



Your Place. Your Say. Your Future - Community Consultation Survey:Full Report

Your Place. Your Say. Your Future - Community Consultation Survey:Full Report	1
Overview	3
Introduction	3
<i>Question 1: What is your name?</i>	3
<i>Question 2: What is your suburb?</i>	3
<i>Table of "suburb"</i>	3
<i>Question 3: What is your email address?</i>	6
<i>Question 4: What is your age group?</i>	6
<i>Table of "Age group"</i>	6
<i>Question 5: What is your gender?</i>	7
<i>Table of "Gender"</i>	7
<i>Question 6: Would you like to become a member of Council's Resident ePanel?</i>	8
<i>Table of "Resident ePanel"</i>	8
Your Place, Your Say, Your Future	10
<i>Question 7: Do you own property in the Wyong Shire?</i>	10
<i>Table of "Ownership"</i>	10
<i>Question 8: Have you read the attached information that was provided?</i>	10
<i>Table of "Info"</i>	10
<i>Question 9: Do you understand the background to the Your Place, Your Say, Your Future campaign?</i>	11
<i>Table of "Background"</i>	11
<i>Question 10: Do you understand the information about Council's current financial situation?</i>	12
<i>Table of "Financial"</i>	12
Your Place, Your Say, Your Future	13
<i>Question 11: Do you understand that Council are presenting options to the community to ensure future financial sustainability and asset maintenance is achievable?</i>	13
<i>Table of "understanding"</i>	13



Question 12: Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services in each of the three options, which one do you most prefer?	13
Table of "Option choice"	13
Question 13: If you chose option one, what was your main objection to option two or three? Only answer this question if you chose option one in the previous question. You can select more than one answer.	14
Table of "why"	14
Question 14: If you chose option one, under what conditions would you vote for option two or three? Only answer this question if you voted for option one in the previous question. You can select more than one answer.	15
Table of "why"	15
Your Place, Your Say, Your Future	17
Question 15: Do you have any other comments?	17
Question 16: Would you like to be entered in the draw to win one of 10 double passes to the Central Coast Mariners New Year's Eve game?	17
Table of "Competition"	17
Question 17: Where did you see/hear information regarding the Your Place Your Say Your future community consultation? (Can choose more than one)	17
Table of "Where did they hear?"	17



Overview

From **14/11/2012** to **04/12/2012**, Wyong Shire Council ran a consultation entitled '*Your Place. Your Say. Your Future - Community Consultation Survey*'. This report covers the online element of the consultation process, which was run from http://consultation.wyong.nsw.gov.au/your-place.-your-say.-your-future/community_consultation

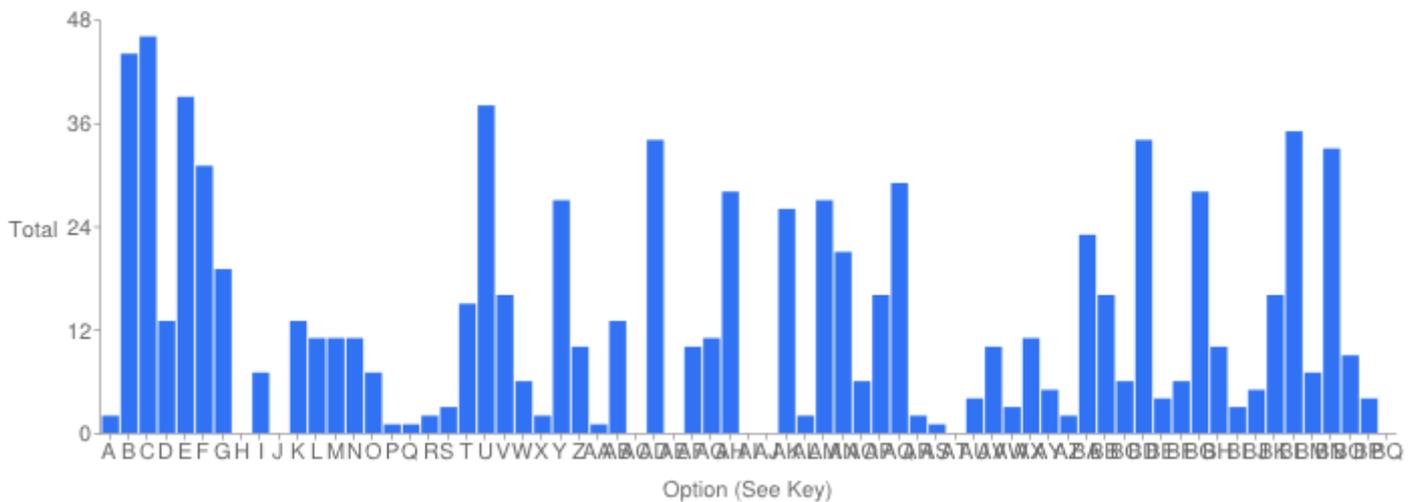
Introduction

Question 1: What is your name?

There are **795** responses to this part of the question.

Question 2: What is your suburb?

Table of "suburb"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	ALISON	2	0.2283%
B	BATEAU BAY	44	5.023%
C	BERKELEY VALE	46	5.251%
D	BLUE BAY	13	1.484%
E	BLUE HAVEN	39	4.452%
F	BUDGEWOI	31	3.539%



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
G	BUFF POINT	19	2.169%
H	BUSHELLS RIDGE	0	0%
I	CANTON BEACH	7	0.7991%
J	CEDAR BRUSH CREEK	0	0%
K	CHAIN VALLEY BAY	13	1.484%
L	CHARMHAVEN	11	1.256%
M	CHITTAWAY BAY	11	1.256%
N	CHITTAWAY POINT	11	1.256%
O	DOORALONG	7	0.7991%
P	DOYALSON	1	0.1142%
Q	DOYALSON NORTH	1	0.1142%
R	DURREN DURREN	2	0.2283%
S	FOUNTAINDALE	3	0.3425%
T	GLENNING VALLEY	15	1.712%
U	GOROKAN	38	4.338%
V	GWANDALAN	16	1.826%
W	HALEKULANI	6	0.6849%
X	HALLORAN	2	0.2283%
Y	HAMLIN TERRACE	27	3.082%
Z	JILLIBY	10	1.142%
AA	KANGY ANGY	1	0.1142%
AB	KANWAL	13	1.484%
AC	KIAR	0	0%
AD	KILLARNEY VALE	34	3.881%
AE	KINGFISHER SHORES	0	0%



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
AF	KULNURA	10	1.142%
AG	LAKE HAVEN	11	1.256%
AH	LAKE MUNMORAH	28	3.196%
AI	LEMON TREE	0	0%
AJ	LITTLE JILLIBY	0	0%
AK	LONG JETTY	26	2.968%
AL	MAGENTA	2	0.2283%
AM	MANNERING PARK	27	3.082%
AN	MARDI	21	2.397%
AO	NORAH HEAD	6	0.6849%
AP	NORAVILLE	16	1.826%
AQ	OURIMBAH	29	3.311%
AR	PALM GROVE	2	0.2283%
AS	PALMDALE	1	0.1142%
AT	RAVENSDALE	0	0%
AU	ROCKY POINT	4	0.4566%
AV	SAN REMO	10	1.142%
AW	SHELLY BEACH	3	0.3425%
AX	SUMMERLAND POINT	11	1.256%
AY	TACOMA	5	0.5708%
AZ	TACOMA SOUTH	2	0.2283%
BA	THE ENTRANCE	23	2.626%
BB	THE ENTRANCE NORTH	16	1.826%
BC	TOOWOON BAY	6	0.6849%
BD	TOUKLEY	34	3.881%



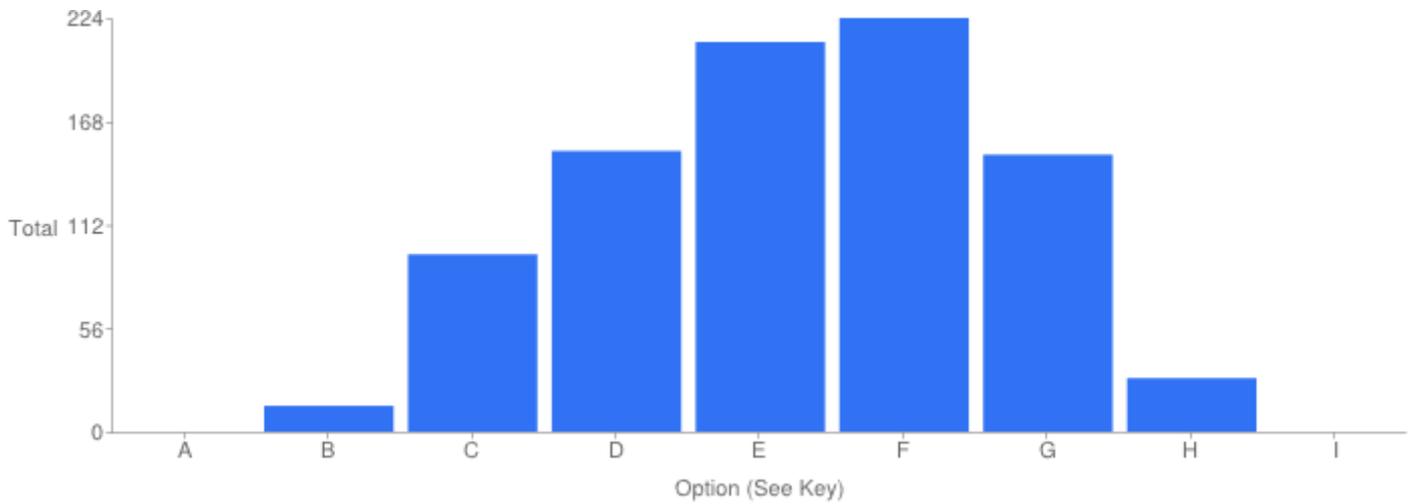
Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
BE	TUGGERAH	4	0.4566%
BF	TUGGERAWONG	6	0.6849%
BG	TUMBI UMBI	28	3.196%
BH	WADALBA	10	1.142%
BI	WALLARAH	3	0.3425%
BJ	WARNERVALE	5	0.5708%
BK	WATANOBBI	16	1.826%
BL	WOONGARRAH	35	3.995%
BM	WYONG CREEK	7	0.7991%
BN	WYONG	33	3.767%
BO	WYONGAH	9	1.027%
BP	YARRAMALONG	4	0.4566%
BQ	Not Answered	0	0%

Question 3: What is your email address?

There are **634** responses to this part of the question.

Question 4: What is your age group?

