Council has implemented a number of public consultation methods to listen to the community and to communicate the message of the need for a special rates variation to address infrastructure conditions. The methods and the results thereof are discussed below:

**1. Public Exhibition of Business Paper, Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans and b**

In May 2013 (Resolution 5.05/13) Council requested senior staff to investigate the possibility of a special rates variation. As per usual practice the Business Paper was available publicly (in early May 2013). The possibility of a special rates variation was mentioned in the Glen Innes Examiner at that time (4 June 2013). Please refer to Annexure A to the Business Paper.

As a result of the above resolution, Council staff undertook a review of the Long Term Financial Plan. The revised LTFP was presented to Council in November 2013. Prior to the Ordinary Council Meeting a Council workshop was held with Councillors to explain in depth the LTFP, the need for a SRV and the impact that it would have on Council's infrastructure backlog. Council adopted resolution 9.11/13, which in principle adopted Scenario 5 of the LTFP as its preferred option for consultation with the Community. This scenario included a special rates variation. The revision of the LTFP was advertised widely, with the full Long Term Financial Plan – Discussion Paper and the associated report being advertised from mid November.



The revised Long Term Financial Plan was advertised both in the Glen Innes Examiner and on Council's website. Hard copies of the documents were available at Emmaville Post Office, Deepwater Post Office, the Library/Learning Centre, Town Hall Office in Glen Innes, the Glencoe Post Office and on Council's website. The revised LTFP including the SRV has been on display from 2 December 2013 to 7 February 2014, in excess of the required 28 days. It should be noted the closing date for submission regarding the LTFP was also 7 February. The closing date for submissions in respect of the SRV was 7 February 2014.

**Newspaper advertisements:**

Long Term Financial Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	05/12/2013
Long Term Financial Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	12/12/2013
Delivery Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	09/01/2014
Asset Management Plan (Transport)	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	09/01/2014
Community Consultation Forums	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	09/01/2014
Long Term Financial Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	09/01/2014
Community Consultation Forums	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	16/01/2014
Long Term Financial Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	16/01/2014
Delivery Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	16/01/2014
Asset Management Plan (Transport)	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	16/01/2014
Community Consultation Forums	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	24/01/2014
Long Term Financial Plan (availability)	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	24/01/2014
Delivery Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	24/01/2014
Asset Management Plan (Transport)	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	24/01/2014
Community Consultation Submissions	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	06/02/2014
Long Term Financial Plan (availability)	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	06/02/2014
Delivery Plan	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	06/02/2014
Asset Management Plan (Transport)	Glen Innes Examiner	Page 2 / CWYC	06/02/2014

The total number of advertisements regarding these documents, included by Council in 'Connecting with your Council' (CWYC), the regular forum and place for Council advertisements, was eighteen (18) times in six (6) papers, over a two (2) month period.

We have been advised by the Glen Innes Examiner that the circulation of the newspaper is approximately 3,500 issues per week (1,600 on Tuesday and 1,900 on Thursday). Articles are also often available on the local paper's website.

**2. Staff Consultation/ Information Sessions**

On 29 November 2013 and 5 December 2013, four (4) meetings were held with Council staff to discuss the need for and extent of a special rate variation. Approximately 120 staff members attended the information sessions that dealt with:

- Various external and internal reviews that have occurred across NSW Councils in the past 18 months and what their outcomes are;

- Show Comparisons of Glen Innes Severn Council (GISC) average current rate base versus our regional average and neighbours;
- An explanation of what a special rates variation is;
- An explanation of how the funds raised from a special rates variation will be spent;
- An explanation of how a LIRS loan differs from a standard loan and what the \$4 million will be spent on; and
- What may happen if GISC does not apply for a special rates variation?

The sessions lasted for approximately one (1) hour and the majority of staff were supportive of the need for a special rate variation, particularly staff who dealt with asset maintenance on a regular basis. The intention of these sessions was to inform staff of the direction of Council and to ensure that staff were included in the process and could answer queries from the public if they felt confident, or knew whom to redirect them to.

### **3. Mail out to Ratepayers**

On Friday 10 January 2014 Council printed 5,361 brochures which were mailed on 14 January to all of Council's ratepayers. The brochures comprised of sixteen (16) pages explaining the SRV and associated process in full, while inviting ratepayers to take part in the Community Consultation process.

The topics covered in the brochure included:

- Introductory Letter by the Mayor;
- How our Rates work;
- Where do our rates come from now?
- What does Council spend money on?
- Is Council poorly managed or is Council broke?
- How do our financial and asset management ratios compare?
- What are our current financial / infrastructure ratios?
- What are our projected financial / infrastructure ratios for 2023?
- What is rate pegging?
- What is a special rate variation?
- How do our rates compare?
- Why is Council suggesting a special rate variation?
- If Council is in a good position why do we need a SRV?
- How much is Council asking for?
- Is Council going to raise any other fees?
- Why should you support a SRV?

- Why spending the money on roads and bridges matters;
- What is Council doing currently as part of its Continuous Improvement Program?
- What if there is no SRV?
- How to have your say? and a
- (tear out page) Community Survey.

There were various options for the Community to “have their say”; these options were identified in the brochure, which included six (6) community consultation forums, stakeholder meetings on request, letters and submissions as well as the abovementioned survey.

The Brochure was extensive and informative to ensure that the process and reasons behind it were understood. Council ‘followed up’ the brochure with a number of press releases and further explained the press releases in the Community consultation forums.

A copy of the Brochure is attached as Annexure B to the Business Paper.

#### **4. Press Releases and other Media Coverage:**

There has been a reasonable amount of media coverage regarding this issue. The main coverage has been in the Glen Innes Examiner, The Glen Innes Examiner website, Council’s website and on radio stations such as 2NZ and GemFM.

Council’s main aim in respect of media coverage was firstly to make the Community aware of the meetings and consultation process, and secondly to follow up on the mail out and Community Consultation forums to succinctly explain the need and extent of a special rates variation.

#### **Media Releases:**

Council issued three (3) media releases and also met with Glen Innes Examiner reporters on a number of occasions to discuss and clarify the issues, to ensure that the Community was getting accurate and timely information.

The three (3) media releases covered the following:

- a) Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme** – this release re-iterated the need for a LIRS loan and why the investment in bridges through LIRS funding is a sound financial decision.
- b) Special Rate Variation** – this release explained the situation Council is in and the need for and extent of the special rates variation.
- c) Special Rate Variation (New Proposal)** – After the first two (2) Community Consultation forums in Red Range and Glencoe the main theme that arose was the equity of distribution between Farmland and Residential ratepayers, and the fact that an increase for Residential ratepayers would be shared over more people and therefore would be easier to bear. A new proposal was

prepared, and a press release was written to release this additional information to the community and to identify the change of this suggested proposal. This is discussed further below.

A copy of each of the releases is attached to the Business Paper as Annexure C. Media releases were published in the Glen Innes Examiner newspaper and in some cases also appeared on the Examiner's website.

**Radio Coverage:**

There has been radio news coverage of the Community Consultation forums as well as the release of the new proposal, adjusting the distribution between farmland and residential rates. This radio coverage was on both GemFM and 2NZ; the news coverage was reasonably extensive over January and early February 2014.

The listening audience for GemFM and 2NZ is in the order of 40,000 in the area, with a significant number of those listeners presumed to be in the Glen Innes Severn Local Government Area. Therefore, the news stories which invited Community members to attend and noted the extent of the original and new special rate variation proposals would have reached a large number of listeners in time to allow feedback to be provided.

GemFM and 2NZ did not provide an estimate of the total listeners in the LGA but noted that the number of advertisers from the GIS LGA was significant, suggesting that it was a well patronized radio station in the area.

**Council's Website:**

As part of the Community Consultation strategy articles were published on Council's website, as well as a link to all documentation available and the locations where hard copies of the documents were available. The documents identified for public consultation were also available at Glencoe Post Office, Glen Innes (Town Hall and Library/Learning Centre), Emmaville Post Office and Deepwater Post Office for the periods indicated below.

The articles and information that were available on Council's website, for particular periods are listed on the following page (it should be noted that the documents excluding the associated explanatory articles are still available on Council's website):



Topic	Article	Period	
		From	To
Long Term Financial Plan	Council Seeks Residents Input	29/11/2013	07/02/2014
Community Consultation Forums	Invitation to attend Community Consultation Forums on SRV	09/01/2014	03/02/2014
Alternative Distribution SRV	Council considers alternative distribution of SRV	24/01/2014	07/02/2014
SRV	Council seeks input on proposed SRV	12/01/2014	07/02/2014
Asset Management Plan and Delivery Program	Public Display of Plans on website	20/12/2013	11/02/2014

The visitation of Council's website for the period in question (29 November 2013 to 7 February 2014) has been 4,334 visits with 2,813 unique visitors (different people). It should also be noted that 54.9% were new visitors. This suggests that during this period there were a large number of new visitors.

### **5. Community Consultation Forums**

As with the majority of Council's community consultation, forums were held at townships in the Local Government Area (LGA) to present the information in an easy to understand and reasonably brief format. The presentation was approximately half an hour, with an introduction from the Mayor and General Manager, and then a presentation from the Director of Corporate and Community Services, the Manager of Finance and Director of Infrastructure Services (in that order).

The presentations provided an overview of the current situation and need for a SRV, specific topics included:

- Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and the LTFP;
- Significant backlog on infrastructure renewals in all rural and regional Councils;
- The revised decrease of almost \$900,000 in grant funding from the Commonwealth Government;
- The Special Rate Variation as part of the broader financial strategy;
- How Council is, and will continue to, tighten its own belt;
- What will happen if a SRV is not approved;
- The LIRS program and how it fits into Council's financial strategy;
- Why the LIRS program is a sound financial decision;
- LIRS funding is cheaper than maintaining a deteriorating asset;
- The state of our assets, in particular bridges and roads;
- The extent of the backlog and shortfall in annual expenditure; and
- Effect on the state of our assets (Base Case compared with Scenario 5).

Upon completion of the presentations a question and answer session was held, which in most cases lasted around two (2) hours. These sessions were informative, and there were varying views from full support of the SRV to full opposition. Some forums were heated (in particular the final Town Hall, and Emmaville meetings) but earlier meetings were reasonably understanding of the need for a SRV.

The estimated duration and attendance at these consultation meetings is as follows:

Location	Date and Time	Venue	Estimated Duration	Estimated Attendance
Glencoe	10am Monday, 20 January	Glencoe Hall	2:30	28
Red Range	7am Tuesday, 21 January	Red Range Hall	2:30	15
Deepwater	7am Wednesday, 22 January	Deepwater Hall	2:30	27
Glen Innes	2pm Wednesday, 22 January	Library and Learning Centre	2:30	34
Emmaville	7am Thursday, 23 January	Emmaville Hall	3:00	39
Glen Innes	7.30pm Monday, 3 February	Glen Innes Town Hall	2:30	220
<b>Total Estimated Attendance</b>				<b>363</b>

It should be noted that the final Glen Innes Town Hall meeting had a different format to the initial five (5) consultation meetings. The aim of the final meeting was to provide more question and answer time after a brief presentation from the Mayor and General Manager.

## 6. Stakeholder Meetings

Although advertised, no requests from community groups were received.

## 7. Letters and Submissions

A number of letters and submissions were received in respect of the special rates variation:

Submissions	No. Received
Long Term Financial Plan and SRV Submissions	35
Delivery Plan Submissions	0
Asset Management Plan (Transport) Submissions	0

The main arguments (either for or against the SRV) identified in the submissions and in the community consultation forums are further discussed below.

## RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND COUNCIL RESPONSE TO RE-OCCURRING ARGUMENTS:

Although a number of submissions were received, in large part the submissions had re-occurring arguments. Please refer to Annexure D to the Business Paper. The main concerns raised were:

### a) The perceived inequity between Farmland and other ratepayers

The original proposal had a SRV suggested distribution for Residential ratepayers 10% increase above the rate peg for one (1) year, and an increase of 10% above the rate peg over three (3) years for Farmland rates. At the community forums it was argued that Council was inequitable in its application of the distribution. Hence

Option Two (2) was prepared, where the burden of additional rate revenue is spread differently to alleviate some of the burden of Farmland ratepayers and spread this to Residential ratepayers. Under this proposed distribution Residential ratepayers would have an increase of 10% above the rate peg for the 2014/15 year, and a five percent (5%) increase above the rate peg in the following year. Farmland ratepayers would have an increase of 10% above the rate peg over two (2) years, and an increase of five percent (5%) above the rate peg in the third year (instead of another 10%). This is discussed further below under “**Discussion regarding alternative proposals on breakdown of SRV increase:**”

**b) The exclusion of Business and Mining rates from the increase**

**Mining:**

The impact of including mining would be minimal and based on the amount outstanding the actual cash return would be negligible. Please consider in this regard that the total amount outstanding from the three (3) mining properties is \$12,623.96 accounting for 96.75% of total rates raised in the last financial year. Therefore mining can be reasonably excluded.

The argument was also raised that the mining rate should be raised now, in case mining is commenced within the area and this results in a loss of rates. This is not a valid concern as it is expected that the mining application process will provide Council with sufficient notice to be able to address mining rates prior to any new mining in the area.

**Business rates:**

The impact of imposing additional rates on businesses would result in an immaterial reduction in rates across the board. It is expected that an increase across the board would still result in a compounded increase over three (3) years of 29.62% (compared with an increase of 25.87% for Residential and 38.05% for Farmland based on Option 2).

In fact, it is believed that increasing business rates would result in more inequity for the following reasons:

- Business ratepayers already pay other fees such as trade waste charges which result in a higher overall bill (it should be noted that a basic comparison between Farmland, Business and Residential based on a total levy including annual charges suggests that business ratepayers pay \$2,363.44 per annum compared with \$1,516.11 for Residential and \$2,132.25 for Farmland);
- Business rates are very comparable to the regional average and are believed to be reasonable when compared based on town size within the regional average comparison;
- As a general rule, the majority of business ratepayers also pay residential or farmland rates and therefore increasing business rates will result in inequity in respect of ability to pay;

- Arguments have been raised that there are ratepayers who own multiple properties. However, it is expected that these properties are rented out and therefore still 'use' the facilities provided by Council;
- Argument has been raised that a large number of business owners are not from the Glen Innes Severn area. This is not justified with an estimated 73% of business properties owned by residents of the Glen Innes Severn Area. In this regard it should be noted that there is also no ability under the *Local Government Act 1993* to target ratepayers from large organisations.

**c) Trust and Wastage (whether the money will be spent on roads)**

Trust and wastage are a paramount consideration for the community and always will be. Council deals with community money and this results in a significant amount of public scrutiny on how funds are spent. At public meetings it is often hard to refute such accusations individually, as the particular situations may not yet have been brought to Council's attention, and therefore have not been investigated.

Council will continue to retain a strong focus on reducing wastage or perceived wastage. The only way to do so is to continuously focus on improved efficiency and productivity within Council.

**d) The number of administration staff and administrative inefficiency**

The number of administrative staff and administrative efficiency (or cost) has been raised on a number of occasions. Council's response remains the same, based on the Division of Local Government Comparative figures Council's administrative costs per capita are approximately half that of the group average for similarly sized Councils. Council continually strives for improvements in this area (along with all others).

**e) The need for Council to source more grant funding from State and Federal Governments**

The need for additional grant funding from State and Federal Governments is appreciated and fully supported by Council. The difficulty with placing full reliance on such increases is that they are, by their very nature, unreliable. For example the Federal Government Assistance Grant has continued to decrease as a proportion of Federal Government revenues. (This graph is highlighted on page 10 in the distributed brochure attached as Annexure B to the Business Paper).

The main emphasis on Council has been to apply for additional grants or to lobby the State and Federal Government for additional grant revenue. It should be noted in response to this that Council has continued to do so in every avenue reasonably available to it. This is the primary reason Council expected an increase in grant revenue in earlier years, which has not materialized.

Therefore continuing to argue that the State and Federal Government will or should give Council additional money is an unrealistic hope.



**f) Defer CBD infrastructure upgrade and use the funds for road and bridge infrastructure**

The CBD infrastructure upgrade is funded by LIRS funding from the State Government (therefore it is a grant subsidised interest loan at 1.46%). Council is bound to use this money for the purpose for which the State Government approved it. If Council does not use the money for this purpose Council would lose the subsidy of 4% and thereby pay 5.46% on the money borrowed. Therefore, in truth, Council does not have the ability to redirect these funds to other projects. However, one should note that the CBD works is for an infrastructure upgrade with the primary purpose being to upgrade infrastructure which would otherwise require replacement in future years. Therefore funding these works through grant subsidised loans is a sound financial and asset management decision.

**g) That Council is too top heavy and has too many managerial staff**

Council has to deal and comply with over 100 different sets of legislation (that have direct responsibilities and/or obligations as a result). Council fulfils over 108 different functions in our Local Government Area. Council also has to adhere and provide information back to various State and Federal Departments regarding approximately 1,300 different sets of performance and compliance measures. In addition to this, Council is expected to comply with 513 different Better Practices Guidelines – on which it is audited/assessed.

**h) That Council should not pay attention to the requirements of the State Government and that we should “do our own thing”**

Clearly, this argument/suggestion is illegal. The *Local Government Act 1993* makes provision for a Council Charter in Section 8 – identifying 14 requirements to which a Council should adhere. It is noteworthy that it is expected of a Council “to bear in mind that it is the custodian and trustee of public assets and to effectively plan for, account for and manage the assets for which it is responsible”. Section 232 of the abovementioned Act further deals with the role of a Councillor. It is noteworthy that it is highlighted in subsection 1 (dot point 3) that it is a role of a Councillor “to participate in the optimum allocation of the Council’s resources for the benefit of the area”. Council staff falls under the provisions of the Local Government (State) Award 2010. Salary and wage increases are negotiated centrally by the employer organisation and unions, and we have to implement the outcomes – with all the other provisions of the Award. The current Council has the responsibility to make the hard decisions now, in order for our community (with its Council) to be financially sustainable in the longer term, with serviceable assets – especially our local roads network. This is not a process that Council has taken lightly; however the Management Executive and senior staff at Council are convinced that the SRV proposal is a sound and responsible management strategy for the longer term.

**i) That Council is not doing anything to save money or become more efficient**

Council has set itself the goal of saving in the order of \$650,000 each year by implementing and pursuing the following initiatives:

- Sale of properties not necessary for operational purposes: Tindale Units (\$18,000), Highwoods (\$20,000), Garden Court (\$25,000), Potters Parade Land (\$11,000), Abbott Street Land (\$25,000), AAFI Airport (\$200,000). Subtotal - \$299,000;
- Stricter Controls in Overtime and Time in Lieu: \$65,000;
- Non-replacement of staff on leave: \$50,000;
- Reduction in “Acting in Higher Grades”: \$24,000;
- Cutting 10 vehicles from light fleet: \$50,000;
- Shutting down of Freezer Rooms: \$20,000;
- Grand Total - \$508,000.

Council does have a focus on continuous improvement, and will continue to identify further savings/efficiencies. Specifically, gains have been made with regards to procurement practices. A \$60,000 saving is expected to be achieved shortly from Council's in-house printing, and a further \$30,000 for a renegotiated telephone contract.

There is however still some work to be done. Further savings of \$50,000 to \$60,000 per year need to be identified. Council acknowledges that there is room for improvement in some of its service delivery and operations; everything is not perfect (and probably never will be!). However, to argue that “cutting out all the waste” is miraculously going to provide us with an additional \$850,000 to \$950,000 per annum is just not rational thinking – with all due respect.

**j) That Council erred in the way it calculated the average rates within the region**

At the final community forum meeting at Town Hall, a hand-out document (please refer to Annexure E to the Business Paper) with the heading “Farmland Rate Comparison 2013/14”, clearly shows that no matter how one calculates the regional rate average, including Glen Innes or excluding Glen Innes, including or excluding Tenterfield, including or excluding irrigation and intensive farming areas from the equation –a discrepancy still remains between the Glen Innes Severn Farmland Rating and the regional average – with our rates being lower. There is therefore merit in Council targeting the Farmland rating category. Council has put this difficult decision regarding a SRV off for a few years, but it cannot wait any longer.

**Survey Findings:**

The results of the survey are attached as Annexure F to the Business Paper for Council's consideration.

**Statistical significance:**

Of the 5,361 surveys sent to Ratepayers 336 were returned. This represents a return of 6.2%. Based on this response level, at a 95% confidence level, the margin of error would be in the order of 5.5%. This means we can be 95% confident that the result of the survey will be within a tolerance of 5.5% of the result indicated in the survey, which is subject to the possibility of multiple or skewed results.

### **Errors/Discrepancies:**

Due to the anonymous method used for the survey, it is possible that one (1) individual could have completed a large number of surveys, which would skew the results; hence the survey should be used as guidance only.

Another matter to consider is that the survey targeted primarily ratepayers (through the ratepayer only mail out), who may or may not be local and therefore those individuals who do not pay rates, but use Council services, have not really been included.

Furthermore, of the surveys received, some respondents did not answer all questions.

### **Survey Results:**

#### **Question 1: Discretionary services**

The survey requested the public to identify services to Stop, Reduce, Increase and Maintain. It should be noted that the 'Maintain' was added by rate payers. Of the eleven (11) services identified 1,880 responses indicated that the services identified should be increased or maintained, while 1,120 indicated that the services should be stopped or reduced. Of the services identified only Rural Halls, Village Libraries and Festivals had more respondents suggesting that the service be cut or reduced, while all other services had more respondents wishing to maintain or increase the service. Public Toilets, the Glen Innes and Emmaville Swimming Pool and the Saleyards had the most support (based on numbers 'for' and 'against').

#### **Question 2 to 9: Condition and Importance of Roads**

The survey results identified that the condition of infrastructure assets (bridges, town and village streets and unsealed and sealed rural roads) was important to ratepayers, with a ranking of over four (4) out of five (5) for all categories.

In respect of the condition of roads, the ranking was from one (1) through to (6) with one (1) being very poor and six (6) being excellent.

The results were as follows:

Infrastructure Asset	Condition (1 to 6)	Importance (1 to 5)
Rural Sealed Roads	2.68	4.07
Rural Unsealed Roads	2.44	4.07
Town and Village Streets	2.74	4.05
Bridges	2.95	4.03
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>4.06</b>

The results indicate that the conditions of assets were important, and that the condition was marginally below Fair with a ranking of 2.7.

**Question 10: Support for a SRV to pay for Roads, Bridges and Footpaths:**

The support for a SRV to pay for Roads, Bridges and Footpaths on a rating of one (1) for fully disapprove through to five (5) fully approve is 2.61. This suggests that there is partial support for a SRV to pay for Roads, Bridges and Footpaths.

**Question 11: Support for a SRV Residential and Farmland:**

The true result of this particular question is more difficult to determine, due to the ability to suggest an alternative percentage. Therefore some discretion has been used to determine whether the alternative suggestion is an increase above the rate peg or no increase at all.

The results have been broken up into four (4) categories, full support for the proposal, support for a SRV but not for the particular proposal, support for an SRV, and full disapproval.

**Farmland:**

Full Approval	88	28.12%
Approval for SRV but not Council's proposal	44	14.06%
Approval for an SRV	132	42.18%
Full Disapproval	181	57.82%
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Residential:**

Full Approval	115	36.98%
Approval for SRV but not Council's proposal	30	9.64%
Approval for an SRV	145	46.62%
Full Disapproval	166	53.37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

It should be noted that due the margin of error of 5.5% (+/-) based on the sample size, the survey results are very close.

**Question 13a: If no SRV what services should be cut:**

The results of this question are self explanatory. However, it should be noted only 60% of survey respondents answered this question. This suggests that there were either 40% in favour of the service or apathetic to its existence. The most suggested services for cutting were the Events and Festivals, Tourism and the Village Libraries. However, it is suggested that these results are not conclusive.

The Deepwater, Emmaville and Red Range Landfill appear to be the most popular services of those identified to remain.

**Question 13b: Comments:**

The comments provided by respondents on the surveys are attached as Annexure G to the Business Paper exactly as they were received.



## **SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS FOR, AND THE EFFECT OF, THE SRV:**

The need for an SRV has been covered in detail in various Council documents, including the revised Long Term Financial Plan Discussion paper, the revised Delivery Program, and the revised Asset Management Plan (Transport). Please refer to Annexures H, I and J to the Business Paper. These documents were placed on public display for longer than the required period of twenty eight days. No submissions were received regarding the Asset Management Plan (Transport) or Delivery Program. Thirty five (35) submissions were received regarding the Long Term Financial Plan and the associated SRV. Information on the SRV was also included in business paper reports and commentary relating to these documents, as well as presentations to the Community.

For this reason only a brief summary of the need for a Special Rates Variation has been provided below. The two (2) main topics are Financial Sustainability and Asset Management; two (2) further relevant topics include LIRS funding and Internal Savings.

### **Financial Sustainability**

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework, as well as the TCORP and the Independent Review Panel reports, have come as a big shock to the majority of Councils in NSW, and have resulted in a realisation across the industry that Councils are in a poor and deteriorating position. This has further strengthened Council's focus on financial sustainability and good asset management practices.

Financial Sustainability is a complex topic and can be measured in a number of different ways. The main aim of the Glen Innes Severn LTFP is to address asset expenditure and to do so by achieving a balanced (or break even bottom line).

It is expected that the reviewed LTFP will accomplish this. As indicated in the November 2013 business paper, the benefits of Scenario 5 are significant:

*“This scenario indicates a stable cash position, a satisfactory operating position, and a balance between the general fund and the remaining funds, combined with an acceptable asset renewal ratio. This scenario will address a number of critical infrastructure projects which are of present concern.*

*This scenario is an improvement on earlier scenarios, in that it addresses all of the key concerns raised. It would be ideal to meet the required renewal ratio; however, this should be balanced with the additional benefit of bringing forward urgent works.*

*This scenario is suggested as the preferred and therefore recommended option.”*

The effect of the SRV is fully discussed in both the Long Term Financial Plan and the associated business paper report (November 2013). The primary focus of the Special Rate Variation is to address the financial sustainability of the Glen Innes Severn area and to spend more money on roads.

Scenario 5 provides a significantly improved situation in the longer term compared with the Base Case scenario.

## **Asset Management**

Infrastructure assets, in particular roads and bridges, are currently in a poor and deteriorating state. This has come about primarily from lack of funding but also as a result of a lack of a longer term focus on assets, in earlier years.

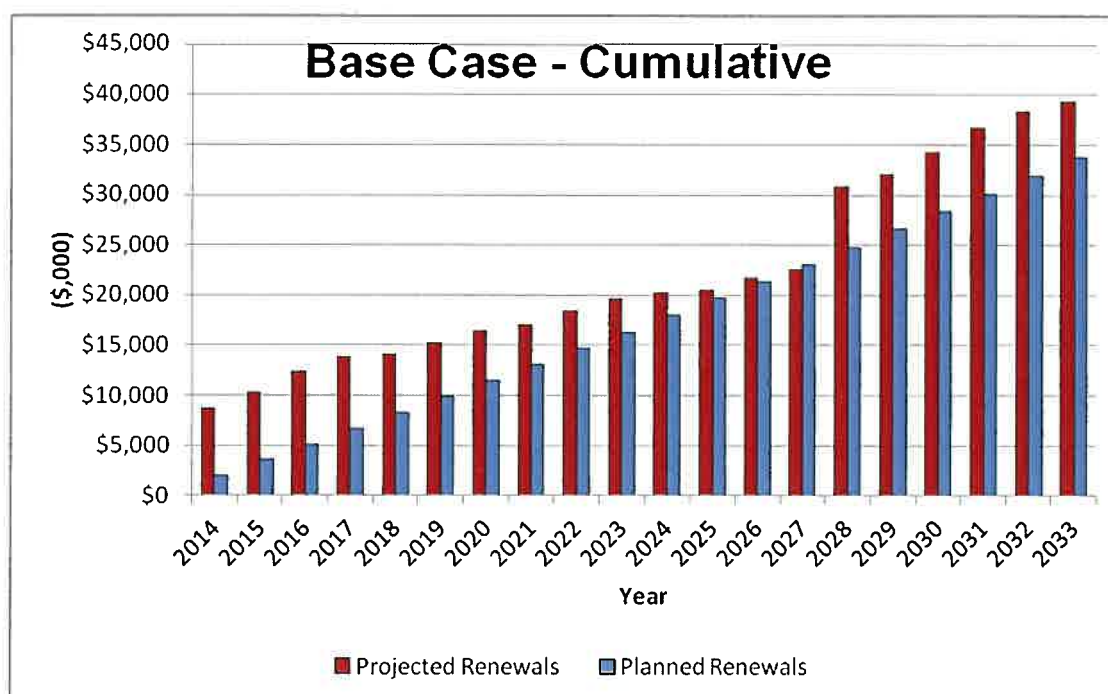
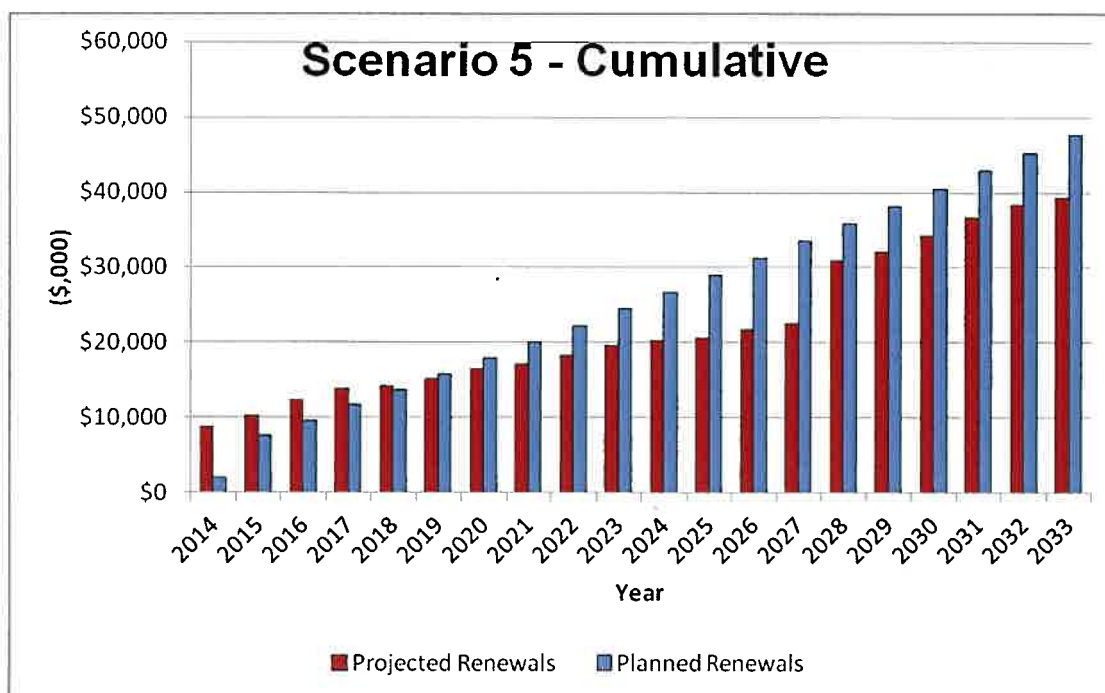
The historic budget for roads and bridges has been around \$1million up to \$1.5million, depending on grant funding. This is not sufficient to maintain the road asset base and therefore a backlog has developed.

The extent of the backlog is significant. At present, Council has approximately \$1.1 million in rebuilding costs for roads that are in condition five (5) which means if nothing is done within the next few years, the roads will become almost unserviceable. Council should also be spending around \$3.2 million on roads in condition four (4) that without significant renewal will deteriorate to condition five (5); in addition to this Council has a backlog of over \$4 million for roads in condition three (3), that without significant maintenance over the next few years will deteriorate to condition four (4).

Council has 128 road and pedestrian bridges and large culverts; from the recent inspections of these it has been advised that Council needs to spend in the order of \$4.5 million to \$4.7 million over the next ten (10) years. The inspection report also showed that 100 (of the 128) have been rated as requiring some type of work within the next year, and at least eight (8) of those need very significant rehabilitation or total replacement.

The SRV combined with the \$4 million LIRS loan is a long term strategy to address the deteriorating condition of Council's assets. The loan will enable Council to bring forward and address the majority of bridge problems. Therefore, based on the estimates, Council will only be left with a bridge backlog in the order of \$500,000 to \$700,000. The additional funding will also enable Council to repair and renew anywhere from an additional 10 to 30 road segments every year. By 2019, Council will be starting to address the road backlog, which means that the overall deterioration of roads will be slowed down, and in ten (10) years time the backlog will be starting to diminish.

The two (2) graphs below display a clear picture. The base case results in a deteriorating position where projected renewals (required renewals) outstrip planned renewals (actual renewals). Scenario 5 indicates that the opposite is true and Council will start to deal with the backlog.



- TCORP has proven that bringing forward capital works is more cost effective than maintaining assets in a poor condition. For this reason TCORP is encouraging councils to borrow under the LIRS scheme. TCORP will do an independent assessment confirming that Council can afford to borrow this additional money;
- Completing a number of bridge projects in one (1) year will allow Council to obtain better value for money (through more competitive tendering);

- Council will also apply for grant funding that assists in addressing the infrastructure backlog (for example the recently announced bridge programme); and,
- The increased funding will improve the regularity of resealing from 18 years to 12 years.

### **LIRS Funding**

Scenario 5 in the LTFP – Discussion Paper includes borrowing \$4 million under this scheme; this money is proposed to be spent on bridges. Council is concerned about the state of its timber bridges in particular.

Council has made this proposal for the following reasons:

- Bridges are vital links for communities. Council has had to defer bridge works in the past because of the high costs involved;
- The expected interest rate (2%) is lower than Council's current return on Investments (approximately 3.7%);
- Council has access to historically low interest rates, fixed over ten (10) years;
- The cost of constructing bridges is increasing at about 5% per annum; therefore bringing work forward results in savings;
- Bringing forward more works is likely to result in Council receiving more competitive tenders as the work is of a significant scale;
- The cost of this subsidised debt funding is lower than maintaining a deteriorating asset; and
- Council has not made this suggestion lightly. It is a sound financial decision and Council will be able to make repayments on this loan. If approved, the money will be spent on renewing / replacing bridges of concern.

Council has reviewed the LTFP and concluded that the loan is affordable. The Treasury Corporation will independently verify this before Council's application is approved. However, to ensure that Council can repay the loan within the required ten (10) year period, Council will use some of the funds from the Special Rates Variation to repay the loan and interest. The loan will allow Council to move forward \$4 million of works, at an expected interest rate of around 2%.

### **Internal Savings**

Council has set itself the goal of saving in the order of \$650,000 each year by implementing and pursuing the following initiatives:

<b>Internal Savings</b>	<b>\$</b>
Sale of properties not necessary for operational purposes:	Approximate Amounts
Tindale Units	18,000
Highwoods	20,000
Garden Court	25,000
Potters Parade Land	11,000
Abbott Street Land	25,000
AAFT Airport	200,000

Stricter Controls in Overtime and Time in Lieu	65,000
Non-replacement of staff on leave	50,000
Reduction in "Acting in Higher Grades"	24,000
Cutting 10 vehicles from light fleet	50,000
Shutting down of Freezer Rooms	20,000
Procurement Savings through new contracts	90,000
	<b>598,000</b>

There is more work to be done; further savings of \$50,000 to \$60,000 per year need to be identified.

### **DISCUSSION REGARDING ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS ON BREAKDOWN OF SRV INCREASE:**

The revised Long Term Financial Plan included five (5) scenarios as follows:

- Scenario 1 –** Base Case Scenario;
- Scenario 2 –** Implementation of a Special Rate Variation for three (3) years;
- Scenario 3 –** Special Rates Variation and Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) Loan;
- Scenario 4 –** Special Rates Variation and Unsubsidised Loan;
- Scenario 5 –** Special Rates Variation and Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) Loan and Reduced Capital Expenditure.

At the November 2013 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council carried Resolution 9.11/13 2, which in principle adopted Scenario 5 of the Long Term Financial Plan as its preferred option for consultation with the Community.

Scenario 5 included a suggested breakdown of the rate increase, based on the apparent variance between the Farmland rating regional average and the Glen Innes Severn LGA farmland rating. The suggested variation based on this 'average based' comparison resulted in Council proposing to increase Farmland rates more than the increase suggested for the Residential rate (10% increase above the rate peg over three (3) years for Farmland compared with a 10% increase above the rate peg for one (1) year for Residential rates).

At both forums held at Glencoe (20 January) and Red Range (21 January) it was argued Council had been inequitable in its application of the distribution. . At that point in time, the Mayor, in terms of Section 226 of the *Local Government Act*, exercised the policy-making function of the governing body in-between meetings of Council and requested that the General Manager prepare another distribution under Scenario 5, where the burden of additional rate revenue is spread differently from the original proposal. The request was with specific emphasis on alleviating some of the burden of Farmland ratepayers and spreading this to Residential rate payers. The net effect of this was to transfer five percent (5%) of the farmland increase in year three (3) to residential ratepayers in year two (2).

The impact on revenue and the increase in rates is indicated below. Option one (1) was the original proposal, while Option Two (2) is the amended secondary proposal.

### Option 1: Special Rate Variation (Original Proposal)

Rates category	YEAR					
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Residential (RATE PEG) (Average)	545.63	565.27	584.49	597.93	618.26	639.28
Special Rate Variation	545.63	565.27	584.49	656.38	678.70	701.78
Variance	-	-	-	58.45	60.44	62.49
% Increase				10.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Rate Peg %		3.6%	3.4%	2.30%	3.40%	3.40%
Compounding Increase				12.30%	16.12%	20.07%
Assessments	3,636	3,636	3,636	3,636	3,636	3,636
Revenue Raised	-	-	-	212,520.56	219,746.26	227,217.64
Farmland (RATE PEG) (Average)	1,875.85	1,943.38	2,009.45	2,055.67	2,125.56	2,197.83
Special Rate Variation	1,875.85	1,943.38	2,009.45	2,256.61	2,559.00	2,901.90
Variance	-	-	-	200.95	433.44	704.08
% Increase				10.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Rate Peg %		3.6%	3.4%	2.30%	3.40%	3.40%
Compounding Increase				12.30%	27.35%	44.41%
Assessments	1,016	1,016	1,016	1,016	1,016	1,016
Revenue Raised	-	-	-	204,160.12	440,373.38	715,340.31
TOTAL ADDITIONAL REVENUE PROPOSED				416,680.68	660,119.64	942,557.95

## Option 2: Special Rate Variation (Further Proposal)

Rates category	YEAR					
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Residential (RATE PEG) (Average)	545.63	565.27	584.49	597.93	618.26	639.28
Special Rate Variation	545.63	565.27	584.49	656.38	711.52	735.71
Variance	-	-	-	58.45	93.26	96.43
% Increase				10.00%	5.00%	0.00%
Rate Peg %		3.6%	3.4%	2.30%	3.40%	3.40%
Compounding Increase				12.30%	21.73%	25.87%
Assessments	3,636	3,636	3,636	3,636	3,636	3,636
Revenue Raised	-	-	-	212,520.56	339,076.56	350,605.16
Farmland (RATE PEG) (Average)	1,875.85	1,943.38	2,009.45	2,055.67	2,125.56	2,197.83
Special Rate Variation	1,875.85	1,943.38	2,009.45	2,256.61	2,559.00	2,773.95
Variance	-	-	-	200.95	433.44	576.13
% Increase				10.00%	10.00%	5.00%
Rate Peg %		3.6%	3.4%	2.30%	3.40%	3.40%
Compounding Increase				12.30%	27.35%	38.05%
Assessments	1,016	1,016	1,016	1,016	1,016	1,016
Revenue Raised	-	-	-	204,160.12	440,373.38	585,343.19
TOTAL ADDITIONAL REVENUE PROPOSED				416,680.68	779,449.94	935,948.36



The impact on total revenue raised is immaterial. Therefore the primary consideration must be the imposition on ratepayers and the equity associated with this new proposal.