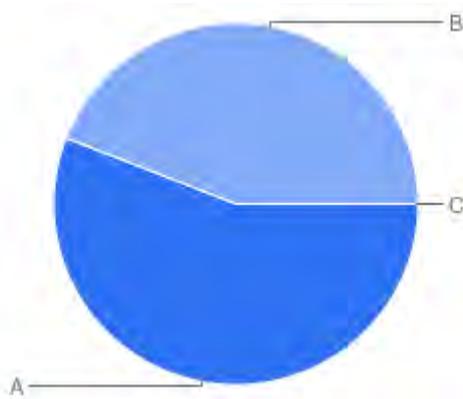
Table of "Age group"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Under 18 years	0	0%
B	18 – 24 years	14	1.598%
C	25 – 34 years	96	10.96%
D	35 – 44 years	152	17.35%
E	45 – 54 years	211	24.09%
F	55 – 64 years	224	25.57%
G	65 – 74 years	150	17.12%
H	75 years +	29	3.311%
I	Not Answered	0	0%

Question 5: What is your gender?

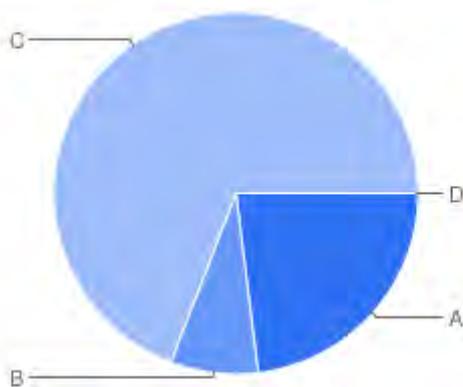
Table of "Gender"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Male	490	55.94%
B	Female	386	44.06%
C	Not Answered	0	0%

Question 6: Would you like to become a member of Council’s Resident ePanel?

Table of "Resident ePanel"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Yes please!	202	23.06%
B	No thanks – I’m already a member	68	7.763%
C	No thanks – I’m happy as I am	606	69.18%



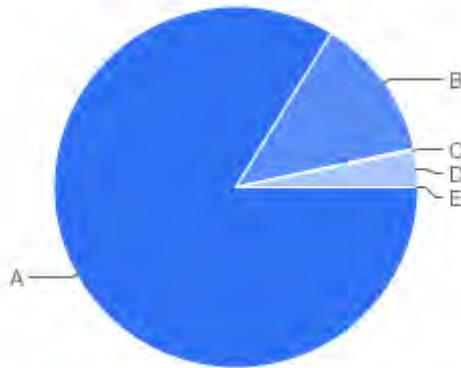
Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
D	Not Answered	0	0%



Your Place, Your Say, Your Future

Question 7: Do you own property in the Wyong Shire?

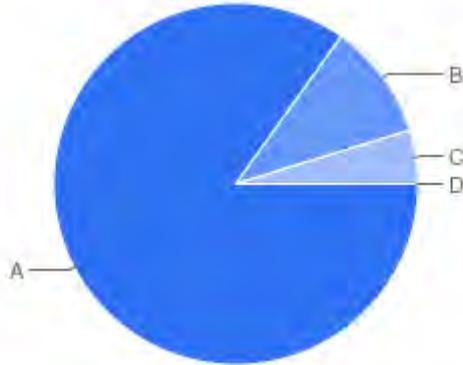
Table of "Ownership"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Yes	734	83.79%
B	Yes – I own two or more	112	12.79%
C	Yes – I own a commercial premises	2	0.2283%
D	No – I rent/am a tenant	28	3.196%
E	Not Answered	0	0%

Question 8: Have you read the attached information that was provided?

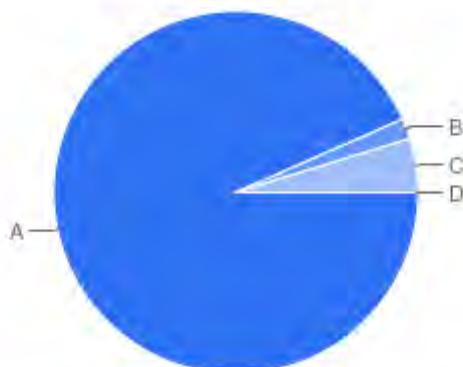
Table of "Info"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Yes	743	84.82%
B	No – I already know about	91	10.39%
C	No	42	4.795%
D	Not Answered	0	0%

Question 9: Do you understand the background to the Your Place, Your Say, Your Future campaign?

Table of "Background"



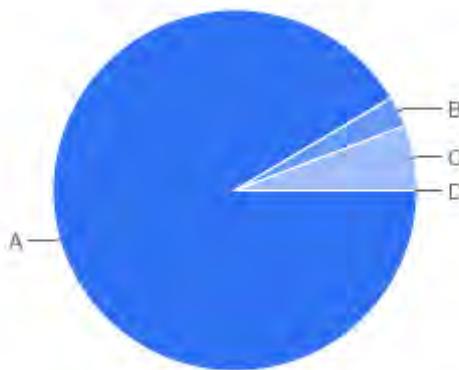
Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Yes	818	93.38%
B	No	57	6.62%
C	Not Answered	0	0%
D	Not Answered	0	0%



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
B	No	16	1.826%
C	Unsure	42	4.795%
D	Not Answered	0	0%

Question 10: Do you understand the information about Council’s current financial situation?

Table of "Financial"



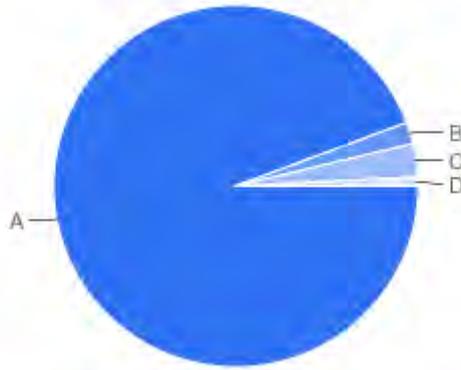
Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Yes	801	91.44%
B	No	24	2.740%
C	Unsure	51	5.822%
D	Not Answered	0	0%



Your Place, Your Say, Your Future

Question 11: Do you understand that Council are presenting options to the community to ensure future financial sustainability and asset maintenance is achievable?

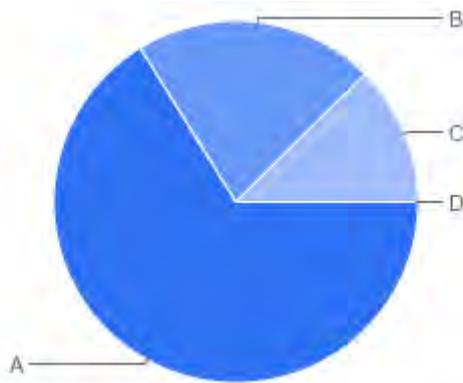
Table of "understanding"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Yes	826	94.29%
B	No	17	1.941%
C	Unsure	26	2.968%
D	Not Answered	7	0.7991%

Question 12: Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services in each of the three options, which one do you most prefer?

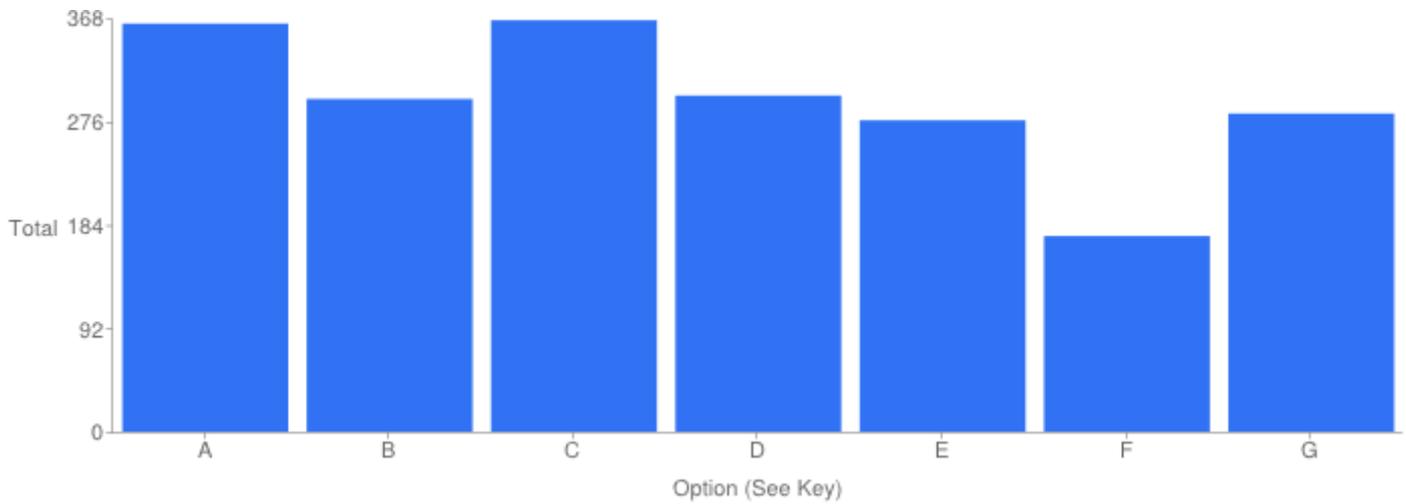
Table of "Option choice"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Option one - Reduce Services - Maintain Rates.	580	66.21%
B	Option two - Maintain assets - Increase Rates	187	21.35%
C	Option three - New assets - Increase Rates	109	12.44%
D	Not Answered	0	0%

Question 13: If you chose option one, what was your main objection to option two or three? Only answer this question if you chose option one in the previous question. You can select more than one answer.