**Farmland Rates and the Regional Average:**

As mentioned above, the original proposal was on the basis of a comparison of Farmland and Residential rates against what could be considered the Regional average.

A further comparison made on the ad-valorem and base amount method (farmland only) has provided a similar result, suggesting that indeed there is a variation between the GISC farmland average and the regional average.

A summary of the two (2) methods indicates the following (please note that the latest DLG figures (2011/12) were used in respect of the original comparison):

Method of Calculating variance	GISC Farmland Rate	Regional Average Farmland Rate	Variance per Assessment	No. of Assessments	Total Variance
Average Rates method (original method) (2011/12)	1,875.85	2,599.15	723.30	1,016	734,872.80
Ad-valorem + base amount method (2013/14)	2,057.89	2,920.48	862.59	1,016	876,391.44

When making the comparison please review the actual calculation sheets; different years are used and not all of the Councils were included in the Average Rates method. It is not expected that this would materially impact the outcome.

It is recommended that Council considers both options. However, given the feedback provided in all subsequent community consultation forums it is recommended that Council considers option two (2) as the preferred scenario. It is further recommended that Council considers the impact per ratepayer, effectively the dollar increase per person. The impact on the increase per person by imposing the increase on residential ratepayers is spread and therefore, in respect of equity and ability to pay, this is likely to be easier to bear.

**Ability to pay as indicated by outstanding accounts/ unpaid amounts:**

In regard to ability to pay, the January 2014 rates report shows the overdue percentage for each rating category (as a proportion of rates raised for each category for this financial year):

Residential	\$243,078.47	4.11 %
Business	\$ 42,418.22	4.33 %
Farmland	\$ 34,477.74	1.53 %
Mining	\$ 12,623.96	96.75 %
Non-Rateable	\$ 19,456.72	12.14 %

It is clear that the Farmland rating category is lower than all other categories for unpaid amounts. However, in general, it should be noted that the total overdue amount is now lower than in earlier years, with the 2013/14 result of 3.82% being significantly lower than the June 2007 result of 12.50% (which was even higher in earlier years).

Council has a policy provision for agreements to pay by arrangement (Council's Debt Recovery policy). In fact, of the outstanding amounts identified above, a significant portion is on payment arrangements. Furthermore, there are currently 158 ratepayers who have entered into arrangements for the payment of their accounts, totaling \$220,754.34.

Based on the information above, it is recommended that Scenario 5 of the LTFP combined with Option 2 (the option identified above) would provide the most appropriate and equitable spread of the rate increase.

**(a) Governance/Policy Implications**

Nil.

**(b) Legal Implications**

Nil.

**(c) Social Implications**

The ability for the community to pay for a Special Rates Variation should be considered. It is expected that option 2 will provide farmers with limited relief in respect of the rate increase.

**(d) Environmental Implications**

Nil.

**(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications**

The asset management implications combined with the Community's ability to pay are key concerns. The need for additional revenue to maintain Council's infrastructure is evident. The implications of the additional funding have been identified in the reviewed Asset Management Plan (Transport), and are significant. In fact, this SRV provides Council with the opportunity to start to address the now infamous infrastructure backlog.

**CONCLUSION**

Council has provided a number of different community consultation methods by which to communicate the need and extent of a rate variation to the Community. Further, based on the range and extent of consultation methods, it is suggested that Council is in a reasonable position to be able to understand the 'feeling' and concerns of the Community.

The arguments both for and against have been re-iterated on a number of occasions, and in large part have come down, to what appears to be a grudging understanding for the need of a special rates variation, to address the infrastructure backlog.

It is therefore recommended that Council seriously consider the feedback provided: the state of Council's infrastructure, the ability of ratepayers to pay the increase, and most importantly the impact the variation is expected to have on Council's infrastructure backlog. Once these items have been properly considered, it is suggested that there is only one correct course of action left for a progressive Council, and that is to approve the application for a special rate variation to IPART.

If a special rate variation is not approved Council will find itself in a position where the backlog continues to grow, and the quality of the average assets will deteriorate (as is already evident); the Asset Management Plans also identify this trend. This will result in all but two (2) of Council's financial ratios and all of Council's infrastructure ratios falling below the Treasury Corporation of New South Wales (TCORP) benchmarks. This will mean that Council will not be financially sustainable into the future and it will therefore have to identify services to be cut, and/or identify areas to reduce current service levels provided.

**COMMENTARY: GENERAL MANAGER**

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the DCCS and MF for this report and all the work that had been done leading up to this report. Further, I would like to thank the Mayor for chairing and the Councillors for attending the community consultation meetings – under difficult circumstances. I think that it would be fair to say that it was not fun for any Council official involved.

It is indeed challenging to explain the complexities of Council's operations and the functions that we are responsible for to people who have never been exposed to the intricacies of a local government entity.

Council finds itself proverbially between a rock and a hard place. However, the time has come to act, and to address Council's infrastructure backlog and associated long term financial sustainability, primarily brought about by 36 years of rate pegging. The only option open to Council to fully address this dilemma, is to apply for a Special Rate Variation through IPART.

I provide my sincere apology to all farmland ratepayers for having to make this recommendation for a significant rate rise to Council during a period of drought; I understand that the timing is terrible. Unfortunately, the longer term outlook for Council is also terrible. As a community, we need to achieve a position where we can adequately renew and maintain our local road infrastructure and other assets. There will probably never be an ideal time to implement something like a Special Rate Variation.

It will be prudent for Council to review its Debt Recovery Policy at this time, especially against the background of the current harsh natural conditions.

Understanding that it is an exceptionally hard decision for Council to make, I recommend for Council to adopt the recommendation as printed below. With the knowledge that Council has gained over the last few years as a result of improved asset management plans and long term financial plans and indicators, it would constitute a responsible resolution. It should not be viewed as in the best interest of

Council; it is in the best longer term interest of the whole community that we as Council officials serve.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. *That Council notes the information in the body of this report, in conjunction with Annexures A to J, and in particular the extent and results of the community consultation involved with this process.*
2. *That Council notes the information received in the submissions attached as Annexure D and where sufficient information is available for a response that Council responds with a posted letter of thanks to the submitters, advising that this report is available for their perusal on Council's website.*
3. *That Council notes the extent of the community consultation process and acknowledge that the consultation was sufficient for Council to make an informed decision regarding the community's knowledge of the extent and need for a Special Rate Variation.*
4. *That Council adopts the proposed Asset Management Plan (Transport) after the required time on public display, as the revised Asset Management Plan (Transport).*
5. *That Council adopts the proposed Delivery Program after the required time on public display, as the revised Delivery Program.*
6. *That Council adopts Scenario 5 of the Long Term Financial Plan, after the required time on public display, as the revised Long Term Financial Plan.*
7. *That Council adopts 'Option 2', as identified above, for the Special Rate Variation distribution above the rate pegging in the application to IPART, being:*

Category	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Rate Peg	2.3%	3.4%	3.4%
Residential Rates	10%	5%	0%
Farmland Rates	10%	10%	5%

8. *That Council adopts the increase identified in paragraph 7 above as a multiyear and permanent increase under section 508(A) of the Local Government Act for both the Farmland and Residential Rates. The increase identified in paragraph 7 above including the rate peg will result in a total increase in permissible general income of 11.21% in 2014/15, 10.02% in 2015/16 and 5.59% in 2016/17.*
9. *That Council requests the General Manager to prepare and submit an application to IPART by 24 February 2014 detailing the results in this report, and the associated information that has come to light during the Community Consultation period.*
10. *That Council requests the Director of Corporate and Community Services to review Council's existing Debt Recovery Policy to ensure that the impact of the SRV is mitigated as far as reasonably possible for those ratepayers who are experiencing genuine hardship.*

***11. That, in the event that the application to IPART referred to in paragraphs 7 to 9 above is unsuccessful, the Director of Corporate and Community Services be requested to prepare a further report to Council.***

# **Annexure D**

***Glen Innes Severn Council***

***Extraordinary Meeting***

***20 FEBRUARY 2014***

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**Sent:** Monday, 20 January 2014 12:27:16 PM

**To:** Council Email

**Subject:** Council's Application for a Special Rates Variation Publication

Thank -you for such an informative publication. It was interesting reading and I hope all the recipients take the time to at least peruse it.

However there was one area that I think had an omission that could distort results.

Point 1. of the survey needs to include a column that allows the marking of "Maintain this service".

Based on 20 years of working in Market research, both formulating and writing surveys and in administering them, it is apparent that a better overall result is obtained if the respondent is encouraged to mark all areas, even if it is to maintain the status quo.

I hope this small, but I feel important, comment is helpful.

Yours, \_\_\_\_\_



**From:**

**Sent:** Friday, 31 January 2014 8:08:26 AM

**To:** Council Email

**Subject:** rates

Hi

I say NO to the rate rise and YES to productivity.

You have so many people in your offices and on the admin side, actually probably too many save some money there.

Don't put the onus back on us you are why the council is in the dire straights it is.

I haven't seen any councillors forgo their wage to help the situation!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Stop the jobs for the mates and family members. That includes contracts excetra.

I believe all the councillors and council beurocrates need sacking and new blood brought in. That includes the administration staff.

Thanks for nothing

A angry rate payer

From:  
Sent: Tuesday, 28 January 2014 2:41:30 PM  
To: Council Email  
Subject:

I say NO to rate rise & yes to productivity!

sent from my iPhone

From:  
Sent: Thursday, 30 January 2014 12:47:16 PM  
To: Council Email  
Subject: rates

" I say NO to the rate rise and YES to productivity".

**From:** ...  
**Sent:** Friday, 31 January 2014 11:12:06 AM  
**To:** Council Email  
**Subject:** Rates Rise

I say NO to the rate rise and YES to productivity"

**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 31 January 2014 1:12:26 PM  
**To:** Council Email  
**Subject:** Fw: Rate Rise

**From:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sent:** Friday, January 31, 2014 1:11 PM  
**To:** [council@gisc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@gisc.nsw.gov.au)  
**Subject:** Rate Rise

I say NO to the rate rise and YES to productivity.

**From:** ~  
**Sent:** Saturday, 1 February 2014 4:27:26 PM  
**To:** Council Email  
**Subject:** Rate rise

I say NO to the rate rise and YES to productivity .

**From:** :  
**Sent:** Friday, 7 February 2014 10:29:21 PM  
**To:** Council Email  
**Subject:** SRV Submission

Dear Council

I hope that you will consider all submissions sent on the 7th of February

Please consider the following points

- Defer the main street works and invest this money into the infrastructure works that must be completed, we already have a functioning main street, the same can not be said about many items of rural infrastructure. Where is the \$\$ best spent – I would suggest not in the main street!
- SRV post drought – I was prepared for this drought holding 55 t grain and 150 T silage, I have spent \$25000 on fodder (on top of my drought preparedness) and will need to spend much more to get through this winter, please hold off any extra rates increases until post drought – use the main street funds instead.
- Less talk of “cutting services” and more discussion of efficiency and productivity.
- In relation to landfills I hope GISC is recovering their share of the drum muster levy – if not why not?
- Please consider increasing business rates as well – why should they miss out.
- Don't just compare GISC with the other councils in the area, look to be a leading council / business manager and achieve results in a cost effective and timely manner, be a leader not just “average”.
- Well done with the cost cutting measures so far, make it a goal to keep up the good work with further financial savings, efficiencies and productivity gains each and every year.
- Consider other cars / vehicles that may be removed from councils books (this may only be able to happen on the retirement of a staff member or appointment of a new one) – do not provide a car unless it is absolutely necessary for the staff member to do his or her job, let them use a car from the car pool. Look at other bonuses that are provided outside the award and assess if they are necessary.
- Look for productivity gains in every department – some sort of incentive system may be worth considering, ask the staff where savings, efficiencies and productivity gains can be made. Who knows they may be able to provide insight into your business that management may have overlooked.

I was disappointed with the brochure sent out (we received 5 copies). Question 13 asks us to identify which services should be cut – with a smaller number of rural and village people these results will be skewed in relation to what the townsfolk want. They may not care about Deepwater landfill, public halls and village libraries (I notice that the town library was not included!). If a vote was put I think you would find that more cuts to council internal spending (like the ones already made) would be the first point to save funds.

Please call me to discuss any of these points further.

Yours sincerely



- I LIKE THE MAIN STREET AS IT IS + THE FOOTPATHS ARE FINE! THEY ARE ONLY FOOTPATHS.
- A LOT OF FARMERS HAVE MORE THAN 1 ASSESSMENT SO PAY WAY HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE + PROBABLY PAY THE WASTE CHARGE + BASE RATE NUMEROUS TIMES.
- RATES HAVE INCREASED OVER THE PAST FOR LESS SERVICES + DETERIORATION OF ROADS.
- USE SOME CASH RESERVES TO FUND + MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE, IF IT IS CURRENTLY \$14 MILLION!
- CHARGE THE FLIGHT SCHOOL FOR THE USE OF THE AIRPORT OR BETTER STILL TELL THEM TO GET LOST! THE LAND AROUND THE AIRPORT MUST BE WORTH NEXT TO NOTHING SO ALL RATEPAYERS WILL BE LOOKING FOR LOWER RATES IF THEY ARE WITHIN 5 KM OF THE AIRPORT?!

- DONT COMPARE US WITH ANY AVERAGES, REGIONAL OR OTHERWISE, MAKE OUR MONEY WORK BETTER PLEASE
- THE RATIO TABLE ON PAGE 5 INDICATES SUCH SLIGHT IMPROVEMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOGS + RENEWALS WE WOULD STILL BE BELOW THE BENCHMARK
- QUERY THE GENERAL MANAGERS ADMINISTRATION SKILLS?
- FARMLAND + SOME RESIDENTIAL RATEPAYERS MAY WANT TO APPLY FOR A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION THEMSELVES, BASED ON SERVICES PROVIDED + VALUE FOR MONEY. I WONDER WHICH SCENARIO THAT WOULD BE?
- ONLY APPLY FOR THE SPECIAL RATE VARIATION FOR 1 YEAR + SEE HOW THAT GOES FIRST

• THERE IS NO CAP ON OTHER  
COMPONANTS OF THE TOTAL RATES  
PAID SO THE ACTUAL AMOUNT  
THE COUNCIL GETS SHOULD BE  
WHAT IT USES. WE CANT  
COMPARE THAT TO OTHER AVERAGES  
RESIDENTIAL RATES ARE MUCH  
HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE SHOWN  
ON PAGE 8 GOING ON WHAT  
I HAVE HEARD

• MAYBE GLEN INDUSTRIES WOULD  
BE INTERESTED IN SOME MOWING  
& MAINTAINANCE OF SOME  
PARKLAND OR CEMETRIES.

• THE OFFICE STAFF ARE  
VERY HELPFUL.

GOOD LUCK

23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2014

Attention: Mr Hein Basson  
General Manager,  
Glen Innes Severn Council  
Glen Innes NSW 2370

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
24 JAN 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

Dear Hein,

I am writing to express my concerns after attending the meeting at Deepwater on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2014 in regard to the proposed rate increases and proposal of a loan to be taken out from the Glen Innes Severn Council.

I personally do not support the rate increases of 10% or the rate pegging of 2.3% or the proposal of the loan.

As an accountant and business owner I think this is not a good economic decision after hearing the cases of "for" by the council attendees. I see this as having a detrimental effect in the future on the ratepayers of the district.

Also, I see this as a short term fix and not a sustainable decision.

The rates are supposed to cover the services like the pool and mowing of the park in Deepwater, and should not be reduced or cut, simply because council needs more money. Council actually has an obligation to provide these services otherwise they should be reducing the rates not increasing them.

I suggest you look closely at the internal costs of the council, like admin staff numbers and ways in which you could reduce these internal costs.

Best Regards

GLEN INNES COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
04 FEB 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

Sunday 2-2-2014.

To the Glen Innes Shire Council.

We the undersigned object to the Special Rates Variation

We support the comments made by Jason de Jong, Hendrick de Jong and J.F. Kennedy in the letters they sent to the Glen Innes Examiner.

The reasons for our objection are as follows.

1. The rural community's present and future is very dismal, economically speaking. We cannot ask for any increase in our 'funding' and our overheads are also rising at an alarming rate.

2. Farmland rates 2011/12 - Glen Innes Shire with exception to Kyogle are the lowest. Has that maybe something to do with land valuations? <sup>it</sup> Do<sub>2</sub> is not really an issue.

Suggestions on cost reduction for the Shire.

1. Environmental Management - various needs etc. Transfer this to the LLS. It's <sup>an</sup> absolute role for the Shire and the rural sector already pays rates to the LLS.

2. Events and Festivals. A reduction in overhead is manageable especially regarding the Celtic Festival - who needs overseas' talent or dignitaries.

3. a). Reduce Council's "bright ideas" which invents and brings on expensive feasibility studies, more public consultation and/or expensive brochures eg. Relocation of the Town Centre to the existing bus terminal/stop and the Town Hall transformation

b). Grey Street & its buildings are a Rural Heritage why change it to something it is not. consider the extra expense. - and you be surprised how many tourists admire it and take photos as it is.

c) Again Grey Street - fine - for the electricity cables etc and lights, clean up the footpaths but we do not need a reduction in parking space numbers or size to make way for trees. and their resulting root damage. Mead Street is an example of what can go wrong. Same as what will happen to Church Street & the Lipidambers.

Deers from the Park already make a mess in Grey St why add more.

In conclusion, we suggest that the council adopt the same principles that business owners and farmers adopt. One distributes one's income to the sectors most in need at a given time. Parks and Gardens, and Economic Affairs are not "in need"; Roads and Bridges are.  
So redistribute your income.



Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2013

Glen Innes Severn Council,  
P O Box 61  
GLEN INNES

Re : Attached Survey

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
10 FEB 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

My comments to the attached survey are to be read with this survey.

Note 1. Parks and Gardens – reduction in this area could be made – in particular the highway gardens could be removed to benefit the town. They restrict peoples vision and are totally unnecessary. I believe Glen Innes has lost heaps of tourist dollars because the Visitor Information Centre cannot even be seen if you are driving from the north to south. People shouldn't be looking at plants – there should be signs saying Friendly Main Street Shopping, Local Event happening etc. Beardies Woodlands is another area I had never visited until the other day and I am shocked that this even exists. Certainly not a good place for tourists to pull up. If a Service Club/Clubs can't be persuaded to take it over – close it.