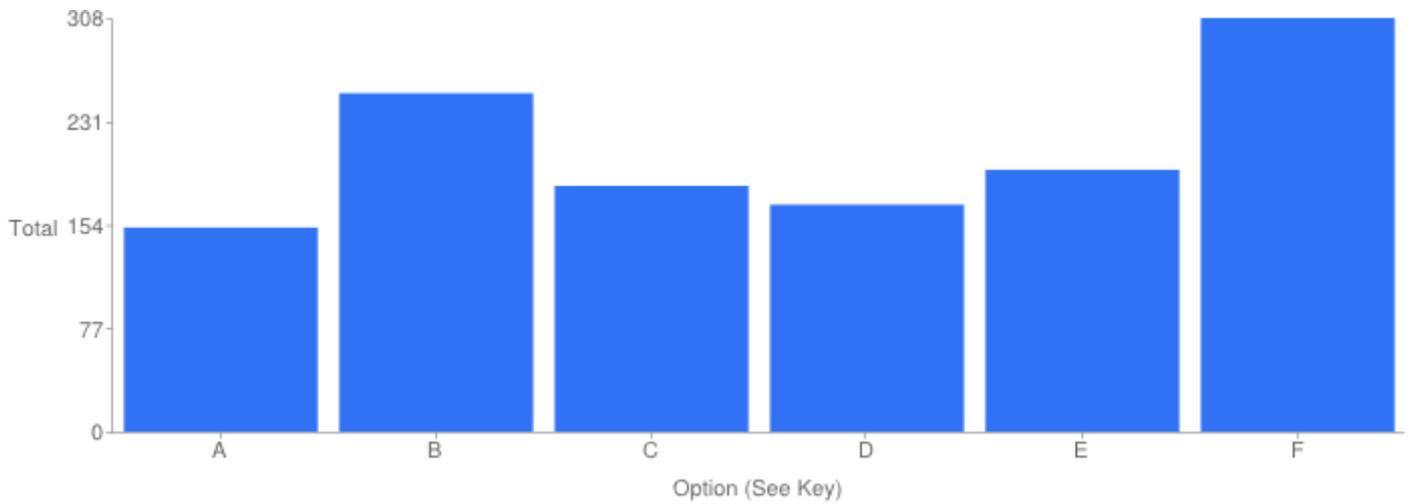
Table of "why"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Can't afford it	363	41.44%
B	Council wastes money on things the community doesn't need	296	33.79%
C	Don't want to pay for Council inefficiency/bad management	366	41.78%
D	Not confident the money would be spent the way Council says it will	299	34.13%
E	Money being spent on the wrong things	277	31.62%
F	Plans don't fix the things that are important to you	174	19.86%
G	Not Answered	283	32.31%

Question 14: If you chose option one, under what conditions would you vote for option two or three? Only answer this question if you voted for option one in the previous question. You can select more than one answer.

Table of "why"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	If you could afford it	152	17.35%
B	If Council improves their efficiency first	252	28.77%
C	If Council demonstrated that the money was spent as they planned	183	20.89%
D	If Council made developers make proper contribution to new developments	169	19.29%
E	None (would not support under any circumstances)	195	22.26%
F	Not Answered	308	35.16%



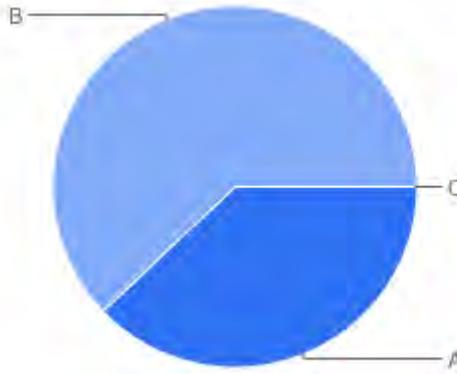
Your Place, Your Say, Your Future

Question 15: Do you have any other comments?

There are **561** responses to this part of the question.

Question 16: Would you like to be entered in the draw to win one of 10 double passes to the Central Coast Mariners New Year's Eve game?

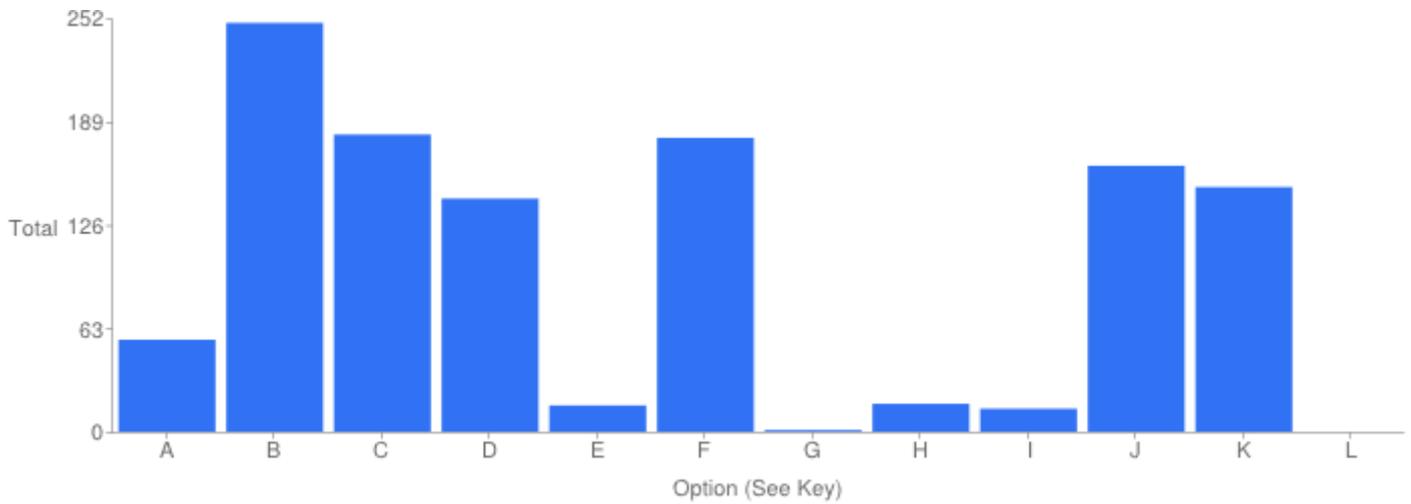
Table of "Competition"



Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Yes please	332	37.90%
B	No thanks	544	62.10%
C	Not Answered	0	0%

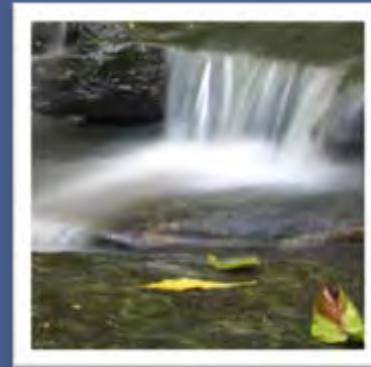
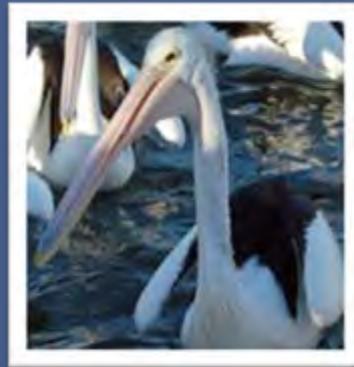
Question 17: Where did you see/hear information regarding the Your Place Your Say Your future community consultation? (Can choose more than one)

Table of "Where did they hear?"



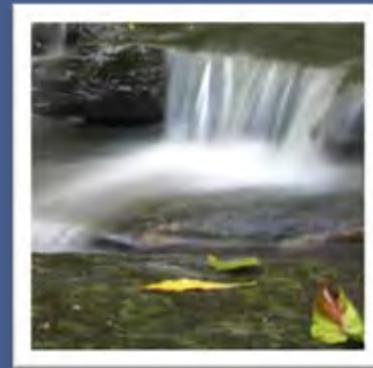
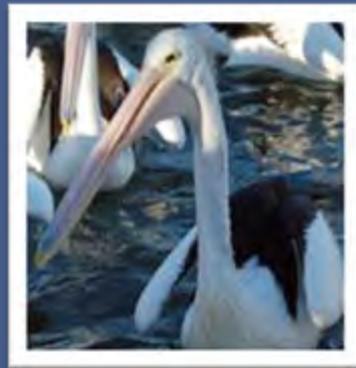
Key	Option	Total	Percent of All
A	Advertisements on the radio	56	6.393%
B	Advertisements in the newspaper	249	28.42%
C	Articles in the newspaper	181	20.66%
D	Information on the Council website	142	16.21%
E	Information at a local event	16	1.826%
F	Information sent in the mail	179	20.43%
G	Information on signs	1	0.1142%
H	Information at shopping centres	17	1.941%
I	Attendance at a workshop	14	1.598%
J	Word of mouth	162	18.49%
K	Other (please comment)	149	17.01%
L	Not Answered	0	0%

There are **172** responses to this part of the question.



Wyong Shire Council Special Rate Variation Research

Prepared By: Micromex Research
Date: January 2013



Background

Background & Key Research Objectives

Wyong Shire Council has determined that to maintain current infrastructure and services it would need additional funding. In order to assess community attitude to this it conducted a robust community consultation.

This survey was designed to capture a true measure of community response to the potential SRV, with further objectives including:

1. To measure community support for the introduction of a possible special rate levy
2. To provide an avenue for feedback in order for residents to express their views on the proposed SRV



The purpose of the survey was to engage and involve the community in the decision process regarding the future of the LGA

In order to assess the community's response to the special rate variation, Wyong Shire Council commissioned quantitative community research.

Specifics of the Survey

Random telephone survey with n=400 residents aged 18 y/o +

- o The sample was weighted by age to reflect the 2011 ABS Census data
- o A sample size of 400 residents provides a maximum sampling error of approximately +/- 4.8% at 95% confidence
- o Participants were asked some profiling questions, then specific questions relating to the proposed special rate variation

Fieldwork was conducted between the 23rd and 26th of November 2012

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

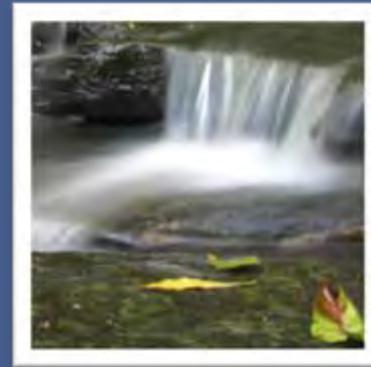
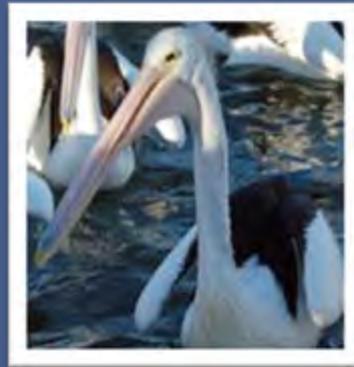
Developed in conjunction with Council, the questionnaire, of approximately 10 minutes in duration, was designed to establish current attitudes and explore community response to the proposed resource strategies.

Questionnaire Structure

- Q. Satisfaction with the quality of infrastructure and facilities provided by Council
- Q. Satisfaction with the quality of long term planning for local infrastructure provided by Council
- Q. Importance of Council implementing plans and programs to provide better infrastructure and facilities
- Q. Prior awareness of Council conducting community consultations regarding this issue
- Q. Where information about the community consultations had been sourced

Concept read – detailing the 3 Options

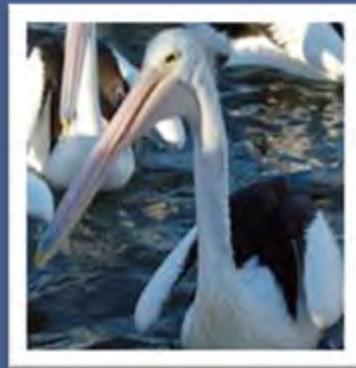
- Q. Preferred option of the 3 scenarios
- Q. Support for Options 2 & 3
- Q. Home ownership
- Q. Age
- Q. Length of time lived in the Shire
- Q. Gender
- Q. Interest in becoming a member of Council's Resident ePanel



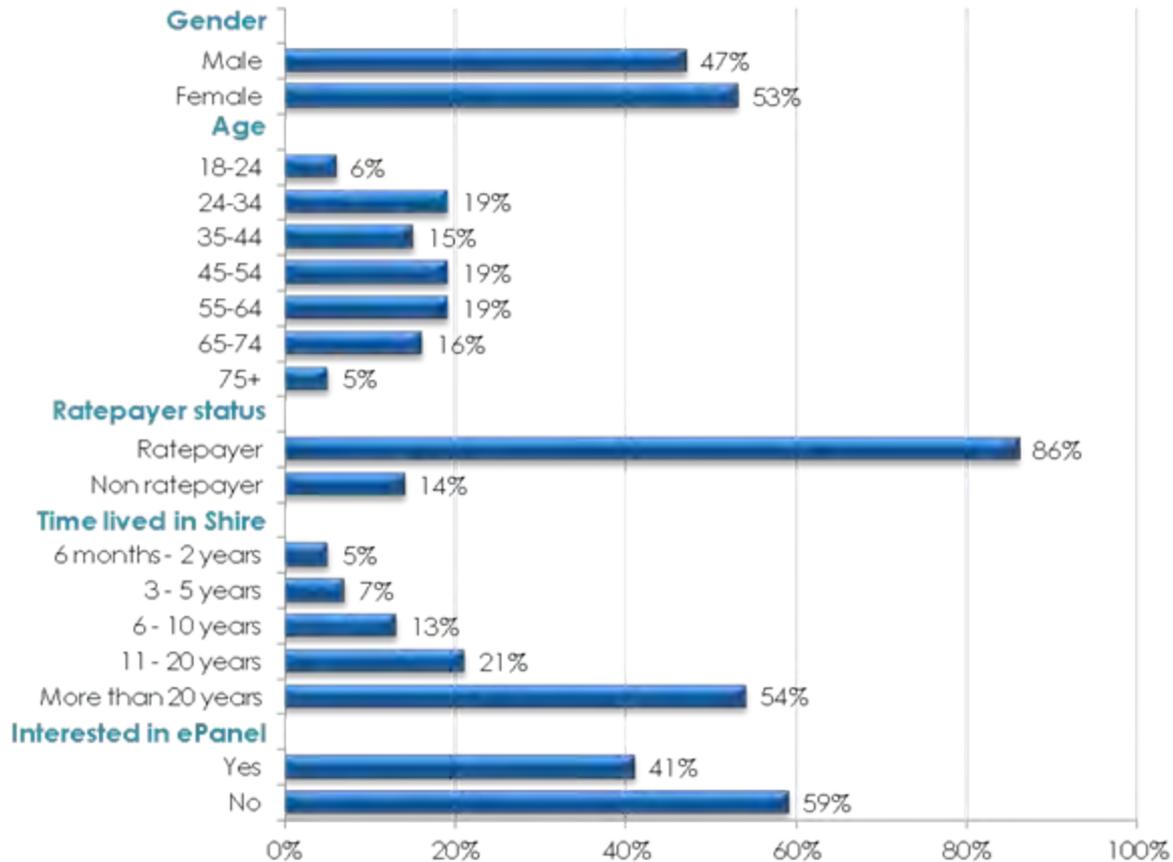
Key Findings

The outcomes indicate that the community is polarised on whether they would support Council applying for an SRV

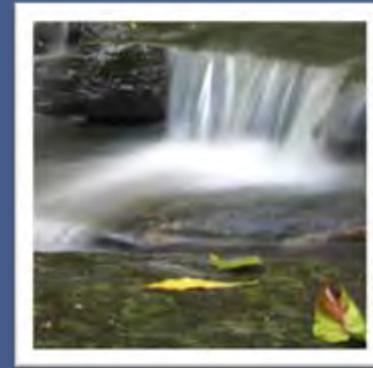
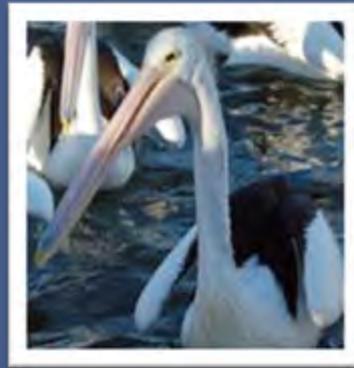
- ⇒ *51% of residents are against the proposed increase, citing affordability issues*
- ⇒ *49% of residents are supportive of some type of special rate variation, agreeing that the quality of local infrastructure and facilities needs addressing*



Sample Profile



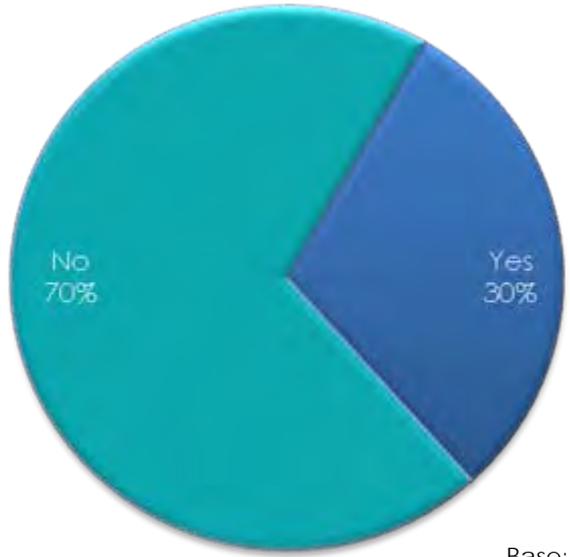
Base: n=400



Consultation with the Community

30% Of Residents Were Aware Of Council Conducting Consultations With The Community

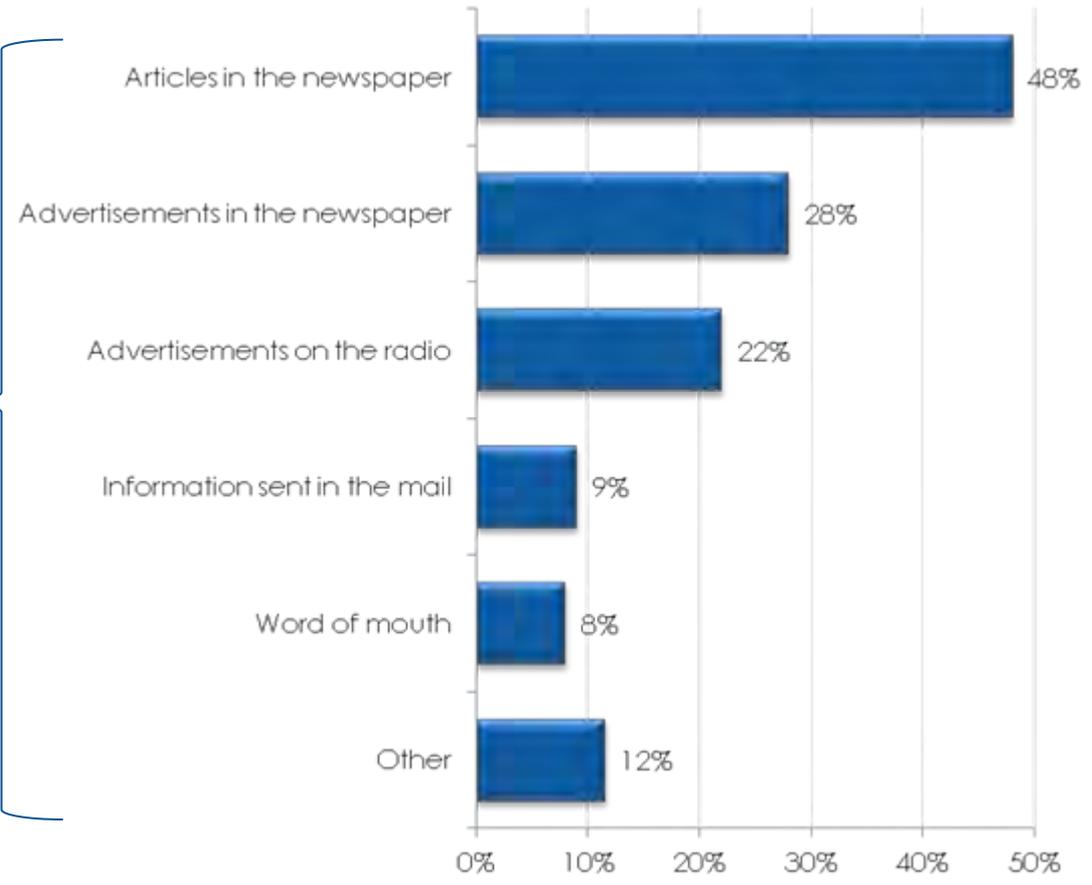
Q. Council is currently presenting options to the community to ensure future financial sustainability and asset maintenance is achievable. Prior to this phone call were you aware that Council was conducting consultations with the community on this issue?