Note 2. I did a small sampling of our customers/staff regarding the library – I note you only included village libraries in your service listing. Generally, people older than myself said they loved the library but younger people rarely visited, wouldn't consider it, just downloaded books from the net etc. Therefore, I believe that a reduction of library services across ALL the libraries should be made unless some new method of distributing books is quickly introduced. I would never buy another paper book.

Note 3 & 4. I very rarely travel on roads outside the highway's in Glen Innes so am unable to comment on this. However, you should have an engineer or similar person that can report on this to you accurately.

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Note 5. Again, I am not an engineer and could not comment on the condition of the bridges.

Note 6. Reduction in ALL library services unless you can statistically prove that younger people will continue to use them. I would exempt baby learn to read from this statistic as this could be delivered anywhere even using E readers for this. (\$615,00 is a lot of E-readers to bring the community into the future)

Note 7 & 8. Tourism is an important part of our community. However, at \$774,00 for Economic Affairs I feel this section could be reduced by tendering for the delivery of this service. Most of the festivals and events supported by the council seem to have little impact on the community and never seem to become self-sufficient or income generating.

Note 9. I support the Option 2 Further Proposal. However, an even more equitable scenario by including business rating may have shared the load further. I am not sure if this was considered.

For your information I am enclosing a copy of "Mayor Tom Tate's 20-second survey" I note from this:-

- Not high gloss paper
- Quick and easy to fill in
- A "What can be done better" section (after the town hall meeting this is a quick way to find out this before it becomes a community rumour/issue) i.e. Is it true that the Jet-Patcher is hidden behind the workshop buildings so people think it is out and about? Also, with this rumour, that the instructions are to fill pot hot A, B & C in different areas and leave anything you may go over?
- Contact details, so you know that a real person is commenting
- Website availability for "having your say" and Facebook

I feel in some ways your survey failed to give options (i.e. I made a maintain this service column) and failed to gain information for the council that could be valuable. (which roads cause most people grief rather than what is the condition of all roads) The multiple delivery and high gloss colour certainly did the council no favours with the ratepayers!

Whatever the council's decision is, I feel everyone has had the opportunity to comment and trust that the decision made will consider all options

Regards

# Mayor Tom Tate's 20-second survey

Keeping my promises and representing your views is my number one priority.  
Please let me know how I can deliver the services you expect at a price ratepayers can afford.

Answer the questions below and return this completed survey form by mail (free of charge).

## How are we going?

- |                           |                                |                                   |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Roads are better          | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| Suburbs are safer         | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| There are more local jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| We're proud of our city   | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| The future is bright      | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |

## Help keep a lid on rates – what can be done better?

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## Contact details

Complete your details so your voice is heard!

Name

Address

Email

Age ☐ 18-35 ☐ 36-55 ☐ 55+

Get involved in the City of  
Gold Coast's decision making  
and 'have your say' on the  
future of our city.

Register at [gchaveyoursay.com.au](http://gchaveyoursay.com.au)

[facebook.com/MayorTomTate](https://facebook.com/MayorTomTate)



Tape securely before sending

All these small villages can be serviced from Glen Innes  
festivals every 4 years as they are just the bands and things  
over and over. The swim centre is the only place for young and  
old to get together and I think that is very important.  
And what happened to your tree child centre there  
is some body in council who cannot run a business and  
Please don't blame the staff. I think you all should take a good  
look at how much it takes to run one business, I think you  
should put money into these positions not have have 3 or 4  
people telling them what to do. People who have run a  
business and know what they are doing - it is very clear.

[REDACTED]

with the tree child care centre  
and the threat to close the swim  
centre what does that tell us.

I also say we do not need 7  
other councillors I believe that would  
save about 70,000 plus you Mayor  
General Manager, you are on Council  
you should not need uneducated  
people to help you run our town  
and keep you honest, so please look  
at the big picture.

May I ask when water restrictions  
are on is there one rule for locals  
or another for Councillors wives

I believe the time is between 6-7pm  
how come the wife of one is watering  
at 8pm.

(No Bone sign out front)

From:  
Sent: Monday, 10 February 2014 9:59:00 PM  
To: Council Email  
Subject: Proposed rate increase

A message to Glen Innes Councillors,

We attended the meeting held at Glen Innes Town Hall regarding the proposed rate increase and found it to be one of the most disorganised and frustrating meetings we have ever been to. There was no chairman, no roving microphone and no time limits for speakers.

Regardless, the overwhelming opinion of ratepayers was NO RATE INCREASE.

Our Councillors need to realise they have been elected by Glen Innes residents to act in the majority interest and not to impose their own views.

Despite the much advertised average rates paid by other ratepayers in other districts surely it is obvious that farmland rates are already high in relation to services provided. As some speakers noted - what do I receive for \$8000 rates currently? why do we pay 4 times the rates as someone living in town despite the fact that we receive far less services?? These rates are set to increase by 43% on average so obviously some will increase even more. This fact hasn't been made clear.

Glen Innes farmland ratepayers are currently enduring an unprecedented drought and I think it disgraceful for Council to entertain this proposal for many reasons, not least being the financial trauma that will linger for several years even after the drought breaks. You would also have to consider that the workload facing farmers at the moment would inhibit their ability to attend meetings and draft submissions.

There are many instances of Council decisions that defy logic but one is the airport proponents only obligated to pay \$14000 in rates for 600 people living at the airport. These people will have access to numerous services such as water, sewerage and waste management. We will potentially be paying \$12000 for one residence with 3 occupants and no access to any of these services. Surely the inequity of this is obvious to anyone.

Council does not have a mandate to apply for this rate increase and should not presume that it does.

Regards,

Glen Innes Council

Proposed rate variation

I oppose the proposed rate variation based on percentage. A fixed levy that all residents pay equally would be more reasonable.

The ad velorem content of the rates is very unfair. The land valuation system is arbitrary, and bears little relation to reality. It means that some people have to pay anything up to 10 times what others pay, yet the use of Council services may be the same or less. The land valuation can increase by 100% or more between valuations for no obvious reason, and is not even comparable amongst close neighbors. There are very few grounds for objection to the valuation, and relativity to nearby properties is not allowable as grounds for objection, or indeed the purchase price. Most objections are dismissed. I have had a valuation dated within 2 weeks of my purchase that was 3 times what I actually paid (on the open market), yet had my objection dismissed.

The land valuation does not even relate to ability to pay. A person with a million dollar house may pay much less than someone living in a fibro shack, because of the arbitrary nature of valuation.

I find that my residential rate is nearly double the average, yet I live in a poorer section of town, among old flats and houses.

I would be more comfortable of the rate increase if it were made as a fixed amount for all residents, as is done with sewerage, water and garbage. If the Council would move away from land value rates and instead have uniform rates for all, and more fee for service systems for facilities used, then I would be more supportive of a rate rise.

I urge Council to make any increase a levy of a set amount, rather than a percentage, which keeps increasing the inequity between residents.

Thank you for offering the opportunity to comment.

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
10 FEB 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

Re beautification of MAIN ST. (Grey St)

1 No one (except you) want trees, mall less parking (or narrowed) or money spent unnecessarily. JUST LOOK AFTER

WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE.

2 Keep the footpaths clean - a good dose of Demestras might be the answer. Delve into your archives and see what past residents have contributed to our town eg. Lynch Oval, Baths, sporting fields, library, Tafe...etc. This is a legacy bequeathed to you. Treat it with the respect it deserves and keep it maintained.

3 Town Hall rent needs to be minimum so more community events could utilize it.

4 Last but not least

I'm happy to read black & white bulletins - glossy ones are a great waste of money and please look after what we already have.

Thank you

Sincerely

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
10 FEB-2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS / DIS / PA(DIS) / PM(LBD)

attached to SRV Survey

**From:** Thursday, 6 February 2014 6:43 AM  
**Sent:** Council Email  
**To:** submission regarding special rate variation  
**Subject:**

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL

Received by Records

06 FEB 2014

FOR ACTION: MF  
FOR INFORMATION: D.C.C.S.

Submission to Council regarding a Special Rate Variation

We have a young family and live on a farm. We use all the facilities in the town including the pool, parks, schools, sporting fields and library. We access these facilities via rural roads. We spend a most of our income within the Glen Innes community.

All the community benefits from wealth created on the local farms whether or not they use a particular road or bridge. That service road to farms delivers produce to markets which in turn benefits the town as the wealth generated is generally spent locally.

As such the contribution to maintenance of these rural roads should be distributed across the whole community.

As the current proposal targets farmers we feel it is discriminatory against a minority group in the community which produces the majority of the wealth for this community.

We strongly oppose this discrimination.

Servicing the rural sector is why this town was built.

Unfortunately, over time agriculture has declined and the town now derives more of its income from government grants, welfare and government employment. The farming sector is not the cash cow it once was.

Some multiple ratepayers may not be in as sound financial position as their rates notice may suggest as they carry a greater burden of debt (to increase efficiency) compared to the general community.

Farmers have had to amalgamate properties to remain viable. Farmers have also realised a significant drop in land values over the past 3 years further compounding their equity problem.

Council is not a business and should not be running a business.

Council is a service provider. Swimming pools, parks, public toilets and libraries can't make profits.

If the council has to cut costs in an effort to remain financially sound, then we would support :-

Divesting itself of loss making business enterprises and property, and centralising and/or amalgamating services as the most effective solution.



Maintaining one central pool, library, tip and tourism event would enable more resources for that entity and save money.

Combining services under one management group will reduce the unrealistic management fees.

Holding large amounts of cash in the bank as depreciation costs, while making the accounts look good, deprives the council of valuable resources for maintenance.

Planning for the future of the community should focus on maintaining the services that will attract new residents and stop the exodus of young families.

The ability of a community to attract wealth from outside our local economy is essential for growth.

We support a 10% increase per year for 2 years including rate pegging for all ratepayers. This would return approximately the same revenue without disadvantaging any one group.

In the future we would like to see councils apply to the state for permission to apply a poll tax on residents, as some landholders pay multiple rates but are only one service user whilst others in the community pay no rates and use the same services.

That would be equity in cost recovery, as each user pays their share.



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This email is free from viruses and malware because avast! Antivirus protection is active.

attachment #1

I suggest a review of the traffic (or visits) made to the library, visitor information centres, sporting fields and the lake and maybe service them in high usage times. Also you may have to introduce a new pay set up.

We don't use any of these facilities and feel it unfair to have to subsidise them.

We feel our rates are already too expensive, and feel we receive very little for the expense

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
03 FEB 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DECS

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
11 FEB 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2014

The Editor

We all have to live within our means, why should the Council be any different. If we were trying to budget

- We would not send several, shiny brochures to the one address, in separate envelopes
- We would not have the brochure prepared by some professional who can change the figures around to suit any situation
- What business could raise their prices in order to cover a \$4million loan before it has even been approved.
- Council purchased a very profitable business, ie The Quarry, (In which they have already needed an additional \$1million to help supplement their expenses) in order to increase our water supply. What good did that do, we now have water restrictions.
- We would not send 2 letters per month, one invoice, one receipt. Why cant you save on postage, stationery and wages and send one like any other business.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully

Like Council people on Pensions have a limited budget & if Rates rise we will struggle to make ends meet.

Shops will also have to increase their prices as rents will increase & so they will pass it on to the people or go out of business. We will all have a tuff time.

One Year Price Rise may solve Council's problems, but can the rest of the community survive.

When things are going wrong it is always best to look at the top management as maybe they need advice instead of asking people to pay more.

P.S.  
Would it remain at a one year Price Rise?

A Concerned Pensioner.

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL

Received by Records

04 FEB 2014

FOR ACTION:

MF

FOR INFORMATION:

DCCS

29-1-14

FORM

Dear Glen Innes Severn Council,

I live in Shannon Vale and as ~~we~~ I have no Rubbish Collection, no Rubbish Tip (the nearest one being at Red Range), a Mail Delivery only 3 times a week, sometimes can't receive the programme on our local Radio Station, NO FREE TO AIR TV. (ie. have to pay for Satellite T.V.), I THINK THE % INCREASE for Farmland Ratepayers, SHOULD ONLY BE HALF (5%) of what Residential Rate Payers pay.

Also I was refused a "FURTHER ADVANCE," (by Australian Seniors Finance), on an Existing REVERSE MORTGAGE on my property (from Glen Innes) because of "the state of the SEALED section of Shannon Vale Road, (about 2 km before the UNSEALED section begins).

They also commented on the bad corrugations in the section of the UNSEALED section, (between the property and my property). They said it lowered the VALUE of the property.

I have more FLAT TYRES since chunks of ~~road~~ rocks have been put on the road, but very little gravel, inspite of the SIGN saying "GRAVEL ROAD".

Yours Sincerely,

P.S. The section of the SEALED Bitumen, on Shannon Vale Rd., done by "ROADS TO RECOVERY" is in marvelous condition, but it ENDS just before the WOODEN BRIDGE.

Dear Council members

I find this survey very difficult to give an honest opinion due to lack of information on each of the 11 services. I cannot in all honesty say I know much about any of these, especially how they are run, how many people use them & how many people service them.

As I hardly use any of the sealed roads in our area, I can only guess. Our unsealed road is satisfactory (exception being a very small area) only because the grader driver put a decent camber on it after many years of grading it "flat." There should be more tuition for the driver and other workmen should be taught grader driver skills to be used when the only driver is on holiday or sick. I feel this is important that men are multi-skilled - tuition could take place when it is too wet to work. Maybe an inquiry into the practices of the work men in council's employ would be advantageous to all.

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Forwarded by memo to	
29 JAN 1994	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
29 JAN 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

Dear Sir/Madam.

I really don't feel qualified to answer any of your questions. I'm 77 and have been in Glen for 3 years. I don't go out much - don't stray too far from home.

Now can I say what roads or bridges are like out in the country, around here they are pretty bad that's all I can say. I don't know anything about farm land rate payers & what is a pay!!!

So please wait me out  
Yours faithfully

- You could have saved a couple of thousand dollars by sending the attached information and survey on PLAIN PAPER without the photo images. I find this to be a total missuse of funding.
- TOURISM AND OUR FESTIVALS ARE Basically the ONLY form of income coming into this town so WHY would you consider cutting these important areas.
- GET RID of a few of the "Heirachy" positions within council. We don't need all the people "up there" to run this town. VENESSA MENZIES AND HEIN BASSON should be run out of town. That would save a few dollars also.
- BRING IN AN ADMINISTRATOR - save around \$50,000 per annum.
- Use the \$2,500 000 that was meant to beautify our perfectly acceptable main street. Noone in town wants the main street changed.
- Minimise staff at the library. Seriously, it only needs two people to run the town library. And maybe one person to drive books backwards and forwards to rural locations if the rural libraries are kept in play.
- Council could potentially cause a town RIOT with the suggestions enclosed in this survey.
- This Survey does NOT include enough options to gain proper feedback. Very Badly written or Carefully needed?



TO GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL

After perusing the complex proposed Application for increasing Council Revenues, I and many others are not in favour of being slugged additional increases in yearly Rates.

Council has already increased the Rates by an additional Levy recently therefore I found it extremely unjust for Council's further adjustment requirements!( Since then we have seen not one Council improvement in Emmaville)

Let us be honest in our approach and consider the detailed Statement us Ratepayers received in the mail.

The Brochure which outlines details of financial matters would have been expensive to produce and in my opinion a total waste as most of us mere mortals are not able to either understand or worse still, could not be bothered with it.

Why on earth Council could not be more cost conscious by issuing a simple statement beats me.

Speaking of waste, over the years and even now finances have been and are being wasted on non-urgent projects and yet Ratepayers are asked to fund and find added expenditure. We have to manage our Incomes with the meagre funds available, however Governments and Councils are unable to do so.

Why is Council contributing nearly \$1Mil to Festivals etc? Of course we hear it will create Revenue. For whom and does it help us? The short answer is no!

To cut my frustration short I used my directive when I was managing :

WORK SMARTER –NOT HARDER.

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Referrals	
20 JUL 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

We do not oppose to Council's application for a special rates variation providing the extra funds are being used productively and help to maintain a viable community. Whilst roads within the Glen Innes municipality are important we feel the funds need to be spent elsewhere too.

Glen Innes is a low socio economic area and we need to focus on changing this first. This will be the key to improving the town's prosperity. A small percentage of Glen Innes residents are actually working and making a significant income. Glen Innes is predominantly made up of retirees most of whom are old age pensioners, which consequently in itself is a cause for concern, as a lot of these people will not be able to afford the proposed rate variation. As well as this a predominant number of the working age generation are also receiving various types of government benefits and contribute little to the flourishing economic status of the community. In addition to this once children leave school they often are forced to move elsewhere to find employment or further their education, those who choose to stay more often than not proceed to receive government benefits and add to the low socio economic status of the town. To rectify this we need to boost population particularly the working population and import more monetary funds into the community. Glen Innes is in dire need of INDUSTRY. This would increase our population, employment prospects and overall economic status. We have recently acquired the quarry as an additional water supply source, water is an element required of industry, so now that we have it, why not use this for its intended purpose and encourage industry to the town. Without an increase to our population we fear we are going to be left with a "ghost town" as the older generation dies and the younger generation leaves us to pursue their careers and educational opportunities we are not going to have much left, businesses will suffer because demand will diminish and these business people will also be forced to move on. We need to do something before it's too late; otherwise no amount of rate rises is going to help anyone as there will be nobody left in town to pay them.

Council also needs to prioritise their funds. Whilst tourism is nice we are hardly the Gold Coast. We have a couple of good festivals like the Celtic Festival and Minerama which admittedly generate a good income for a couple of weekends in the year, but we should not be concentrating on tourism as much and wasting money on this sector. Again we need to chase **long term sustainable income through industry** this will have a flow on affect to other sectors such as shopping centres which a lot of locals desire but at this stage difficult to materialise until we are economically sustainable.

We believe council need to prioritise their spending. Luxuries like light fleet vehicles for council employees are unnecessary. We have to drive to work using our own cars and fuel so should you! In private enterprise we certainly don't get cars and fuel provided for us to use in our own leisure time. Maybe council workers need to examine wage rates and increases and whether operations are economically viable and efficient, could some services be contracted at cheaper rates?

Roads in the area are in extremely poor condition. We have talked to outsiders who have travelled around Australia and they have commented that roads in this area are some of the worst they've seen. It's embarrassing to think we have to live in a town that is in a state of disrepair. The roads make the town look derelict, unappealing and uninviting. The roads look like hunks of swiss cheese and our cars are being shaken to bits and are becoming rattly lumps of metal. Lang St in particular is disgraceful for a highly trafficked road. When council does undertake repairs they get out the jetpatcher which seems to be a never ending venture. All it seems to do is shower your car in tar and stone damage. As soon as we get rain it needs redoing. Surely that costs a lot in materials, wages and time. Initially costs may appear to be small but longer term wouldn't it be more beneficial, efficient and viable to renew the road in question?

There are some counsellors like James Graham, Andrew Parsons and Dianne Newman who have demonstrated through their ideas, integrity, drive and a motivation to get things happening in the town. Listen to them! We voted them in for a reason, to represent what we want! Other unnamed counsellors are typical New England graziers who tend to inflict their own personal views onto ratepayers using money scheming ventures to waste council money on services and items that will pose personal benefit to them.

We have always liked Glen Innes but can see it deteriorating rapidly and have been tempted to move on, **please give us some incentive to stay!**

27 January 2014

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
28 JAN 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

Dear Members of the Glen Innes Severn Council,

Please accept this letter in lieu of the survey that was sent out to Glen Innes residents.

I have a very definite view of the purpose of government: what it should be doing as well as what it should not be doing. My views would be considered "conservative", but that probably makes sense, since I am an American by birth and America's founding fathers had one main view when writing the US Constitution: government should be limited.

The *business* of government – whether local, state or federal – is to *govern*. The definition of "govern" is: to conduct the policy, actions, and affairs of; to control, influence, or regulate; to constitute a law, rule, standard, or principle for (a state, organisation, or people).

I would like to point out that the business of government is NOT to provide child care, aged care, swimming pools, or sporting facilities. While these things may be enjoyed by the general public, these are businesses that are quite well provided for (or can be) within the private sector. It is a pleasant thing to provide for a community, if the funds are available; but it is folly for a local government to engage in these activities when these businesses consume money that should be utilised for the *proper* business activities with which government is authentically concerned.

I will admit that this concept is practically foreign to Australian citizens. The reasons for this do not need to be discussed here, but the essential fact is that the government in general has been allowed to exceed its mandate. Taxing the population more and more will not alter the fact that the government cannot be all things to all people, it cannot afford to, nor should it have ever been a goal.

My recommendation for Council is to sell all extraneous businesses with which it should never have been involved with in the first place.

Child care and aged care can be much better provided by enterprising business people. If the services are needed, then private individuals will use those private services. If they don't, then one must believe the service was never really necessary and Council was wise to get rid of the burden.

Swimming pools and sports grounds can, and are, just as readily provided for by private businesses or other private entities. If a swimming pool is necessary, there is no reason that a gym cannot buy it and take over the business, or that even a co-op could be created by private individuals to buy, run and maintain the facility. The same applies to the sports fields. The private sports clubs can easily band together to purchase the land and maintain it for their recreational needs.

Even garbage collection is something that could be privatised. Council could sell all of the plant required for collection and allow a private company to sell its services to the public. If they require such a service, they will buy it. If not, one would assume they are capable of taking their own trash to the tip.

This would mean that one of the "fees" (taxes) charged to residents would need to be removed from the "rates" (tax) payments. But everyone is charged when they take their garbage to the tip anyway, so there's no loss there.

Once all the dead weight is removed from Council's books (a savings in maintenance costs, wages, depreciation, etc.; as well as the money from the sale of all that stuff), there would be plenty of money available for the things that Council should really be attending to: roads.

Raising rates (let's be honest – TAXES) does not help anyone ever. Raising the rates (taxes) of rural property owners by over 30% -- whether or not this council's rates (taxes) are lower than other councils' – isn't a solution. Taxing someone to the brink of bankruptcy doesn't make a region stronger.

Cut out all the superfluous extras. That little girl who wrote a letter to the Glen Innes Examiner about her road being unsafe...listen to her. She needs that road more than she needs a swimming pool.

Keep taxes as they are.

Use your money wisely.

Remember the real purpose of government and then govern.

Kind regards,

**From:** -  
**Sent:** Saturday, 25 January 2014 12:48:07 PM  
**To:** Council Email  
**Subject:** Addendum to council on line form Section 13

Dear Sir or Madam,

I filled out the online form and submitted that on line but I forgot to mention two very important facts that I discussed with two councilors who both agreed with the idea.

The idea is that the Fire levy which is now only paid by people who have their house, contents, shed etc and other insurances should be paid by ALL the rate payers and the burden should NOT be on the people who have insurances. Unless they get "preferential" treatment in case of a fire!!

Another way of saving a lot of money is not paying council staff for a half day off for the local show, even it is a Gazetted half day. This will probably save another 50.000 Dollars which then can be used for the swimming pools. Admittedly the staff might not like this idea which is quite understandable.

Like you said with your own house and garden, we have to do with what we got and can not increase our wages, like you do by increasing the rates.

To reduce costs make positions like the General Manager and the Director of Engineering Services job redundant! We never had a "General Manager and Director of Engineering" and things went fine. Yes we did have a "Licenced" Engineer, whose job it was to look into matters and make his/her report. Not like now, that the Director of Engineering Services looks into a telephone book and hire a consultant to do the job.

Over the years we are getting more public servants in all sections of government including local, state and federal. We used to have a Mayor, Councillors and a Town Clerk.

Also the farm rates should NOT be introduced or increased because these people do NOT control the weather. But still have to pay the taxes and rates in bad years. And there will

be more bad years to come! Farmers also pay the illegal LHPA rates!

The other thing is that you should include business partly and mining fully in the rates!! Now the mining companies do NOT pay ANY rates, I know times are hard, but when the times are good they still do NOT pay rates. When the time comes to bring the land back in the original state or close to it, the mining companies all go broke and can therefore NOT pay any money to rejuvenate the land. That is proven here in Australia, the USA, Canada, The Netherlands and other countries. All these big mining companies like BHP and Santos and others all use "subsidiary companies" who then conveniently go broke or are declared bankrupt and the rate payers have to pay for cleaning up the mess.

You give the impression that we have a democracy at work here. Meetings at 7 AM in the morning!

Who can attend them? people have to get kids ready to go to school, they have to get ready to go to work, and they unlike you, do NOT get paid (overtime because you start before nine and at night because you work after five) to go to meetings.

The landfill in Red Range for example can be reduced to say Tuesday 4 hrs and Saturday OR Sunday the 2 hrs.

The roads should be done by the RTA who sub contract it to you, but both organisations blame each other when it comes to the road works.

So to save money stop doing unrealistic changes like the main street that no one wants but you still will spend 1.8 million dollars on!! That money can be use to repair the swimming pools which are more important be cause that can and will save lives when people can swim.

I can not make it any time because of health problems and like to thank you for giving me a chance to voice my opinion.

24 January, 2013

General Manager,  
Glen Innes Severn Council  
PO Box 61  
GLEN INNES NSW 2370

Dear Sir,  
**GISC Special Rates Variation**

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
28 JAN 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

We are writing in concern of the proposed rate increases for the 2014/15 rating year. Proposed residential increase, together with the proposed farm land rate increases over the next 3 years, will see our rate expense increase by approximately \$4,000 provided no other increases are introduced in the coming years. Our average residential rate payment in 2013/14 was \$1,645 as opposed to Council's 2011/12 average of \$545. Our farm land rate average was \$3,683 compared to Council's average of \$1,875. We would have thought in an era of computerisation that Council would have had access to more recent figures than 2011/12.

As the majority of our properties in the Northern region area are rental properties, it means that these increases will need to be absorbed by us. We can imagine the uproar if we were to advise our tenants that rents were going to be increased by a similar percentage over this period. Small businesses have little option then to wear increases in utility costs, which further erodes on their profitability. To continue to remain competitive and survive they have to operate smarter and become more efficient in their chosen field minimising the costs where they are able to do so.

We believe that all rate increases should be pegged to the CPI rise each year. If these rises are insufficient to meet Councils operating budget then they should review their operations so that they can be more efficient and pro- active, the same as any other enterprise is required to do when they have a liquidity problem.

CPI rises were introduced to ensure that goods and services were increased at a steady, affordable rate. If all utility services continue to increase their rates and charges well above the CPI rate then the cash cow is eventually going to dry up.

Perhaps one small way for Council to work towards profitability is to review their mail out procedures. We certainly did not require 27 copies of Councils special rate application newsletter.

Yours sincerely,



### Submission

Received your notice explaining the need for an increase in rates, if I understand your material correctly we are looking at almost 50% increase in our rates for the period of the next three years. This in real terms means an additional 500 plus dollars, for what exactly.

Our business has almost being crippled by this Council as it has reduced road width, and the entire journey can only be made at 40-50kms per hour, this has lead to a frightening number of near misses, with both parties having to go bush to avoid collisions. You have placed load restrictions on the bridges, and rejected every over mass permit we have applied for to get feed, fuel to our property, (and truck livestock out) which has forced us to purchase the items concerned piecemeal rather than in bulk causing a massive blowout in our financial position as we have had to truck it in small loads on the ute and trailer. This also applies to livestock, who due to the roads present at sale in barely a fit condition for sale.

Despite numerous complaints to Council, to which all of them have been ignored, further avenues open to us have been consulting with the Councillors who are supposed to be representing our interests, who have not represented the electorate as they are required too. When speaking to Councillors re roads and bridges, the response is we chose to live out here, there is nothing I can do; we have already spent way too much money on that road. When we arrived the road was in good condition with no limits on the bridges.

It is interesting to note the CEO has been given an additional 30 plus thousand a year for what exactly, and you say unless you go above the rate cap you cannot function as a Council. Further to this the Bridges concerned have been identified as needing replacement for 15-20 years and the maintenance of them by Council can only be described as abysmal. To use your own words a backlog of infrastructure projects, which due to the cost overruns of minor projects, the sheer waste of resources that I have witnessed, the financial mismanagement, the lack of forward planning for these infrastructure projects, we are now afforded the privilege of paying increased rates to bail out a Council with a neutral outlook. Wow the brass balls and the unmitigated gall beggars' belief.

It is also noted that farmland will be bearing the brunt of the cash grab by Council (I believe there are numerous town beautification projects in Glen Innes that will see the bulk of the additional funding as opposed to what is stated in your explanation), this combined with the predicted 20% increase in rates to pay for the formation of the LLS will see 15% of our total income gone in rates.

I also note with interest how do our rates compare for farmland, you say farmland is below average for the GISC compared to the other regions with the exception of Kyogle and Tenterfield does not rate a mention. All the regions named have farmland that is used for high production, cropping, improved pastures suited to intensive agriculture where the carrying capacity can be greater than 10 DSE to the acre, here in the north of the GISC our DSE is equivalent to 10 acres for 1 sheep, the income differential derived in this comparison is substantial and clearly demonstrates the limited financial ability to continue to be used as a slush fund, paying for all our own infrastructure to support our business, which was as I understood was a Council responsibility apparently not anymore.

I reject your proposal as it will place further additional strain to our business, as demonstrated by Councils lack of performance; we will see none of the services supposed to be provided by the additional revenue. This will also give the Council the precedent required to continue to increase the "Special Rate Variance" beyond the 3 year period as stated in your brochure. As is usual Farmland continues to be sourced for income to the benefit of residential areas beyond the capacity farmland can afford to pay.

*Concerned Rate Payer.*

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
23 JAN 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

From:  
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 9:00:22 PM  
To: Council Email  
Subject: Council and Long Term Financial Stability

Dear Sir/Madam

In reference to the survey sent to households it has come to my attention the only people to make sacrifices are the communities not the Council. How about you cut some costs, such as unnecessary overseas trips for councilors at rate payers expense also the unnecessary renovations of council offices (little late for that though) and maybe stop making bad investments with ratepayers money. Am I happy to hand over more money not likely!!!

Also if you serious about a meeting make it a time when most people are out of bed, not 7am!!!

General Manager  
Glen Innes Shire Council  
PO Box 61  
Glen Innes NSW 2370

20 Jan 2014

Dear Sir

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
23 JAN 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCS

**Ref: Glen Innes Severn Council Special Rate Variation**

I am writing to express my extreme displeasure and disappointment at receiving a document such as this.

In this document it is stated unless we accept this Special Rate Variance that significant services will be cut, you also mention that this funding will be used for roads and bridges within the Council's area of responsibility.

Even though I have submitted numerous complaints on the state of the roads to both our resident Councillor and Council no action has been taken. These complaints are listed as follows but are not limited to:

- i. The roads deliberately narrowed to the point that now they are dangerous with numerous near misses observed.
- ii. The state of the bridges and load limits placed on them where no load limits were in place.
- iii. Operator incompetence, the operator has shaped the roads with too much crown and has removed all dirt from the road surface to where the road needs to be totally reconstructed. Recently the operator managed to grade the road all 34 Kilometres of it in 5 days, which from experience is not possible to clear the mitre drains, shape the road correctly and correct the drainage. The Grader observed with a water cart 2 days after rain watering the road for the grader. The grader observed grading at speed and the blade was bouncing creating corrugations. The only way to remove same is to rip the road. The drainage of the road has now been totally destroyed, the mitre drains are now ineffective and water runs down the wheel tracks, or the centre of the road creating gutters.

The waste of resources that I have observed by Council is significant for examples Para III above; numerous vehicles observed attending small jobs when one vehicle would have sufficed. Stone required for filling gaping holes in the road, trucks travelled back to Glen Innes to refill when shot rock was available 400 metres from the site of the job. Further demonstrated is the inability of Council to work with the rate payer to achieve optimal outcomes, at the lowest cost.

Before you enquire I do have the required expertise to make a professional judgment as I was employed in road construction for over 40 years.

You have stated unless you get this additional funding your backlog of infrastructure will continue to grow, even with this additional funding, infrastructure has been allowed to

degrade to a point that no additional funding will see these cleared as they require almost total renewal.

You have stated that you need to increase the farmland rate over a three year period to bring it into line with other Councils. The lack of accountability and the waste of resources by Council have caused this problem, but the bright side is that now we get to pay for this Councils ineptitude, further the demonstrated actions of this Council has shown that they will have no intention of removing the Special Rate Variance after three years. We will no doubt receive another brochure trying to justify further increases. The country I operate will not support the intensive agriculture of the areas listed, accordingly the income derived reflects, no improved pasture, no cropping. This increase in rates will have a devastating effect on upon our ability to continue operating our business as have we have no avenues to increase capacity to meet this impost by a Council with a neutral outlook.

Yours Sincerely

## An open letter to Glen Severn Shire Council

Glen Innes 2370

As a recent resident of Glen Innes I am appalled that Council would lobby for such a large variation in the current rates.

Our home is located in a rural subdivision, still within municipal (or town) boundaries. Most blocks consist of 5 acres. Since our arrival 2 years ago more houses have been built, and some have become rental properties. Our access road is gravel only, and is maintained in quite poor condition by the Council. We are lucky to have the road graded 3 or 4 times per year – and usually only when we complain about the excessive ruts and potholes. Going for a walk is difficult due to the amount of dust raised when vehicles pass, and trying to ride our pushbikes is even more hazardous!

The number of cars utilising this road is very high – most houses have more than 1 vehicle per household, as well as visitors, tradespeople and general sightseers – our road loops around to Blue Hills rd. The school bus also travels this road twice per day.

The amount of dust which comes off the road is tremendous. We need to regularly clean gutters and tank intakes to avoid a build-up of mud which can impede the collection of rainwater, our only source of water for our house and garden. The dust also means extra cleaning of both the interior and exterior of the house and sheds, and more regular car washing – such a waste of our precious commodity in Australia – water!

Who knows what the increased dust is doing to our health? We breathe it – we drink it!

In other small acreage developments it is an expectation that roads will be sealed to prevent the issues I have cited above – why is this not so in Glen Innes?

I was also disgusted with Council's blatant attempt to blackmail residents with the loaded survey sent to all households. Of course we wish to maintain the services we are accustomed to! But to slyly suggest residents should accept cuts to youth services, our pool, our parks and gardens to maintain other services is not the kind of behaviour we would expect from our local government representative body. Get proactive about sourcing grants and other funds – don't raise our rates which many rural residents will struggle to pay! Most of our farming families are doing it tough – don't increase their burden! I strongly suggest Council start listening to residents – perhaps they would then get more cooperation!

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
Page 1	29 JAN 2014
FOR ACTION	mt
FOR INFORMATION	DCS

21.1.2014

**TO: GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL'S APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL RATES VARIATION.**

Dear Cr Colin Price, Mayor, and Councillors of the Glen Innes Severn Council.

We have viewed your very informative 16 page submission to residents on the above Councils proposal.

The Council talks about cost savings to be able to provide the services to the community - we cannot see any cost savings in the document that was sent out to residents, some of which had received more than one copy.

**Q.1: What was the cost to produce this document, and the cost of postage?**

**Q2: If Council is considering cost savings, why are the meetings at Emmaville, Deepwater, and Red Range set at 7am in the morning, and Glen Innes at 7.30pm. These hours are outside normal trading hours and business hours which means overtime being paid? Is this one of your cost cutting scenarios?**

**Q3: Why Council has asked its constituents ( refer page 16, Question 13.) if we do not agree with your special rate variation, to consider cuts at Emmaville, Deepwater - Library, Landfills at Deepwater, Red Range, Emmaville. No mention of Glen Innes making costing cutting services.**

**Q4: Why has Council borrowed money to construct water and sewerage pipe laying for the AAFT flight school - Glen Innes Airport, when a Contract with the AAFT has not been signed, and the AAFT have now lost their important backer Chinese Investor, and are searching for new backers? Also if they walk away from doing this development because of lack of finance, where does this leave us?**

Q5: We the rate payers are therefore being asked to bear the cost of interest being paid on these loans for something that has not been formally and legally signed up?

Q6: Mayor Price made a statement that the pipe laying would be achieving 100m per day and now after 3.5 months they have only achieved 1 km if that. In that section they had to replace 300m of piping that was too old or did not meet the new specifications. Why was this money wasted in purchasing new equipment and trucks near \$600,000 which stands idle most of the time?

Q7: Why was a sub-contractor called in to put out a fire at the Emmaville Tip? Was it because Council's low loader was broken down?

Q8. Why did Council compare our rates with Councils such as Armidale and Inverell. Both these places have similar population, businesses and rural situation on are par with each other? They cannot be compared to smaller towns.

Q9: Council did not include Tenterfield in their rates comparisons on Page 7, you state that Tenterfield are currently applying for a rate increase of 45%. However, you compared all other areas with our rates for the 2011-2012 and this did not apply to Tenterfield during this period of time. Why?

Q10. Re your comparison issued on page 7, the areas of Walcha, Bingara and Uralla have the highest farmland rates and the lowest Residential Rates - it is obvious they are smaller townships and greater areas of Farmlands as well as being a much higher producing farm land area. Once again this is not a good comparison. Why?

Q11. Who prepared this data and how can anyone predict a "Projected Financial/Infrastructure Ratios for 2023?

Note: Have all factors been considered to predict this information such as, flood, fire and drought which not only impact on Council's resources but income from business, farmers alike. If Glen Innes and surrounding areas have a population increase, there would be more rate payers, the need for more housing and or properties; this would increase income by rates. However, should the reverse happen, in other words a decline in population, what then?

If you want to compare between Council's and their charges, it should be based on

1. Number of residential properties.
2. Number of Businesses
3. Number of Rural Property holdings and size within their dura striction. If you take Armidale and Inverell out of the equation, your average residential rates come back to \$473.33. Not \$563.30 as you would like us to believe – once again you have based these figures on 2011–2012 and not the last financial year which is a lot different.

**Where can savings be made?** – This is the question you are asking your constituents.

Firstly, this problem the Council is experiencing is due substantially to **mismanagement**.

Consider this – purchasing equipment and spending money on the airport prior to getting it in writing, signed sealed and delivered.

Spending \$615.000 on Libraries – when most people and children these days have Ipods, iPhone and computers which replace the use of books and information required to perform any tasks necessary. We are not suggesting that Libraries be completely disbanded, however, the \$615,000 could be substantially reduced and still provide a needed service to those who have not got other means to access books etc.

**Council Office Staff**– to be reduced or take a pay cut – how can you justify a \$30,000 pay increase to the General Manager when it is obvious mismanagement has taken place to end Council up in this financial situation. We believe he is on \$190,000 per annum which is \$3653.85 per week, we have to live on \$500 per week for two and we have to pay your rates and keep our animals alive. Plus this is not the end of his pay packet, superannuation, long service leave, holiday pay, all expenses paid.