Base: n=400

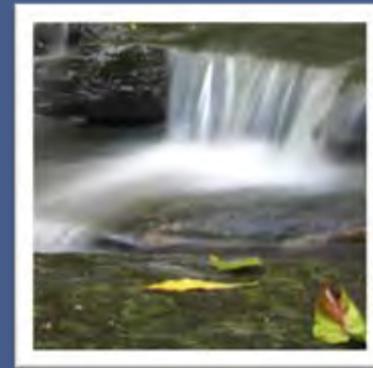
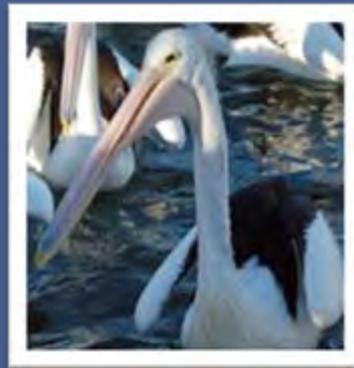
- 65-74 y/o were significantly more aware than were 24-34 y/o
45% v 17%
- Ratepayers were significantly more aware than were non ratepayers
32% v 17%

Q. Where did you see or hear about this?



Base: n=121

There are reasonable levels of awareness

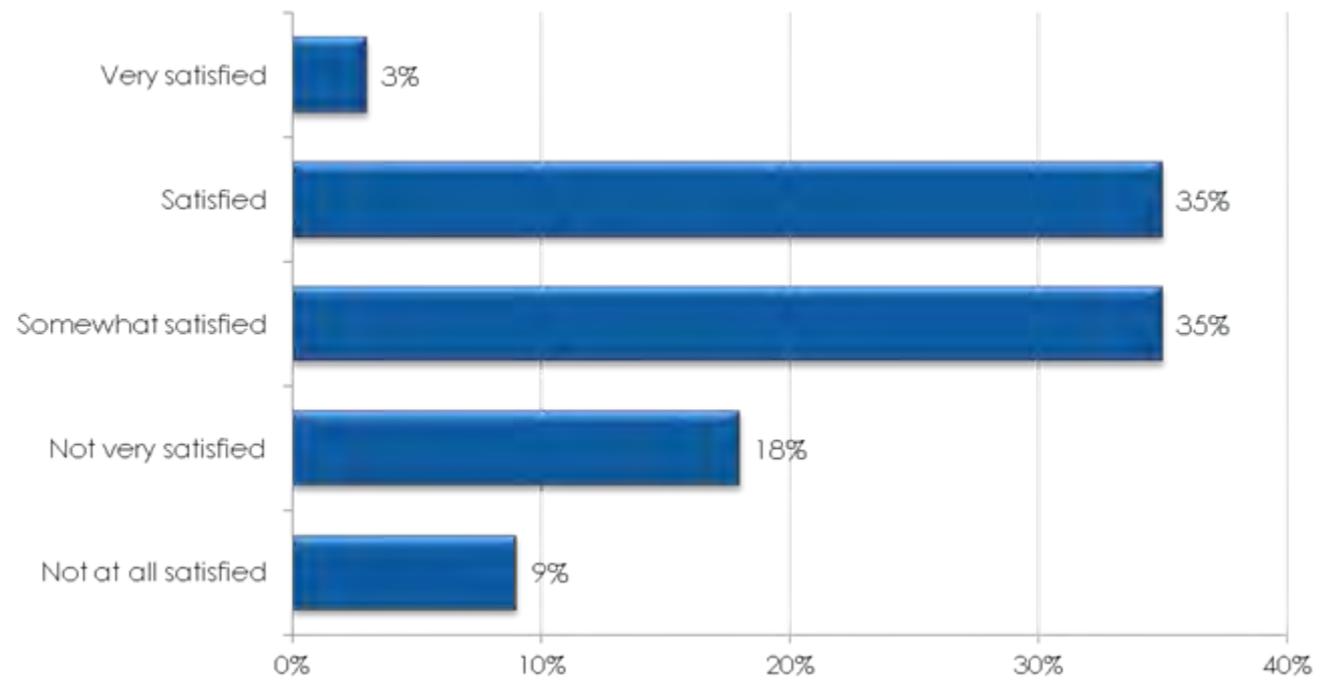


The Detailed Response

73% Of Residents Are At Least 'Somewhat Satisfied' With The Quality Of Infrastructure And Facilities Being Provided By Council

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

Mean rating – 3.04



24-34 y/o are more satisfied than are 55-64 y/o
3.35 v 2.78

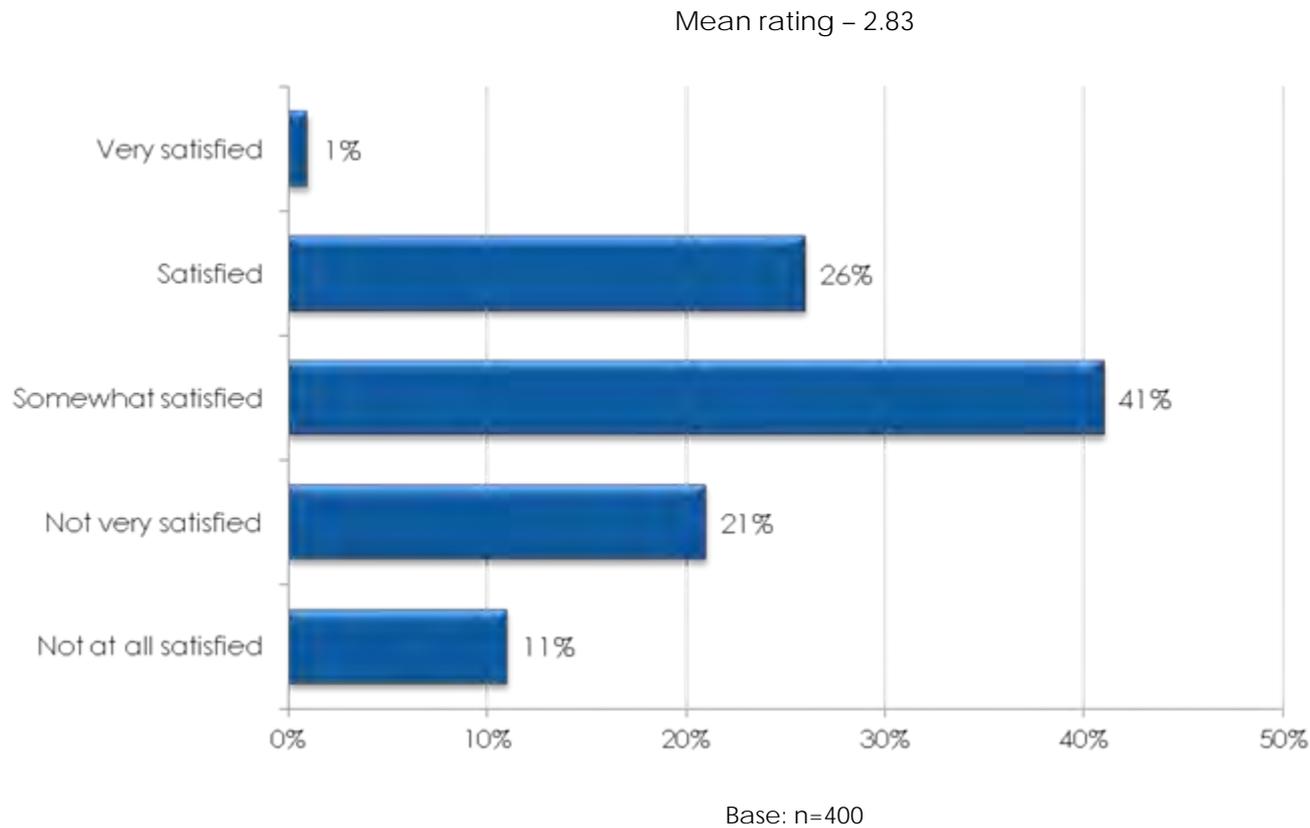
Base: n=400

Mean ratings: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

27% are not satisfied with current quality levels

68% Of Residents Are At Least "Somewhat Satisfied" With The Quality Of Long Term Planning Being Provided By Council

Q. How satisfied are you with the quality of long term planning for local infrastructure being provided by Council?



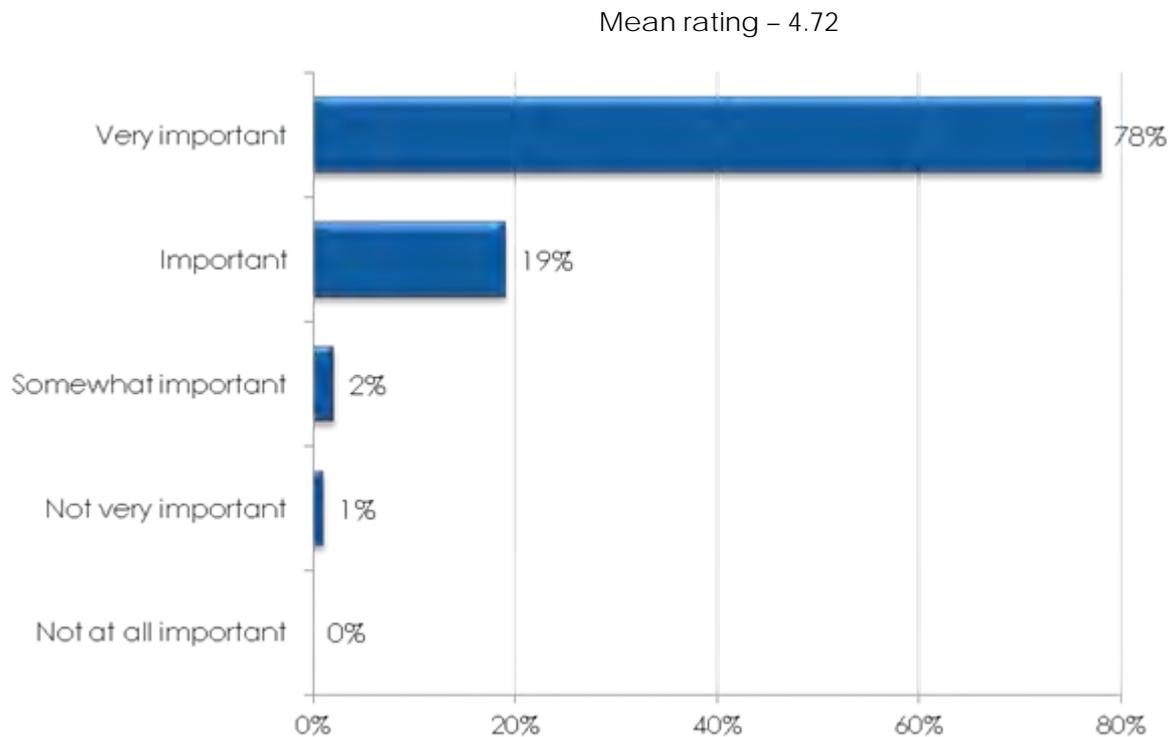
Females are significantly more satisfied than are males 2.99 v 2.66

Mean ratings: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

11% are not at all satisfied with the quality of long term planning currently provided by Wyong Shire Council

97% Of Residents Believe Council Should Implement Plans & Programs To Provide Better Infrastructure & Facilities

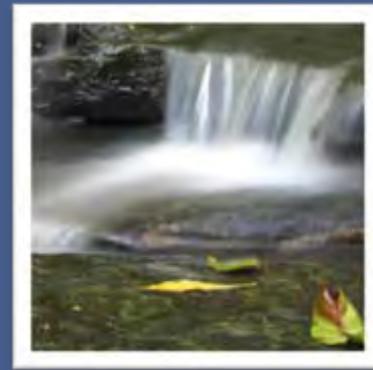
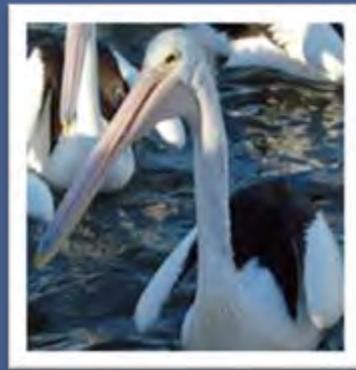
Q. How important do you believe it is for Council to implement plans and programs that will provide better infrastructure and facilities for the Wyong Shire?