**Councilors** – they are elected to represent the people, they put their hands up for the job – why should they be paid when they are earning an income from other sources, and they get extra for attending functions such as Sheep Races, Horse Races, or just putting an appearance to any event. E.g Why was Malcolm Schumacher sent to Alice Springs recently all expenses paid, and Perth all expenses paid for approximately 1 week to investigate their road building techniques etc. when he doesn't have the qualifications or knowledge to fully evaluate the techniques used? Plus if you analyse this expenditure if was totally unnecessary, because the same materials and money to do this work are not available here.



Page 4.

**Maintenance** – This can be substantially reduced by selling off all the vehicles including the trucks recently purchased for \$660,000, slide on water tanks that don't fit and if filled with water produce an overloaded situation to the vehicles they are mounted on, so holes had to be drilled in them to let the water out when it reached the required level – plus they were far too long for the truck bed. mismanagement again? The buck stops where? Who approves these expenditures?

**Who is responsible for these mistakes** – doesn't anyone measure things up, or look at the economic issues?

**Q12.** If the Council is able to raise the rates, is the extra money going to upgrade all the roads that had been downgraded in the last 13 months, which had the effect of reducing Council's maintenance responsibilities. Will they be upgraded again? Currently the Gulf Road has 3 types of downgrades, one of which means the last section from Summerville Road is only graded every 2<sup>nd</sup> year. The 15 tonne limit on the wooden bridge on the Gulf Road which has caused some considerable problems for farmers living further down the Gulf, they are unable to get fuelling trucks and stock feed trucks in to keep their animals alive. This has to be done by transporting small quantities in the back of a ute and trailer. Further costs to the farmer. Is this going to be fixed?

**Why doesn't Council employ sub-contractors**– Sub-contractors give a firm price for a job, normally in writing, it is in their best interest to finish the job within the time frame. Council already keeps 10% of the contracted price for the job as a standby in case there is a problem within the first 12 months of completion and the Sub-Contractor has to fix the work. The Council also has the option of keeping this 10% for an additional 12 months e.g. a recent job valued at \$800,000, Council kept 10% = \$80,000 for 12 months and earns interest on it.

Also to be considered is the extra cost savings to Council – the Sub-Contractor is responsible for all his equipment maintenance, fuelling, wages, overtime, superannuation and so it goes on, this reduces the Councils' outlays, no maintenance issues as far as equipment and machinery, no wages etc.

Council should be employing local Contractors and not outside contractors who are readily available, keeping their dollar within the community.

**Councils' employment Issues:** You have a Qualified Engineer but he is your Assets Manager.

You have a Director of Infrastructure who makes recommendations and these are over look or rejected by the General Manager. If anything needs to be done, outside Consultants are called in to do it. Therefore why do we need these people if outside Consultants are used to provide the information required to put proposal forward.

**Other Issues of Mismanagement-** The road in front of Woolworths took far more time to do than it should have, resulting in loss of business to all those businesses across the road from Woolworths, and it still not right.

**Roads to Recovery – State Government Funded:**

Why didn't Council apply for the inflation percentage on the \$600,000 given each year and has been for the past 4 years, which is funded by the State Government. Inverell got \$2.8 million for the previous year, and because they applied to have it increased by the inflation rate, they received \$3.7million. Why didn't the General Manager apply for this inflation rate for Glen Innes Severn Council? Money available but not applied for. Mismanaged again. If he had applied for it over the past 4 years we would have had an additional \$57,000 to spend on roads this year.

**Water:** You purchased for \$3,000,000 the Aggregates Quarry stating that it would provide additional water storage facility, you stated that the Council would modify the southern quarry pit so it can hold about 250 mega litres, approximately half the volume currently stored in the Beardy reservoir. Now we have level 4 water restrictions in place. Another mismanaged project.

**ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES:** Nowhere in submissions to the people have you listed the Administration Expenses – are these so high, you just don't want anyone to know. Are they hidden in the figure of \$18,875,265 under the heading – Other Expenses (e.g. Library, parks and garden, waste and planning services) as listed in the flyer sent out with your rates notice for 2012-2013? You did however show on page 2 of Special Rates Variation information, in your pie graph that 7% of the overall Expenditure of Services is to Governance & Administration. We are not sure what Governance means in full but trying to do the sums 7% could equate to \$1,750,000. However I cannot be sure of this figure, but I would assume it would be close if one person wage alone is paid \$190,000, Mayors

Page 6.

wage approx. \$30,000 , Councillor's \$10,000 each, then all the other staff members. Plus all the lurks and perks.

So who is passing the buck and where does it stop - We think the Council needs to look at itself seriously, it is a business not a holiday experience where you have unlimited money to spend needlessly and then ask for more - when there could have been so much more saved.

The Mayor is essentially a ceremonial figurehead who can only exercise power at the discretion of the Council, not the General Manager or staff, but the elected Councillor's. Remember the three RRRs - RATES, ROADS AND RUBBISH.

We request that our concerns should be made public at the Council Meetings. We reject your proposal in full.

Yours faithfully,

Hein Basson, Mayor and Councillors,  
General Manager  
Glen Innes Severn Council,  
PO Box 61,  
Glen Innes, 2370

7/2/14

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL	
Received by Records	
10 FEB 2014	
FOR ACTION:	MF
FOR INFORMATION:	DCCS

Dear Hein,

Re: Special Rate Variation Proposal

I write to formally object to the proposal to increase farmland rates as proposed by Council. I note that your mailed advice indicates that submissions are to be in council's hands by 7/2/14. This has not been possible due to the severe drought conditions now affecting our farming operation. It is essential to be "on farm" seven days a week and often for very long hours.

I've set out below the issues of concern:

Public Consultation

Council made the decision to seek a Special Rates Variation (SRV) at its November 2013 meeting. Much of the material within council's mail out was included within the council November business paper. Formal advice of the proposal was received 17/1/13 just three days prior to the first public consultation on 20/1/14. With submissions closing on 7/2/14, this is clearly an inadequate timeframe. Past public consultation activity has shown that this important component is not taken seriously by council.

The cumulative effect of three 10% increases over three years together with the allowable rate pegging took a while to sink in for many people. I believe that council had an obligation to advise that there would be a cumulative effect and that the result may well be as much as 43% in three years' time.

The charts prepared by council in order to compare council farming rates with surrounding councils failed to give an accurate comparison and used figures two years old. I realise that council provided a new spreadsheet for the meeting on the final consultation night, however the result showed Glen Innes Severn as much the same being 28% lower than the group average. The attached table prepared based on a \$1M land value across all comparison councils shows Glen Innes Severn as still under, but by only 15.5%. Care should be taken comparing rating levels with larger councils like Armidale, Inverell, Tamworth and Moree as their ratepayers have access to a much greater range of services and there may well be an increased number of council services to the community.

The final community meeting held in the Town Hall on 3/2/14 gave a good indication of the depth of feeling against any rate increase (together with many other concerns) by a large number of people. Unfortunately there was not an opportunity given to discuss any compromise options. An example of such a compromise was a one off 10% increase with council only borrowing a maximum of \$2M rather than \$4M and utilising \$2M from reserves. Such an option may well have failed too without guarantees from council that there would be the necessary changes within council to ensure integrity of project management in the future.

### **Project Management**

It would appear that a big percentage of ratepayer concerns relate to failures in project management. My opinion is fairly much in parallel with much of community feeling, being: There is no sense providing more scarce resources to an organisation that cannot maintain project timelines and is unable to meet budgets.

### **Ability of farming community to pay**

You will remember that I asked the question at the Glencoe meeting: "Has council researched the ability of the farming community to pay this significant rate increase." The answer given was "No, there has not been any research." The ability of the community to pay should be taken much more seriously and the context of prevailing factors taken into account, including:

- A very large percentage of farmers now require off farm income in order to make ends meet. This percentage could be well over 50%. We need to look closely at the trend line. You will be aware that quite a number of farmers have remained viable as a result of acquiring neighbouring holdings and increasing their debt levels considerably in order to do so (within their budget constraints).
- The three yearly Valuer General's valuations have begun arriving and it would appear that there is a considerable downward correction in land values. This result indicates that farming enterprises cannot sustain the highs in grazing farmland prices of times past. The continual rise in farm expenses has finally made an impact in real estate values.
- The current drought will have an impact well beyond this year regardless of when the rain comes. The ability to meet expenses and maintain assets will be strained for at least the next three years and much longer in some cases. You may be aware of prices obtained at the recent cattle "Breeders Sale" where cattle were being sold under the cost of production and in some cases around half of last year's figures.

### **Loan borrowings**

Council's "Long Term Financial Plan" of 23/6/11 states: "Borrowing costs will increase on average by \$529,942 over the period (10 years) in line with planned projects that involve new loans to the total of \$13.16 million." At this stage I have been unable to find reference to amendments to this document to make provision for new loans. It is my view that a Ten Year Financial Plan should be amended by resolution of council following careful consideration of changed circumstances. There is little sense in preparing such a plan and then ignoring it.

Whilst I agree that a case can be made for borrowings for long life assets such as bridges, I find it hard to accept borrowings for general road works which would normally be accepted as

maintenance. The heavy take up of loan funds will limit the future capacity of council to carry out basic maintenance works such as road grading which are already very much under pressure.

### **Council Quarry Operations**

There are many concerns circulating in the community about the viability of the quarry operation. There is an understanding that a portable crusher is planned which will involve a considerable operating expense. My concern is that the quarry can become a financial haemorrhage and should not be propped up by additional ratepayer funds. I believe that council should provide a full financial statement to the community including Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet. (for each year of operations).

### **Grey Street CBD Project**

Council has pressed ahead with this project despite heavy community opposition. There is support for a number of project components, however I along with many consider that sealing the full width of the pavement, tree planting, destruction of the toilet block, cutting a hole through the Town Hall, reducing car park widths, elimination of a pedestrian crossing and creating a shared zone all require further consideration. I realise that the loan funds are tied to this project, but perhaps there are other CBD enhancements that would gain general approval. We should not waste money on components of a project that do not have community support at the same time as seeking to extract more out of the ratepayers.

### **Council's planned \$5,300,000 Administration Building**

Page 9 of Council's Long Term Financial Plan, 2011 – 2021 indicates that 2014/15 (being year 4 of the plan) \$5,300,000 will be provided for co-location of council's administrative staff. Funding provision is: \$3.3M loan, \$1.2M Infrastructure Fund and \$800K from sale of land & buildings. The land and buildings component would no doubt include the Highwoods Estate a gift to the former Municipal Council to be held in trust for the community.

Page 11 of the document states: "The Co-location of administrative staff to address a sub-standard working environment such as poor lighting and ventilation, inadequate amenities, inefficient use of resources and energy wastage. This is a building project estimated at a total of \$5.3 million (\$3.3 million loan, \$1.2 million reserves and \$800,000 from the sale of building/land (2014/15)" When the question was asked about the use of reserve funds at the Glencoe meeting there was no mention of this massive over the top building project which was believed to have been permanently shelved some years ago.

Council should remember that many of their own constituents do not have basic air conditioning and struggle with weekly budgets whilst council is proposing such a grandiose scheme. When this excessive project was floated some years ago there were other associated projects including cutting a hole through the Town Hall building for access. The following questions now require answers:

Does the Town Hall part demolition, the removal of the Town Hall toilet block and the new car park relate to this project? A further question: Is the servicing of this loan factored into the proposed rate increase? I would be pleased to hear that council has eliminated this excessive project and that its continuing inclusion in the ten year budget was an error.

### **The way forward**

It is my view that council needs to work much closer with ratepayers, be more transparent and consider the options to overcome project management difficulties. Council needs to amend its Long Term Financial Plan by resolution of council (after public consultation) and in doing so eliminate the excessive proposed administration building. Any proposal of this magnitude needs to have a comprehensive public consultation. Budget trimming of low cost community services like verge slashing should not be the central target. After these considerations are attended to, it may be possible to look at a compromise level of rate increase.

I believe that council should put a resolution to the next Local Government Conference to gain support for a heavy lobbying campaign to have an additional two cents of fuel tax dedicated to local government road works.

Yours faithfully,

# FARMLAND RATING COMPARISONS - 2012/13

Notes	Glen Innes	Guyra	Inverell	Walcha	Gwydir	Uralla	Kyogle	Armidale	Tenterfield	Average	Glen Innes With 2.3% + 10%	Glen Innes 3 years at rate peg plus 3yrs at 10%
1 VBD	1/07/2010	1/07/2010	1/07/2009	1/07/2012	1/07/2011	1/07/2012	1/07/2013	1/07/2010				
2 Valuation	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000			
3 Rate in \$	\$ 0.002466	0.001951	0.004121	0.00298725	0.00367617	0.003977	0.00286683	0.003622	0.00209707			
4 Min Rate	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	390.85	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 330.00			
5 Rate	\$ 2,466.00	\$ 1,951.00	\$ 4,121.00	\$ 2,987.25	\$ 3,676.17	\$ 3,977.00	\$ 2,866.83	\$ 3,622.00	\$ 2,097.07	\$ 3,084.92	\$ 2,775.00	\$ 3,562.30
6 Base charge	\$ 331.00	\$ 447.00	\$ 185.00	\$ -	\$ 160.00	\$ 238.00	\$ 184.00	\$ 474.00	\$ -		\$ 372.50	\$ 478.20
7 Subtotal	\$ 2,797.00	\$ 2,398.00	\$ 4,306.00	\$ 2,987.25	\$ 3,836.17	\$ 4,215.00	\$ 3,050.83	\$ 4,096.00	\$ 2,097.07	\$ 3,309.25	\$ 3,147.50	\$ 4,040.50
8 WPMC	\$ 59.00	\$ 331.00	\$ 331.00	\$ 102.00	\$ 115.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 109.00	\$ 160.00			
9 Envir. Levy						\$ 200.00	\$ 124.30	\$ 124.30				
10 Total Rates	\$ 2,856.00	\$ 2,729.00	\$ 4,637.00	\$ 3,089.25	\$ 3,951.17	\$ 4,415.00	\$ 3,050.83	\$ 4,329.30	\$ 2,257.07	\$ 3,479.40		

Abbreviations: VBD - Valuation Base Date, WPMC - Waste Facility Management Charge

## Notes:

- 4/ Minimum rate charge does not impact on total rates for larger properties
- 4/ Walcha and Tenterfield have a minimum general rate which is charged where the valuation is at the very lower end of the scale
- 8/ The base charge set by council remains the same regardless of valuation
- 8/ The Walcha waste management charge entitles access to waste services without further charge
- 8/ Gwydir Council (Bingara / Wartald) Waste Management Levy entitles no charge access to waste disposal facilities
- 8/ Kyogle Council provide a voucher system for ratepayers to access the waste disposal facilities.
- 9/ The Uralla environmental levy includes provision of free access to waste services plus environmental projects
- 9/ Armidale City Council levy an additional \$124.30 charge as a contribution to a new landfill waste facility
- 10/ Tenterfield Council is seeking a Special Rates Variation of 15% next year followed by 10% for the following 3 years (Including rate pegging provision)



# Annexure F

***Glen Innes Severn Council***

***Extraordinary Meeting***

***20 FEBRUARY 2014***

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# GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL

## COUNCIL'S LONG TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY - SURVEY RESULTS



RECEIPT METHOD (INTERNAL MAIL, MAIL, INTERNET, HAND DELIVERED, EMAIL, FAX etc)  
RECEIPT DATE (ACCURATE AS POSSIBLE)

Same (added  
by some  
ratepayers)

Stop providing  
this service

Reduce this  
Service

Increase this  
service

3

4

### 1 Discretionary Services

Public Toilets

Rural Halls

Sporting Fields

Glen Innes Swimming Pool

Emmaville Swimming Pool

Visitor Information Centre

Village Landfills

Parks and Gardens

Village Libraries

Saleyards

Festivals

### 2 Condition of Rural Sealed Roads

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

### 3 How important are the condition of rural sealed roads to you?

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

### 4 In your opinion, how would you generally describe the condition of rural unsealed (gravel) roads in the Local Government Area?

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

### 5 How important are the condition of rural unsealed roads to you?

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

### 6 In your opinion, how would you generally describe the condition of town and village streets in the Local Government Area?

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

### 7 How important are the condition of town and village streets to you?

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

### 8 In your opinion, how would you generally describe the conditions of bridges in the Local Government Area?

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very poor

Poor

Fair

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

1	2	3	4	Total
1	47	106	106	260
36	108	38	89	271
17	77	78	101	273
8	46	141	80	275
17	59	101	91	268
23	110	68	85	286
15	70	86	89	260
3	81	79	98	261
66	85	55	79	285
10	67	97	96	270
63	111	47	70	291
259	861	896	984	
2.68				
4.07				
2.44				
4.07				
2.74				
4.05				
2.95				

Very important	Important	Not important	Very important

Initially disapproving

Do you support the percentage increase per year proposed over the next three years?

1 2 3

**ENTER PERCENTAGE SUGGESTED**

YES	NO	OTHER

YES	NO	OTHER

**ENTER PERCENTAGE SUGGESTED**

**13a If you do not agree with the special rate variation which of Council's services would you suggest Council cuts?**

Emmaville Library	Glencoe Library	Deepwater Library	Environmental Management	Deepwater Landfill	Tourism	Events and Festivals	Public Halls	Red Range Landfill	Emmaville Landfill
99	110	102	69	32	82	124	64	37	33
184	184	184	184	184	184	184	184	184	184
54%	60%	55%	38%	17%	45%	67%	35%	20%	18%

# Annexure G

***Glen Innes Severn Council***

***Extraordinary Meeting***

***20 FEBRUARY 2014***

In any benefit/cost analysis there is always a do nothing or leave as is option. I have taken the liberty of including an extra column. Many of the services at satisfactory "As Is". Assets is where the inc. needs to be spent.
I feel that townships would benefit more fm more landfill hours, I feel that too much money is spent on tourism. Who goes to the Glencoe library? We have a library delivery service. Why do we need a festival where people show up in kilts and play bagpipes? Swim centres are suffering because of the closure of the kids pools and the increased entry fees.
Develop Something to replace or equal the Celtic Concept.
We need to encourage greater care of the Comm Assets otherwise the extra money will not solve the run down appearance.
The issue of productivity is a very topical one & one I hope Council has under review considering the poor reputation council workers have traditionally had. Generally I support a rate inc. If there's an obvious improvement in council services & infrastructure especially roads, and litter reduction.
The Pot Holes on the Town Roads are atrocious.
STOP GIVING COUNCIL STAFF STUPID PAY RISES - Use allocated money instead of raising Rates every year, Bring businesses to Town. Open Day Care Centre again, Listen to young Councillors that we voted in, WE WANTED THEM IN FOR A REASON.
It is hard enough to make a living especially with costs rurally, roads are a necessity many of the abover are not and I feel would be a drain. These inc may break struggling farmers.
Private households need long term fin, sustainability to manage funds as householders have too. Common sense needs to be applied! The Quarry Eg: is a White Elephant!!
A 40% inc in farmland rates is 10% for residential in enequitable. I suggest a combination of custs & smaller inc to give a desired outcome.
G.I has a newly build library and residents use the Town for Shopping - why not the library. G.I has a landfill why does each village need land fill - Centralise the Assett.
Farmers are in a hard drought, Cattle prices down, how can we possibly afford more Rates to be wasted like you already have done for instant the Quarry & bores, Cut your own wages and get a descent Council who knows what they are talking about.
NO RISE FOR FARMERS, We are in drought, think Where does food come from? Cut your wages and employ less on your staff. Let men on roads do a proper days work.
I think two dog catchers is one too many!
As far as concerned Council is run as a Business and I think yr first thing to be looked at is "Management", this is what is letting us down most businesses cope with what they have to work with. Work smarter we don't live in the city.
Cut back Town Hall expenses and spend less on the main St.
Cannot honestly answer this question unless an explanation is given on how, for instance, environmental management is executed also do not understand why and how "landfill" are managed.
Leave as Is - cut back staff at Town Hall Office and forgo town square until you can afford it.
I support the one year inc. but believe pensioners should be exempt, people who have investment properties & farm who earn from the land should pay as well as self funded retirees. Its hard enough to keep up with fee increases.
High costs for few users, centralise by maintaining town library and town hall. Cut saleyard costs too more user pays.
Thank you for the comprehensive report and the opportunity to give an opinion on the expenditure of funds from the increase. We have a lot of absentee landlords (and the rents are rising faster than CPI) that and the need to improve the physical environment of our focus and villages and connecting roads motivates me to support this increase, as a residential rate payer. In comparison many neighbouring communities our CBD looks tired, decaying and in need of an upgrade. I support the CBD upgrade plan of the council in addition to the focus of this survey.
Stop spending and borrowing can not afford it pensioner you are greedy stop spending
Some cuts should be made to the above roads, street and bridges are more important

We need good sustainable water supply. Industry and employment is vital for town to grow, tourism is not important - people come here for various festivals or have relatives living here only, They leave town to find employment elsewhere, Even shopping the town has poor shopping facilities, necessitating people to travel to neighbouring towns to spend their money. Please encourage more shops and businesses for our town if you want the town to survive. In the end people matter nothing else.