Mean ratings: 1 = not at all important, 5 = very important

Base: n=400

Residents do not want to see the quality of local infrastructure and facilities be allowed to deteriorate – This result is in line with other LGAs who have pursued SRVs in the last 12 months



Response to the SRV Concept

Council has a responsibility to plan for the future of the Wyong Shire and needs to act now to avoid more significant costs in the years ahead. Council wants your input to help it make some decisions on the way forward.

Over the last two years, Council has reduced its operating deficit from \$30 million to just over \$12 million, however, Council is still not spending enough money to renew existing assets. If Council increases its spending on assets without extra income, it will face a cash crisis by 2016. There is a backlog of \$121M to be spent to bring assets up to a satisfactory condition.

Council wants to provide the community with quality roads, drainage, public space, recreation, sporting facilities and community buildings, but needs to find a way to deliver the best possible service while remaining financially secure.

We need you to tell us which one of the following options is the best for the future of our community.

Option 1 - Reduce services and maintain rates: Keep the rate increase of around 3% as set each year by the State Government.

- This means we will not have enough money to improve our assets to the required condition, our maintenance and infrastructure backlog will increase significantly and services would be removed or reduced

- Under Option 1, the average ratepayer will pay an increase of \$26 in 2013/14. In the 7th year, the average ratepayer will be paying \$200 more per year

Option 2 - Maintain assets and increase rates: Seek an increased rate income of 9.5% (including the rate peg of around 3%) each year for seven years.

This means asset condition will improve to a satisfactory standard over 7 years and asset maintenance costs will reduce.

Under Option 2, the average ratepayer will pay an increase of \$82 in 2013/14. In the 7th year, the average ratepayer will be paying \$770 more per year.

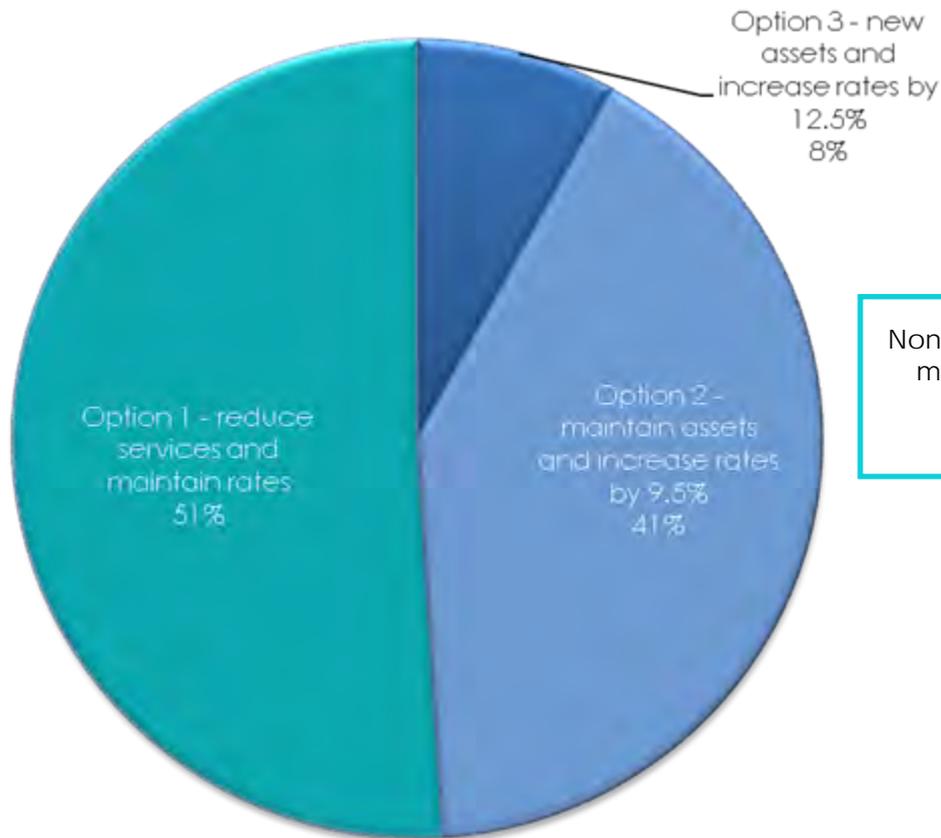
Option 3 - New assets and increase rates: Seek an increased rate income of 12.5% (including the rate peg of around 3%) each year for seven years.

This will improve asset condition to the same standard as in Option 2 and allow an extra \$5m per year for new assets.

Under Option 3, the average ratepayer will pay an increase of \$109 in 2013/14. In the 7th year, the average ratepayer will be paying \$1,112 more per year.

51% Of Residents Would Prefer Not To Pay Higher Rates

Q. Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services in each of the three scenarios, which option do you most prefer?



Non ratepayers were significantly more likely to select Option 3 than were ratepayers
17% v 7%

Base: n=400

Affordability Was The Key Reason For Non Acceptance

- Q. Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services in each of the three scenarios, which option do you most prefer?
 Q. Why do you say that?

Option 1 – 51% of responses	
Cannot afford any more rate increases	17%
Don't believe an increase in rates will lead to better services and facilities being provided	11%
The current rates are too high	10%
Council is not using the money effectively	9%
This is the most affordable option	7%
Option 2 – 41% of responses	
Our services and facilities need improvement	24%
This is the most affordable option	12%
Concerned that any increase in funds will not lead to any improvement in facilities and services	1%
Council are not using the money effectively	1%
The current rates are too high	1%
Other	1%
Option 3 – 8% of responses	
Our services and facilities need improvement	6%

Verbatim responses

"A 3% rate peg is the set increase by the State Government. I think it is unreasonable and unfair for Council to increase this by any amount"

"I don't think Council is using the money effectively at the present moment. I don't trust that a rate increase would see a change in this"

"At present I would find it hard to manage any increase"

"I cannot afford any more rates and I do not like the way Council spends the money as it is not appropriate"

"I feel that even a 9.5% rate increase will be difficult for people to be able to pay"

"I would be hesitant in paying more unless I understood where the money was going to"

"It's the most cost effective way to maintain assets"

"No one wants a rate increase but we cannot afford a decrease in asset maintenance"

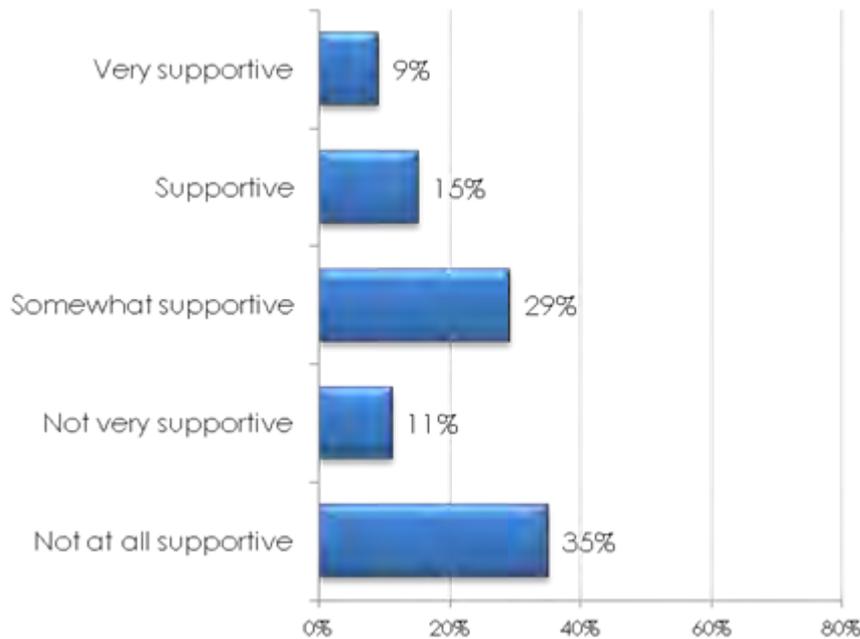
"It's the best option as it not only maintains, but improves infrastructure"

A significant sub cell of residents feel that something needs to be done to address the quality of assets in the Shire

53% Of Residents Are At Least Somewhat Supportive Of Option 2

Q. If Council was to determine that it should make an application to IPART for a special rate variation, how supportive would you be of Council seeking the following options?

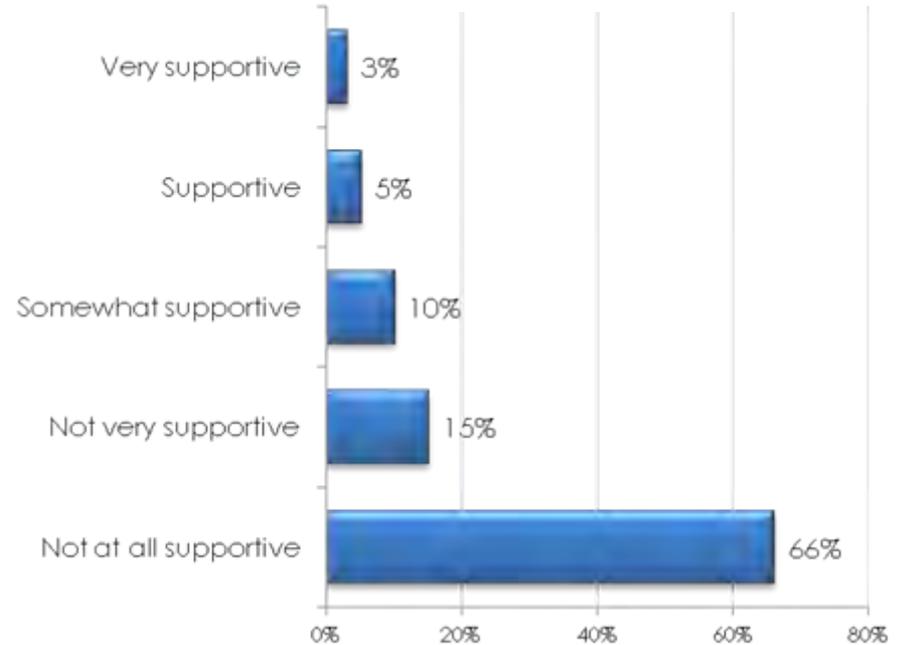
Mean rating – 2.52



Option 2

Base: n=400

Mean rating – 1.64



Option 3

Base: n=400

- Non ratepayers were significantly more likely to support Option 2 than were ratepayers 2.84 v 2.47
- Non ratepayers were significantly more likely to support Option 3 than were ratepayers 2.18 v 1.55

Mean ratings: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = very supportive

Option 3 has elicited minimal support

Option 2 - Verbatim Responses

Q. If Council was to determine that it should make an application to IPART for a special rate variation, how supportive would you be of Council seeking the following options? Why do you say that?