Additional cuts - stop getting consultants and make the GM consult with ratepayers and earn his \$195K PA. Cut bottled water supply to the Town Hall Offices. No special parking allowance/space for any cars of employees. GISC should be ashamed that they ran Gum Tree at a loss purely to close it. Now you doing the same with the pool.

This Council is the Poorest Council out. They have no ideas how to run anything and get things done to look at the roads. Our water is a disgrace, Brown water through our taps and washing. Shame on all you in Council wake up sunshine get things done

Get your hands out of our pockets and do what you are elected to do - not run us into the ground. No to rates variation and Yes to amalgamation. Council needs to prudently manage the money it has - Aggregates plant is losing money left and right and will continue to do so. Refurbishing Town Hall coffee shop to the tune of \$200000 and then renting it out for \$11000 per year, what a waste of ratepayers money - get out of all things that are best left to private enterprise you bunch of MUPPETS! Get rid of Hein Basson and the Price clowns and we may have a chance!

Glen Innes library is available 5 and a half days a week - 90% of families have computers for reading and research

you are spending 5 million on the main street, this will blow out to be 10 million for sure and you are asking a huge rate increase. What a bunch of idiots. Then you are asking what services to cut, I must be missing something here. Can you give us the total rate amounts and not the base rates. This is where you sneaky lot are different to other councils, all the extra charges you put on the rates. The price of water exceeds other councils. Get rid of Basson, Wuinn, Scherf, Schumacher, Price, Price and maybe then we can move forward.

Cut all the above - Roads, Streets and bridges are more important than the above. No cuts to our parks and cemetery, they are beautifully kept and a credit to the parks and gardens committee

See Attached Sheet

Dont like rate increases but realise they are necessary

Cut down on shire vehicles and office staff - cut numbers of Councillors

Why should farming be penalised when other business do not have to pay this extra burden

Cut back on administration costs

How dare you suggest that businesses are exempt from this special rate variation when you are spending a ridiculous amount on upgrading the CBD which is of benefit to the business. I do not support the SRV unless businesses are also included and will actually take this further unless they are. This is grossly unreasonable and inequitable and I am totally against you think this is OK. Businesses (some) may be battling but what do you think the rest of us are doing - please be more realistic.

Cut back on administration costs - this rise will bring hardship to most rate payers who are already doing it hard

No cuts to any of the above instead bring council management salary down to a realistic level and put all council work on a contract basis with locals

Events and Festivals should be commercially viable in their own right - Thankyou for an excellent consultation

Your wages and perks

If you cut services now - you will only need more repairs/ replacement in the years ahead - forget the main street expenses and do what we all expect you to do as our council

By not spending the money to appropriately keep up the areas pluses. We would all lose in the long run and tourists wouldn't stop etc. What we cost on the swings we make on the slippery dip. Glen Innes has a wonderful reputation as a great area to live and visit - keep up the good work and be kind to how Incomer residents

The circled events are private promotions and should not be a council's

Libraries are costing more than other services and as a sign of the times becoming redundant. Hierarchy of the council should have wage rises only to CPI and have had previous businesses knowledge so finances better controlled (corporate governance - more accountability. Encourage businesses to thrive to help grow the local council. Plan for future industry growth

All of the above services are important to the people in these towns and villages. We need to find funds to improve our town, we need plenty of water, good roads and streets so more industry will come into Glen and provide more employment. Our main street needs to have a make over and the residents of the town should be happy to pay more rates to see the town more beautiful. We realise its a struggle to get funds but we have to do something or our town will be left behind.

Administration costs No 1

Reduce administration costs - reduce new staff numbers

The need to increase rates seem like empire building to me. Where did all the alledged saving with amalgamation go

Cuts could be made to administration to many unproductive office staff, all with assistants and motor vehicles. Far too much money spent on consultants eg Bridge at Dundee. Alteration to the main street, Filtration for swimming Pools, council employs 2 engineers for these jobs. A considerable amount of ratepayers funds was spent on plans for a new office block, a total waste of money

People from outlying area go to Glen Innes for various reasons. They could then go to the main Library which would be better for it

Could you not cut the amount of person employed in the front of the Twon Hall, cut costs by doing all the necessary business like rates ect in our Glen Innes office not sending away for things to be done. Be business like if you were in private business you would not last long - Example I got 2 of these letters at my address instead of one - how many more people got these

Listen to rate payers for a change

Run the council properly and listen to what the rate payers want. Instead of doing just what a few council want

Question 1 is very misleading. All of the items listed the town needs we cannot do without any of them. Silly to ask what to reduce money towards. How about just we just look into keeping tightened budgets and wasting money on things the town doesnt need like beautifying the main street.

You again are asking the wrong question. Re arrange your maintenance program to put it on a rotating schedule. Ie over a period of years you maintain all the above. What are you suggesting is like black mail. Nowhere do you ask what to do with our public toilets. Visit Walcha public toilet - that will give you an idea of where our toilets need to head to . We are selling ourselves as a tourist destination so our public amenities not being of top quality. Phone Heather Cohen 04283058546

Cant see why farmers are asked to pay 30% increase for councils waste in drought conditions and bad wool and stock prices

Thank you for providing quality diverse services in an ever more expensive environment. It is recognised that as with all government levels, constant reduction in funds will continue to create problems in the foreseeable future - Dont loose heart - Trevor James

Please do not cut costs - the srv is the only options plus in house council financial constraints. Increased productivity efficiency of council operations especially the graders, trucks etc on the roads, is definitely required. We would be better serviced by contractors rather than the % downtime involved with council operation delivery. Seems to be a hell of a lot of money spent on tourism sector - needs to be scrutinised more seriously to cut back and put the money into services/infrastructure that benefit the whole community - Rural and town

If the land fills are closed rubbish will be dumped in the bush and the sides of the road. The council charges made up fees such as on site septic application fees yearly. I believe poor management and waste such as this brochure are the reason for a poor state of affairs. Maybe ICAC should look into the councils for mismanagement dated back 10-15 years

Cuts to staff starting with Hein Basson, Vanessa Menzies and Graham Archibald - increase productivity - not rates - likely every household - do more with less.

I believe council has erred in not providing a heading "maintain existing services" you have loaded the answers - g parker

All these small villages can be services from glen innes festivals every 2 years as they are just the same old thing over and over. The swim centre is the only place for the young and old to get together and I think that is very important. And with what happened to gumtree child centre there is somebody in council who cannot run a business and please dont blame the staff I think you all should take a look at how many of you it takes to run one business - I think you should put managers into these positions not have 3 or 4 other people telling them what to do - people who have ran an business and knows what they are doing - it is very clear - See other attached in Dataworks

Non essential services to a majority of ratepayers

The extent of use is low compared to cost upkeep. Many wasted on events like fireworks make far better use of quarry complex

See attached Letter - No letter recieved

Read Attached letter

Read Attached letter

Read Attached letter

Read Attached letter

Read Attached letter

Get in and get the jobs done - Tell poeple where the money is to be spent and in what order - Tell the prople when the job has started and finished - In general consult with the people

My preference is to maintain the status quo with servies, and apply the srv. One area which may be able to be reduced a bit is the adminstrive support that council gives to festivals and events: However I believe this is already occuring. I suppose it may be possible to reduce some of the villagers use the main town services. This would be a last resort though. Paying extra rates and taking out additional loan is the best option.

Cut the upgrade of grey street CBD

Small town ships should use local Library - This council should stop feathering their on nest and treat all ratepayers with the respect they all deserve their is to much fighting between all councillors - some councillors in tears. Some believe they are better than others - They say a new broom sweeps clean. Councillors stop gadding around at ratepayers expense. LEave grey street alone no more wasting money.

Glen Innes has a wonderful library. Let the surrounding areas utilise this - the same with the landfill - Times are hard - someone has to give a little

Cut a percentage off all the above due to drought conditions and the low return we receive for livestock we cannot afford higher rates

Please dont waste anymore money on footpaths stop wasting money on expensive property and printing

I suggest council looks at the internal operations and look at cutting staff numbers in the admin office - not services our rates are supposed to cover - I do not

Manage money you are granted better. As gor the other towns rates being higher they are closer to health, doctors and hospitals are bigger and better - closer to cities. We are on the edge of everything and no benefits - Guyra is closer to better hospitals, Doctors and Travel than we are - we have nothing - Give pensioners a bigger discount on rates - Council should not try to manage and buy any business.

I am against the proposed upgrade of the main street

I suggest Council looks at the internal operations and look at cutting staff numbers in the admin office, not services our rates are supposed to cover. I do not support any of the proposed rate increases noty the proposal of the Loan



I think the council also needs to find internal savings (ie a review of office staff levels) rather than asking ratepayers to pay more and receive less

This ratepayer advice documents would be more likely to be read and understood by more ratepayers if it was put into plain english instead of accountant.

Firstly council should look at cutting their expenses by at least 15% before asking ratepayers to pay an increase. This could be done by reducing office staff and tightening up on councils car fleet. (especially wives and their families driving council cars with L and P Plates on them and reducing the kilometres these cars are driven for non-council activities

I am not sure that we should cut any of the above services although I feel that they should be run more economically. I also have concerns that we are not given another option on question 1. We either stop, reduce or increase - what about leaving the same. all I have not answered I feel should be left the same Where does the income go that comes in from the festivals, surely it shouldnt cost council much especially the celtic festival as fees are so high for people attending

What do we have council for if it is not to support the above facilities. And the facilities over page

I do not agree with anything that this council does. What Glen Innes needs is more industry in the town. If the council had the tomato farm or other industry this town would not be dying and no-one in town would be unemployed. What is happening with the air flight school? why should people take a course to learn another language if you do are you guaranteed a job. Wake up council. Look at the town there is nothing here - it is not a retirement village

GM should do his job and not pay consultants. The debacle with the childrens swimming pool is a great example of mismanagement by GISC - will you close the pool and you did gumtree Glen? Another example of a survey designed to give you the answers you want.

Less job losses

Make more use of machinery or sell it off and contract jobs out. How about reducing staff and staff cars. We all have to use our own cars and you would save a lot

The above suggested cuts are all out of glen innes when we note on councils achievements since the amalgamation has been in glen innes at the expense of all our roads and bridges and services - no suggestions about administration cuts in survey.

Suggest only keep Glen Innes Town Library, then even cut this back. Most people have access to computers to research. Maybe keep one out of town tip say Emmaville - close Red Range and Deepwater. Most people can travel a few extra kilometres to a tip.

If they dont fund themselves we shouldnt prop them up get rid of positions such as personal assistants and their personal assistants

If council does not increase rates does this mean council will reduce their office staff and take a wage cut themselves Farmers have to accept low seasonal prices for their stock and still manage their farms on less income. Less money means less spending in town and empty shops

None of the above start with administration, roadworks done properly the first time would work. Rummmerys hill and Moore Street Emmaville perfect examples of Incompetent works

The only thing I would like is to see Glen Innes township cleaned up plus laneways because it looks so untidy and dirty

Firstly I think that council should look at sacking the GM and Engineer who are overpaid for their experience in the positions. This would be the worst council we have had in the towns history

What happens to farmland rates after 3 years - will they revert back 2. reduction of office staff top heavy council needs to understand that it is answerable to rate payers - not ratepayers answerable to council. 3. Council will probably be in the same position in 3 years time if approval is granted - state government has to stop putting more loads in local government

Because the general ratepayers do not benefit only the businesses - Tourists use roads etc. The council should do continued maintenance not leave it until the situation is dire and then levy the ratepayers as usual. It seems the severn shire part does not exist - money all seems to be spent on the glen innes part of the shire. Why do ratepayers who do not have water and sewerage have to pay so much? Sewerage inspection charge is ridiculous - all systems have been inspected. Why cant all meetings be at 7.30pm so people can attend

Red Range and Deepwater are so small that it shouldn't be a great imposition for them to use the Glen Innes tip which should be more cost effective.

Deepwater and Emmaville landfill combine - Deepwater landfill is closer to highway for recycling etc transport. Contract out all services possible including parks and gardens, saleyards - sell off, Festivals let private enterprise operate and run. Close village libraries, visitor info close or let local businesses run that benefit from it. Contract out roads and bridges upkeep, swimming pools let local communities run. Sporting fields contract out. Give staff councils 1st option to be taken up by contractors

We have an excellent library in Glen Innes - the district comes to town and can pick up books then

These people can bring their garbage to town

Get rid of Hein Basson and Vanessa Menzies - Get it together Council - Rate payers are tired of paying for your mistakes

Council should cut within the office and administration instead of the above suggestions

No confidence vote

These services are all important to these areas and to put this question on is very unfair. If I mark one it will effect the users of these services. I will not be marking any of these. If council is not broke why cut any of these.

Everyone comes to town at least once a week - These facilities are provided in Glen Innes - it appears that anyone in the rural area that does not have a library and landfill must go to Glen Innes already. This survey is badly constructed. It does not allow for "no Change" option. It is difficult to honestly answer many of the questions when we do not know and have not travelled the district to inspect bridges

Do not waste money on the Grey Street Beautification when our roads are literally unsafe to drive. It is atrocious that you are suggesting cutting services to rural villages

The Glen Innes council needs to stick to a budget same as households have to do. They need to be accountable to the ratepayers and more productivity is needed. This council has too many staff (especially Road staff) standing around and trying to look busy. one staff member works and two staff members watch!! Council is overstaffed for amount of work done! Council should keep running the council and not become involved in projects they are unable to handle and therefore costs the ratepayer more.

Money to be saved by better management - less mistakes would be a start - more educated persons employed - employee to be limited vehicles for work only - there could be money saved on better economical management - less vehicles would be my first cut.

Cut back on the following - the amount of indoor staff, government cars, get rid of so called town planner, get rid of general manager - let the people elected council run the town and spend the thousands you have invested. You never learnt from loosing \$330 thousand in america. Councils arent money making for profit they are there to provide a service to the ratepayers who you work for. Dont plant treet in the main street. Have a look at Tamworth street - just fix the streets

As Above

We do not object to the rate increases provided the services to rural villages improve. That is improve roads infrastructure maintenance eg halls services to all towns to be maintained

In the present climate and conditions I think all services should be kept at present levels or as near as possible - too great an SRV would impact a big strain on the general community

Dundee - do the bad bridge take 1/2 million from your great big investment fund - 1/2 to 1 million wont hurt it.

Cutting economic affairs would pay for the worst bridge \$774,000 would build bridges, What 1 million going to hurt away from 14 million investment. You get carried away in Grey Street but you drop the ball badly out of town on roads and bridges. - rates from flying school

Closure of any village facility will require council to still maintain the structures and facilities so no win situation. Closing of landfills will require council to introduce garbage collection throughout area and would require additional equipment and staff and additional costs. Would not support any of this unless a more details cost analysis is produced.

Too many salaries paid to high level staff - Glen Innes is a wonderful town but council doesnt seem to help with its growth. We need good services - no trees in main street just good roads and streets. Remember Glen Innes has an ageing community, so their needs must be considered, good medical services consideration should be shown to local business and efforts made to increase shops and services

None as we need all these for Glen Innes to make the town attractive to visitors which brings money to our town

It seems that the top management cannot handle the economy and infrastructure are they qualified to do their job

Events and festivals should be self funded and in hard times thei money could be used to repair roads, council must look after the people who pay the rates first.

I believe incomes of employed senior staff need to be queried - The town centre upgrade expenditure is totally unnecessary and unaffordable - Please consider money spent by the rural agriculture rates payers in the business in Glen Innes, especially the industrial business likely to drop if large rate rises occur, penalising them as well.

Festivals and Library will give total \$1,489,000.00 - How that could be spent on roads

Less need for Libraries with the net Tourism and celebrations only after essentials are covered

Small government is good government - cut the non - essentials

Cut expenditure, dont increase taxes

The basis of life - live within your budget

My severn shire rates go from \$31,000 to over \$44,000 and I live 200 metre outside boundary so dont even rate - appears to be unfair to me

Times are tough - cut festivals and tourism - user pays

Agriculture is one of the Australia few expanding industries and cannot carry more burdens (taxes)

Reason being as time moves on and costs rise more importance should be placed on efficient being Glen Innes and the same with landfill.

Reason being as time moves on and costs rise more importance should be placed on efficient being Glen Innes and the same with landfill.

Cutting services is the last resort - review of current management of services should be done first and every effort made to reduce costs this way. A huge waste of money on glossy surveys and discipline of councillors, feasibility studies etc

You could start with cutting the top heavy office staff that is way to high. The roads are not being maintained at the rate they should be already, (graders and tar patchers) Our rates are already higher than most coastal towns - size of the local swimming pool should be at least left same and not decreased - should be made public if the quarry has been sold so the grape vine tells us

None just stop wasting our money - Council stop wasting money for their own concerns and think how you are wasting our rates on unnecessary ideas - lets see the council tighten its own belt and stop all this talking (which sounds good)

Councils needs to get house in order, live within your means as we the ratepayers do. Stop wasting the public's money on outside consultants etc, as engineers should be doing the job, if they can't replace them, if council can't live within the money they receive management heads should be sacked and replaced

Council should not be upgrading Glen Innes CBD unless they have spare money. They should be maintaining and repairing their infrastructure - like we all do and have to manage - with what we can afford

A review of the productivity of these services should be done and more efficient practices implemented. A cut to these services should be a last resort. Why do we need to spend so much on revamping the main street - perhaps some minor improvements, such as repainting the business facades - it is the historic look of the town that brings tourists in.

Council is out of control with waste of money if you need more money you need to sack some management positions and put people in there who can handle other people's money - listen to the ratepayers

As above - don't make us the scape goat for your own failings. Where are pensioners and low income earners suppose to get a rise to pay for your failings and why should they have to.