"Option 2 is more financially acceptable than the alternative"

"More of an affordable compromise"

"Something has got to be done in the local area"

Option 2		N=400
Somewhat supportive to very supportive – 54% of responses		
The work needs to be done		18%
This is the preferred of Options 2 & 3		12%
Affordability		11%
Concerned that Council would not use the money appropriately		5%
Other		8%
Not very supportive to not at all supportive – 46% of responses		
Cannot afford an increase		26%
Concerned that Council would not use the money appropriately		16%
This is the preferred of the 2 options that increase rates		1%
Concerned that any increase in funds will not lead to an improvement in facilities		1%
Council should investigate other ways of raising this revenue		1%
Other		4%

"I think the rates are too high for poor exchange in services"

"It's too much money and not sure if facilities will be improved"

"Cost of living is already unaffordable "

"Council needs to investigate other options to raise funds as wages are not increasing this much"

"It sounded better for me than the other options"

"It's a compromise and not as steep as Option 3"

"This sounds to be the most fair Option"

"I don't think Council would use the money appropriately"

"I think Council should learn to run more efficiently"

A significant proportion of residents feel that something needs to be done – but at the same time there is a lack of trust in Council ability to manage spending

Option 3 - Verbatim Responses

Q. If Council was to determine that it should make an application to IPART for a special rate variation, how supportive would you be of Council seeking the following options? Why do you say that?

"Believer in the user pay system to achieve a better result"

"I feel Council has to look ahead for our children's sakes"

"Want to see improvements in the area"

Option 3		N=400
Somewhat supportive to very supportive – 17% of responses		
Infrastructure and facilities need improving		4%
Affordability		4%
Concerned with affordability, but realise the work needs to be done		3%
Concerned that Council would not use the money appropriately		2%
Other		3%
Not very supportive to not at all supportive – 81% of responses		
Affordability		61%
Concerned that Council would not use the money appropriately		19%
Other		5%

"I'm a bit more comfortable with this as things need to be done, but I would like to know how and when things are going to get done, I want to see some action and progress"

"I don't think this increase is affordable for ratepayers"

"If this option was adopted I would have to sell my house"

"I would love to have more things in the community but I cannot afford the increase while bringing up a family "

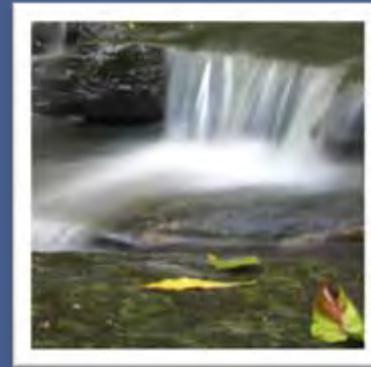
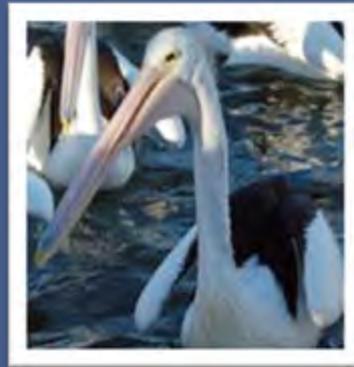
"Too much of an increase for our family to cope with"

"Councillors need to get out and work harder, and stop mismanaging our funds"

"Council should manage its funds better to avoid this big increase"

"I feel Council does not manage their funds efficiently and does not look after local residents, so this rate rise is astronomical and unaffordable for Central Coast residents"

"Increase is outrageous as retired residents cannot afford such a massive increase"



Summary

The outcomes indicate that the community is polarised on whether they would support Council applying for an SRV

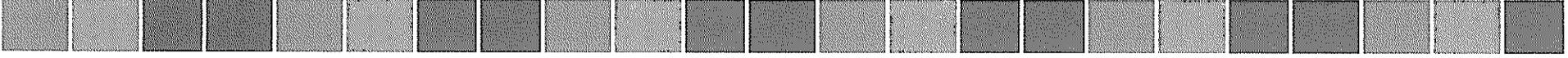
- ⇒ *51% of residents are against the proposed increase, citing affordability issues*
- ⇒ *49% of residents are supportive of some type of special rate variation, agreeing that the quality of local infrastructure and facilities needs addressing*

micromex research

The logo for micromex research features the word "micromex" in a bold, black, lowercase sans-serif font. A stylized compass rose is superimposed over the letter "o". The compass rose has a white center with black lines extending outwards, and a red needle pointing upwards. Below "micromex", the word "research" is written in a smaller, grey, lowercase sans-serif font.

Telephone: (02) 4352 2388 Fax: (02) 4352 2117

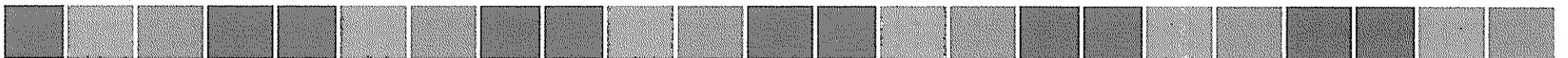
Web: www.micromex.com.au Email: stu@micromex.com.au



Welcome and Introductions

Tonight's Agenda

- What dilemma does Wyong community face?
- The process for resolving the dilemma
- Council's finances in overview – the asset gap
- Community priorities
- Potential funding options
- Consider the pros and cons of funding options
- Provide your input on your preferred options

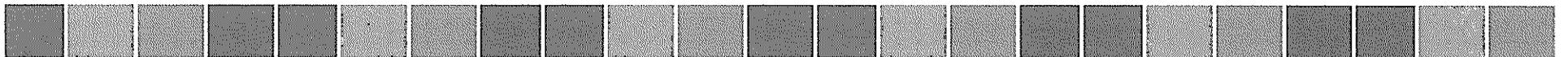


A Short Introduction to the Issue.....

- What do we do?
- What is the issue we're facing?
 - Rate-Pegging has severe impact on Council's \$\$\$
 - Pop. growth has impacted demand for services.
 - Operations and Assets are way behind need.
 - Community expectations

What Our Community Values

- Renewals and upgrades, not new assets.
- Smarter maintenance and operations
- Roads and Drainage
- Open Space
- Sporting, Leisure and Recreation Facilities
- Community Buildings
- Town Centres
- Natural Environment

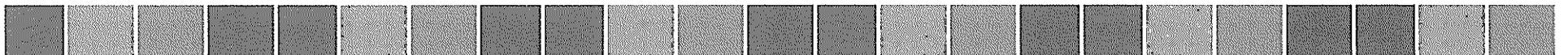


Council has a Decision to Make

- Effort to gain efficiencies almost completed
- Still a huge gap – how do we fund it?
- Balance needed between:
 - Meeting the aspirations of the community
 - Providing appropriate assets
 - The capacity and readiness of the community to pay
 - What are the income options?
 - This is about investing in the future

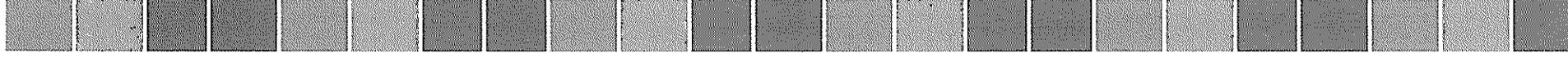
Your Say will Count

- The 3 options are
 - Option 1: Reduced services, maintain rates
 - Option 2: Maintain assets, increase rates
 - Option 3: New assets, increase rates
- Now it's up to you



The Overall Process

- December- Council decides on funding option
- Option built into 2013/14 budget
- Apply to IPART - closes 11 March 2013
- IPART decision in June 2013
- Increases would apply from 2013/14



Questions and Comments so Far...

- Discussion
- Questions?

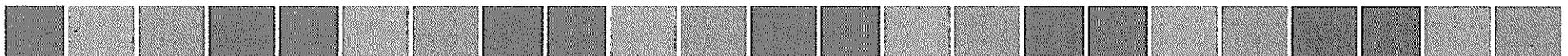


Assets - The Dilemma

- What is an asset?
- What is capital expenditure?
- Assets wearing out quicker than we can renew
- Old assets = more costly to maintain, operate & replace
- The Gap
- Cost to make assets satisfactory = \$121M
- Doesn't include Open Space and Natural Assets
- Not enough money to fix

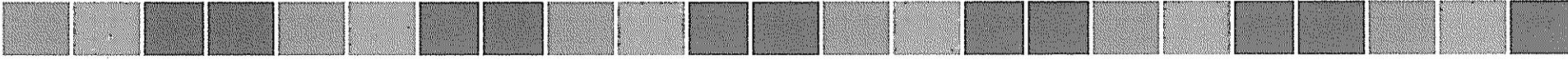
Why We Need to do Something Now

- No quick fix
- Work will take several years
- Need to start or situation gets worse
- Less service to the community
- Less money for asset renewals
- Becomes a vicious circle