If council has been managed effectively then why are we in this situation. Maybe sell some council assets - encourage more business to come to town. Stop jobs for the mates/ family scenario. Look at ways of making money not spending it we have to do this in real life

Invest in a mobile library and donate the excess books to local schools. I totally disagree with rate rises on farmland as at the moment everyone on the land is suffering because of low stock prices and the severe drought. These people can't afford to sustain their own assets so how can they afford to subsidise council assets

Council could cut wasteful spending on consultants, advisors and excessive pay rises for councillors. How much of 10% rises go towards this waste. Leave Grey Street parking alone - We are struggling to pay rates now. Costs are too high - live within your means - we have to

Look at your costs and function within those - get jobs done properly. Even one job properly would be a great result after the quarry (no water available from it to your poor ratepayers) grey street, New work starts then stops! Airport give it away with no safeguards if developer fails to deliver! This survey is designed to be a guilt trip to ratepayers - stop wasting money from ratepayers. Stop wasting money, GISC is the only growth industry in the council area and its a false one made on Empire Building and grabbing money from ratepayers who have to operate within there means unlike GISC. Mayor Price and Hein have shown there consultation methods time and time again. The quarry, The airport, the main street not the rates. Already the quarry history is way way different to what was presented at consultation meetings. Step back and look at yourselves and your performance as thats what happens in the real worlds.

Business rates - how much spent in main street - yet no pain? - This survey shows the contempt council has for the area - just trying to use it as an excuse for its actions - Rural rates us town - given lack of service to rural areas why increase. Already hidden costs (conveniently no show) on rural, well above any rates of onsite waste disposal costs to council - is nil - cost to district farmers is? where does this go? not against some rural rate rise not by 12.3% plus 10% ? which compounded could exceed 60%

There are way too many office staff, personal assistants etc. I think there is too much spent on community services , eduction and housing

Farmers have suffered up to 30% plus falls in income in the last financial year with not much better prospects this 13/14 year so Council will have to put this new work out to contract to get sufficient value for dollar spent and avoid the rediculy insufficient results under local government act regulations and OH & s

Overbearing imposts on ratepayers - particularly rural, will have a severe impact on the viability of many as well as devaluing their assets and the assets of the region. Council like their ratepayers need to live within their means and do some belt tightening particularly within the office staff

All libraries should be sufficient they should be allowed to have paid by government/council all elect and internet within reason all other eg growing books collection should be maintained by fundraising.

Library - I would question the need for these facilities as our town library is available to anyone from these area when they come to town (and they do) - also internet services are available to households for the information at anytime. Festivals - The amount spent on the celtic festival is excessive for this town - ive read one report that says it brings in approx \$1.5 million - I dont know how this figure si found but if thats true it reinforces my argument to increase business rates as they are the ones benefiting from the huge incurred hosting it. Extra cost can be claimed by business as tax expense (so in a roundabout way the government pays more.

Please do something with the water - Ps drinking out of tap is pathetic

Glen Innes pool need to be opympic size though I am noty a swimmer, this town is still disadvantaging those who wish to compete

You forgot to add the approx %1000 per year paid in water and sewerage charges per house. Stop wasting money on council and removing parking in Grey Street - get rid on admin bosses and staff stop wasting our rate money on rubbish should have charged decent rent for airport

The extra expenditure may well be required to improve our area but any % increase has to be tied to an equal increase in value for money. Important to show ratepayers how council is achieving this waste and ineffectiveness are intoleratable to most who are finding it very difficult to remain profitable.

You need all of the above to attract people to towns and villages - Council is a disgrace.....

Cut no services as there are minimal services in a lot of these areas anyway - surely as an ageing population, the elderly deserve adequate facilities and services without being disadvantaged physically or financially

Centralise services - reduce management fees - utilize depreciation allowance for maintainance

There is too much emphasis on Environmental management, leave it to the farmers and those who know what they are doing - Do not need all these Libraries as we have internet, and also close access to GI Library

Time for council to efficiently use the resources (including human) that it has at its disposal. Stop using consultants Council employs engineers etc. Those people need to start doing the job they were employed for and take responsibility for their decisions. Upper management is under estimating the experience and knowledge of council employees. The public all go to accountants so are well aware of the "game of numbers" to suit. Glen Innes Severn council ratepayers have witnessed ill advised expenditure for some time now and should not be expected to give any more to people who are demonstrating a lack of ability to use funds wisely. Council should keep expenditure within budgets due to the current financial situations with state and federal governments.

If increasing rates for rural farmland please spend the money on the rural roads and bridges. On the pinkett road (sealed) there are numerous large pot holes in the bitumen that get a bandaidd fill of a squirt of tar and a spade full of blue metal which is completely gone within the week. The gravel road section on Lawler Road hasnt been graded for 12 months

would council staff take a 10% reduction in their salary package. My income is certainly not going 10% - my feelings whatever the rates rises by council will still waste a fair portion of the rise. I believe that these surveys will be garbage and not read..

I believe money council be saved by cutting staff in the office. Likewise council workers - eg grader drivers and their helpers not leaving a job to go somewhere else and return a few days later to finish first job. A lot of time seems to be wasted

cut council mismanagement pelase and leave our facilities in place

Council should not under estimate the high costs of farming production and how families are being squeezed in rural areas to make land choices. A rate increase at this cycle of the economy I think would be unfeasable - show up bad governances. For one thing I object to G I council sending out 16 pages on glossy paper - what a waste !

Memo Attached

I do not support a rate increase . Council would do better managing what it already receives, instead of comparing itself with other councils. If council cannot do this than its time for a new management team. We already had rate increases and less services

Reduce Library hours - charge for computer time, sporting fields should be user pays, reduce landfill hours, public halls recover funds from uses. Seal only 6m of roads, reduce tourist promotion or levy businesses to pay for this - do not allow rate reduction for welfare people, rates should relate to services used. The tax system (state and Federal) is for wealth distribution - the council should be about services and charge equally to all - see attached sheet

We feel there should be no cuts to the above services - Council has to manage the ratepayers money more efficiently - most people dont want the stupid town square - loss of car parks and trees in the main street - you also need to listen to the people

Cut bacck on staff, Public halls are maintained by local Groups.

Don't cut any of the above. However more use should be made of council staff & resourses to carry out all local repairs , maintainance & technical advise to handle local projects. No outside consultants for straight forward local jobs. Make proper use of existing staff for this work. EG, more efficent all round.

Council needs to stop wasting money on poor dicisions- Put the trees in the park-Put cars in Gary street-Forget about the town square.Take notice of ratepayers wishers- Act more openly and businesslike.

Local Gov has passed its used by date and should be reformed as a body, they can't cope successfully. Return a few key staff members to let contraracts. The contractor will operate much better.

Staff cuts. Act like a private enterprise. There is too many stafferas in Local Gov. The pay rates are for too high.

The above list does not include . Staff cuts which is I think necessary.

Cut back the council staff. I am totally opposed to the proposed increases.

Local seal roads extremely important- farmland is an industry and need to be able to get cattle trucks and sheep trucks to stock yards. It is the farming industry that the township survives on. Why not a heated indoor pool - lets face it most warmer climates have.

Look after the actual "Ratepayers", Business rates should go up if farmland (which is a business I thought) rates so. Govt. Grant money should not be used to help an "outside" developers such as the "Flight School". Grants for roads & bridges would be more useful& should be pursued. A special rate variation above the rate peg should only be allowed for a 1 year, I would have thoght.

There is no option in question to keep staff the same.

I question the value of the Celtec festival to the community.

Stop spending money on the main street (Gary St) It's not needed. Events only profit a few in Business, not the central population.

If it is necessary to cut anything, cut the proposed rejuvenation & beautification scheme pertaining to the Town Hall area.

This is a Tokenistie "survey" designed to appear to be constructive but to get no resulting improvement to Councils gaining shortfall. Ignores the elephant in the room. Ex. Regional funding (we all use and are used by a regional road network) linked to amalgamation and /or shared resources/costs of neighbouring town centres. Practical attitudes need to be replaced by a vision of being a part of a forward looking region. Divided we fall. More maintenance of assets less getting the farm please.

Remember it is not your money, get priorities correct and think of outlying villages find the rate payers there stop wasting money. How many people do you need to run the office computers should speed up office work. Also water restrictions are to be used by everyone, that includes all council employees and managers.

None of the above, May be a cut to the oversized salary bill. Too many jobs. A small town can't afford to pay this often wanted money on high paid staff who are not 100% effective.

I would suggest the Local Council had several years to improve any qualifications they brought to it, your obligations have been dealt with gross weight, you put this survey to the public for show, so what qualifications are you being paid for there needs. To be together guidelines for councils and a larger administration Dept.

This survey is impossible to fill in and convey my feelings. Cut all possible waste first then if necessary increase rates in an equitable manner. Equal rise per person.

No there are many other things to cut which would make a difference such as travel- waste in administration and the work place, business should pay their share.

This survey is impossible to fill out. Cut all waste and non core business. Dismiss unnecessary staff, then if necessary increase rates equitably - equal rise per person.

Reduce to core business, eliminate all waste, dismiss unnecessary staff first. If there must be a rate rise it must be equal per ratepayers.

Why is there no option to maintain these services

Maintain service option

There should be an option to maintain current level of services provide.
All these small villagers can be serviced from Glen Innes festivals every 2 years as they are just the same old thing. The swim centre is the only place for young and old to get together and I think that is very important.
I do live out of town local roads have caused significant damages to our vehicles . However financially myself & other family members living on the land can not survive with rate increases such as these . Also my mother living on a pension could not bear the residential increases.
All a cut in services broadly, will still leave services. We should not be spending more than we bring in, At this point the Australian people are all suffering and can little afford their lifestyle. We all need to conserve and tighten our belts to get through this world economic downturn. That includes councils, wages and other expenditure. Therefore cut a little everywhere, make sure you don't burden the residents only. Further go to fortnightly or monthly on services necessary.
Unnecessary guttering no town hall renovation scrap Gray St "beautification" that should be enough to live within your means.
Stop given senior management wage rise for an appalling job, get rid of councillors as they have proven they are incapable of doing their job.
Sack Basson and Price
The council appears to be top heavy with management and clerical staff and not enough outside workers to properly service rural roads and bridges. Why do we need such a big flash information centre.
Libraries in the day of computer and ebook/reader - Rubbish Tips for the select few. Festivals and Events the price you pay for the celtic festival - shouldn't need that much funding.
Minutes do not seem to mention rent for crofters cottage anywhere - how much - why? Why is ratepayers paying for renovations of coffee shop - rent is totally ridiculous - Lessee will sell for a large amount to purchase - but it will not cost them a cent - Think of other cafe's etc in this town who paid for their business
Most people do a major shop in Glen Innes and should add on a trip to the Glen dump and library. Events and festivals should all be self funding. Public halls provide a very important service to rural life in general
Technology should overcome village library access. No increase because primary producers income is decreasing with depressed markets. Primary producers provide their own water access and power, garbage disposal and septic systems which they pay for to have checked. Access to services is minimal in comparison to the amount of infrastructure the property needs to outlay.
It would be agreeable to a 5% rise provided the increase is spent on roads, bridges and foot paths and not administration services in question and 13 should be maintained at the same to an improved level
Council should sell its trucks, lawn mowers etc employ contractors. There are far too many flexy days wet days, holidays etc - where a contractor would get by with the job. Cut you staff back like everyone else in the private sector
Just a question - why did we rebuild a bridge over the railway - why not fill it in. Kyogle looks like the place to live or perhaps Armidale - more services for same \$
Reduce Chiefs in the office and employ more indians or put more fuel in the graders. Give redundancy (small \$) to Menzies and employ someone else with no connection to GI - cut slack on office staff - understated
Rates in Glen Innes are already too high because of the over value of properties from the general manager
Reduction of office staff and money spent on main street too much is spent on administration , festivals as this money could be spent on bridges and or roads



The rural roads around out farm land are rarely graded or maintained - some landholders have to maintain their own. - sell the quarry purchased and use the money to repair the most urgent bridges and roads. The council will never and shouldnt be managing the quarry - it will be an ongoing loss to council (inefficient workers - Guess what we are in the thro's of a DROUGHT

We have a town planner from out of town costing too much money - donot need that expense. Trees in the street an absolute failer - take a look at Tamworth with bird shit all over the cars, bats took up too much parking space very hard to see shop fronts whilst driving along. I believe council have far too many cars what happened about sharing cars. Previously councilors provided their own cars in some cases. I strongly believe the general manager should stand down and let people we elected do the job . we have already had this happen and he alone put Glen Innes in a good place - now look at the mess. The town is a retirement town and always will be, how come us ratepayers are always hit hard why the hell arent you trying to encourage industry without it we cannot pay for councils demands - get your act together

You mentioned nin No10 that SRV to be spent only on roads, bridges and footpaths. In no 13 you mentioned local Government's existing assets - repaid and maintenance as if this will also come from the SRV? - Why should council cut services to rural services? These services are as important if not more as town services.

Council should not cut community services but take a good look at its own administration costs in excess staff in offices, wages, vehicle usage and other fringe benefits. No doubt there could be cuts in administration. The senior staff cotracts should net be renewed before checking their work performances and that tasks are accomplished within the time frames without spending excess dollars on outside assistance that can be avoided.

Our rates are paid to maintain public facilities for the rate paying public we the public have to work within our budget, we are not paid 10% increases in wages to help us cover all our additional expenses. Work within you budget: Prioritise stop wasting money on glossy booklets

I believe you cannot close, shorten or take away any current service council supplies. Put the rates up evenly and fair to the whole community and lets have a strong council and a beautiful area for all to cherish and attract visitors for all to prosper

Those who live too far from town or village still cant access a library - villages shouldnt expect a library - Environmental - complete waste of money - unproductive - Tourism will exist without huge amounts of money thrown at it. - Try to manage the money you get for exactly just repairs and maintainance - what you should be doing and stop spending on backward running

Too much money spent - local population supports adequately

Peoples wages have not increase 10% infact , more people are loosing work, so to pension, in effect the ordinary person also has budgets to contend with, inflation caused by government spending, cuts now rising prices that incomes cant cope with. Whilst Glen Innes Severn Council is a better council asking peoples opinion, we are all suffering mismanagement higher up. and wasted tax payer funding (NBNCO Braodband debacle) of wasted billions on a system that should if wanted, be done by private sector a system doubt be obsolete when finally rolled out

Please note in buying Mccarthys crusher you solved Mccarthys financial situation but created a further financial situation for the council and the ratepayers. 1st the cost of purchase then a further \$1,000,000 to prop it up, \$83,000 bper annum for a manager to produce very little aggregate. A large RTA job at Hogues Creek has been supplied by McLennons of Grafton - How come the council did not supply

Look in house at staffing and wagers particularly executive staff

In my opinion landfill and librarys are open for too many hours, Council could have saved money by not building new workshop, cut back on oversees and leading hands, cut back on small vehicles on job sites, cut back on consultantcs and use head staff - if they are not qualified they should be replaced. Clean out weir simmlar to Tenterfield, also pump water from below weir wall back into weir as they did in 1964 drought. Use own plant instead of hiring in plant

Re-assess staff numbers and duplication of costs - where can you save here - look at that before asking rate payers to kick the tin

To many festivals for one town and costs to much money - cut costs in the offices

Cut costs in the offices

Low population density compared with other landfills

The council has obligations to provide essential services for community. Rate rises should provide community with increased services, improved services, improved infrastructure and a sustainable and safe community able to progress forward - this council would be the most incompetent we have had for 20 years - why do we need to pay out monies to consultants when we have a co called engineer - finally the administration is top heavy

Look at management and senior staffing of the council. More workers in the field and less sitting at the pine desks - cut wages at the top be council not to increase claiming he has done a good job

It will not matter what the ratepayers say council have made up their mind just like Grey Street you have a meeting with the public, but you are going ahead with the work's

We don't want to reduce the current services we have - just the over spending by council on needless things, like shared zones and trees - re visit the rates with 5% Business, 5% Residential, 5 Farmland for 3 years

all land fills by 2 hours including Glen Innes, all librarys by 2 hours, all public halls full stop

Replace infrastructure management with knowledgeable and experience Direct ond works manager - Yes we need more money - stste governemtns is starving LG to extinction - GISc must stop wasting money on consultants and except local knowledge - very poorly designed project - V Menzie should go as she has no knowledge or idea of infrastructure needs and will not accept advice from others that "she" BELIVES ARE LOWER THAN HERSELF. gisc DESIGN SECTION IS WORSE THAN A JOKE - but again will ot lower themselves to accept advice of experienced people

We are an agriculture area firstly and so our farmers must be supported as much as possible. Council give us a break

I have put an extra column in the section as there is no where to say to leave service as is now I also find it difficult to understand that youth 7 out of 10 above services and in small villages and I suggest that people living in Glen Innes would not care at all what happens out in the small villages

I dont agree with removing or downgrading services that are required under the local government act, to be provided fro the communtiy by Council. Libraries are core business and provide an important service to all the community

GISc has been spending ratepayers money like a drunk at a pub and then expects us to foot the bill - poor leadership and a basic disregard of fiscal responsibilty has put Glen Innes in a very poor position going forward. Very poor HR management has given us a team of staff that are incompetent and would be lucky to be employed elsewhere, so then we have to outsource everything at great cost to the ratepayers. The best thing that could happen to Glen Innes is amalgamation. We need people that are successful and understand financial management in order to prosper, not the "sheltered workshop" of employment that we have now, employing people that are not qualified or suitable for the task

Dear Sir or Madam, Like you said with your own house and garden, we have to do with what we got and can not increase our wages, like you do by increasing the rates. To reduce costs make positions like the General Manager and the Director of Engineering Services job redundant! We never had a "General Manager and Director of Engineering" and things went fine. Yes we did have a "Licenced" Engineer, whose job it was to look into matters and make his/her report. Not like now, that the Director of Engineering Services looks into a telephone book and hire a consultant to do the job. Over the years we are getting more public servants in all sections of government including local, state and federal. We used to have a Mayor, Councillors and a Town Clerk. Also the farm rates should NOT be introduced or increased because these people do NOT control the weather. But still have to pay the taxes and rates in bad years. And there will be more bad years to come! Farmers also pay the illegal LHPA rates! The other thing is that you should include business partly and mining fully in the rates!! Now the mining companies do NOT pay ANY rates, I know times are hard, but when the times are good they still do NOT pay rates. When the time comes to bring the land back in the original state or close to it, the mining companies all go broke and can therefore NOT pay any money to rejuvenate the land. That is proven here in Australia, the USA, Canada, The Netherlands and other countries. All these big mining companies like BHP and Santos and others all use "subsidiary companies" who then conveniently go broke or are declared bankrupt and the rate payers have to pay for cleaning up the mess. You give the impression that we have a democracy at work here. Meetings at 7 AM in the morning! Who can attend them? people have to get kids ready to go to school, they have to get ready to go to work, and they unlike you, do NOT get paid (overtime because you start before nine and at night because you work after five) to go to meetings. The landfill in Red Range for example can be reduced to say Tuesday 4 hrs and Saturday OR Sunday the 2 hrs. The roads should be done by the RTA who sub contract it to you, but both organisations blame each other when it comes to the road works. So to save money stop doing unrealistic changes like the main street that no one wants but you still will spend 1.8 million dollars on!! That money can be use to repair the swimming pools which are more important be cause that can and will save lives when people can swim. I can not make it any time because of health problems and like to thank you for giving me a chance to voice my opinion. Jan van der Waal