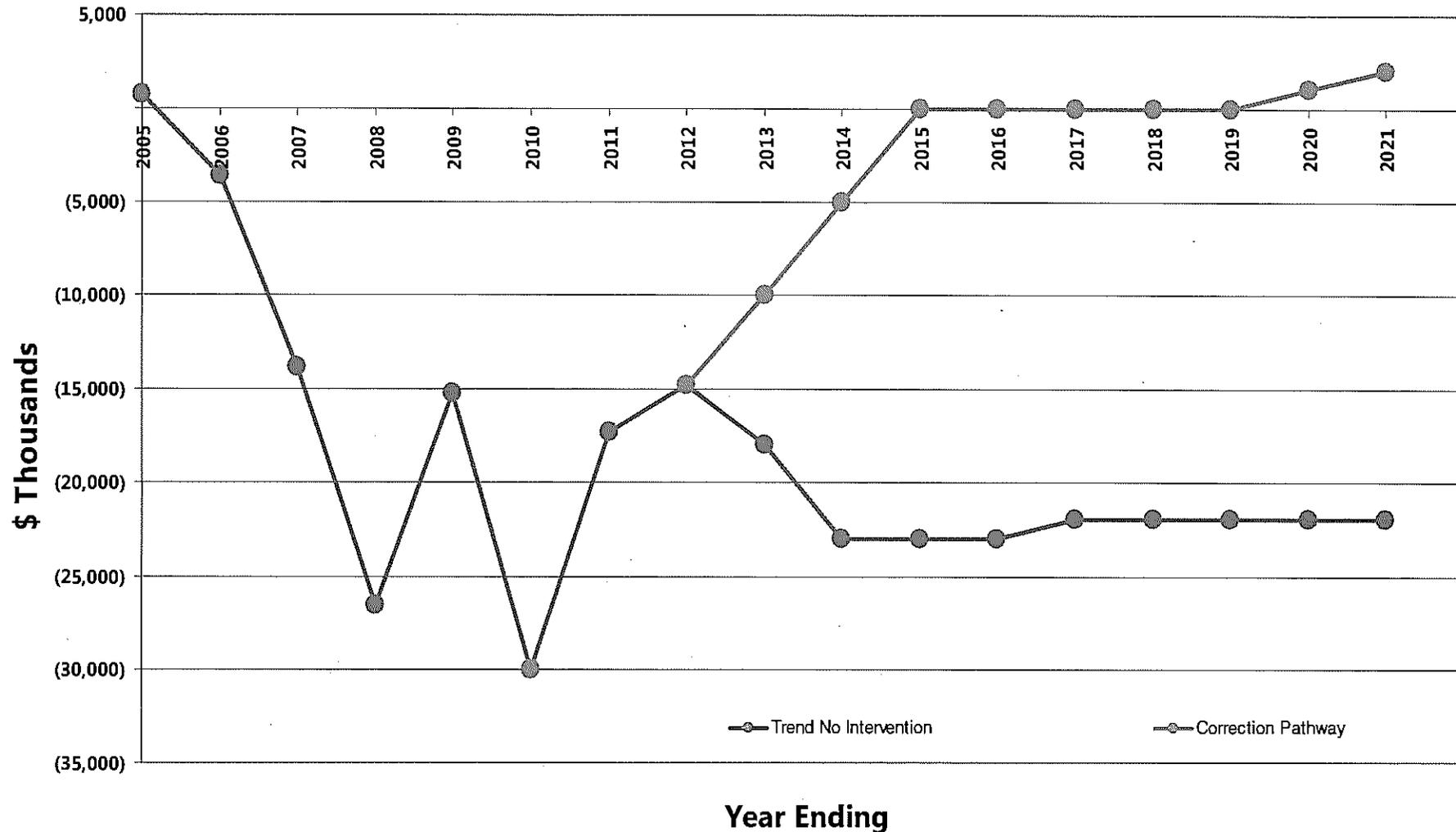


How Do We Pay?

- Not enough cash
- Needs outstrips income every year
- Can't borrow much more
- Increase income or
- Cut some services

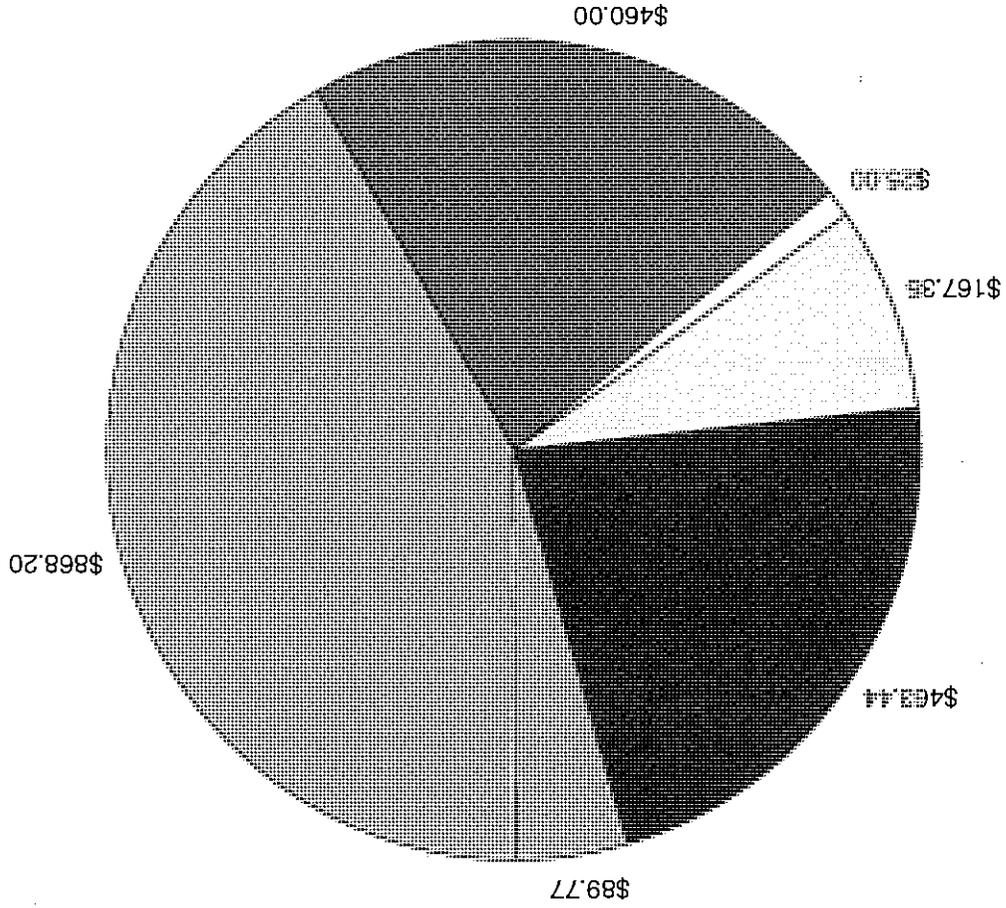


Management has come a long way, but ultimately even breaking even doesn't close the gap



Even when WSC break even in 2015, operations will only be generating around \$25-30m in cash-flow to spend on capital works

Average Rates Notice



Category	2012/13
General Rates	\$868.20
Domestic Waste	\$460.00
Stormwater Management Charge	\$25.00
Water Annual Charge	\$167.35
Sewerage	\$463.44
Drainage Service Charge	\$89.77
Sub-Total	\$2,073.76

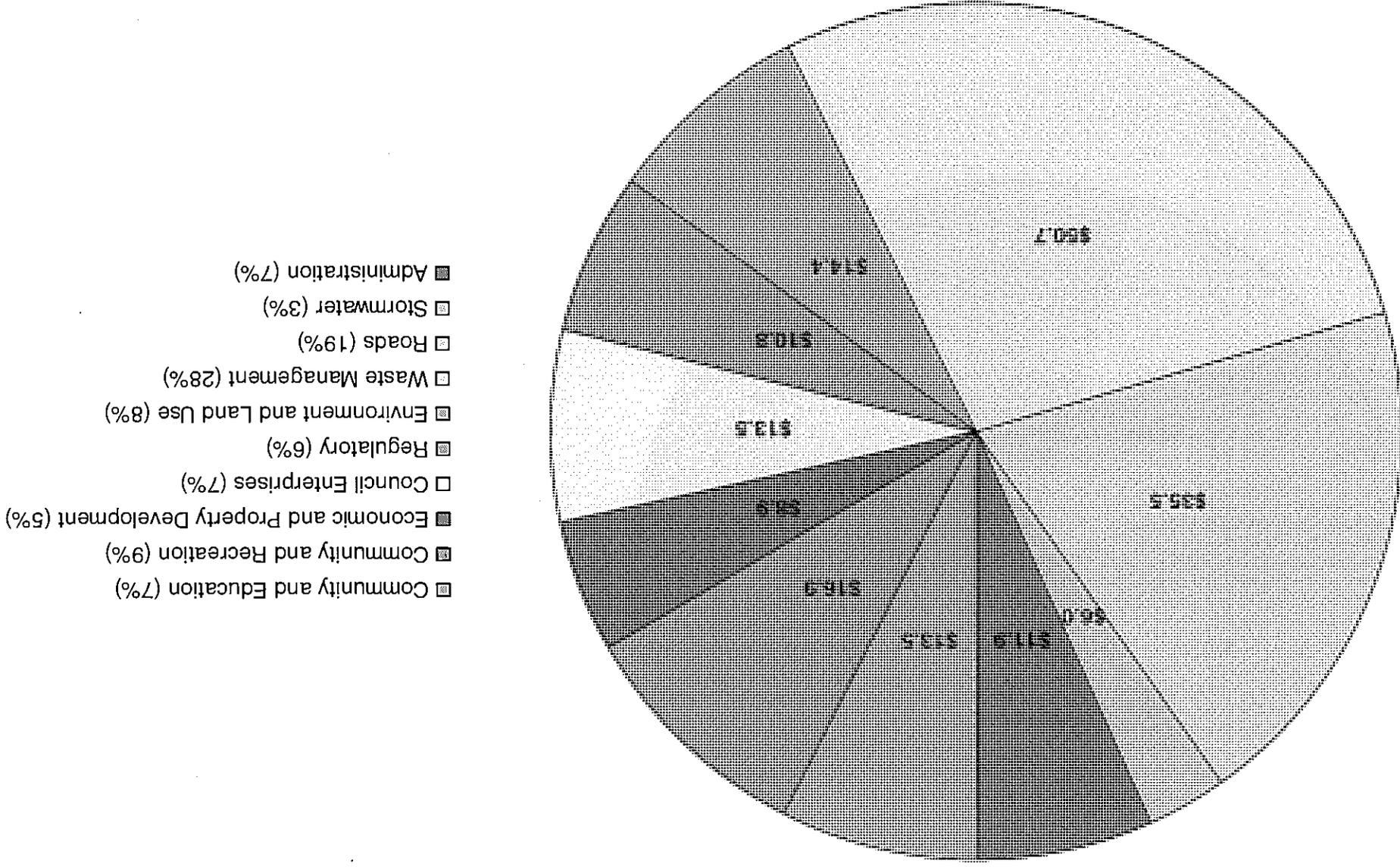
- General Rates
- Domestic Waste
- Stormwater Management Charge
- Water Annual Charge
- Sewerage
- Drainage Service Charge

General Fund Income (2012/13 - \$'m)

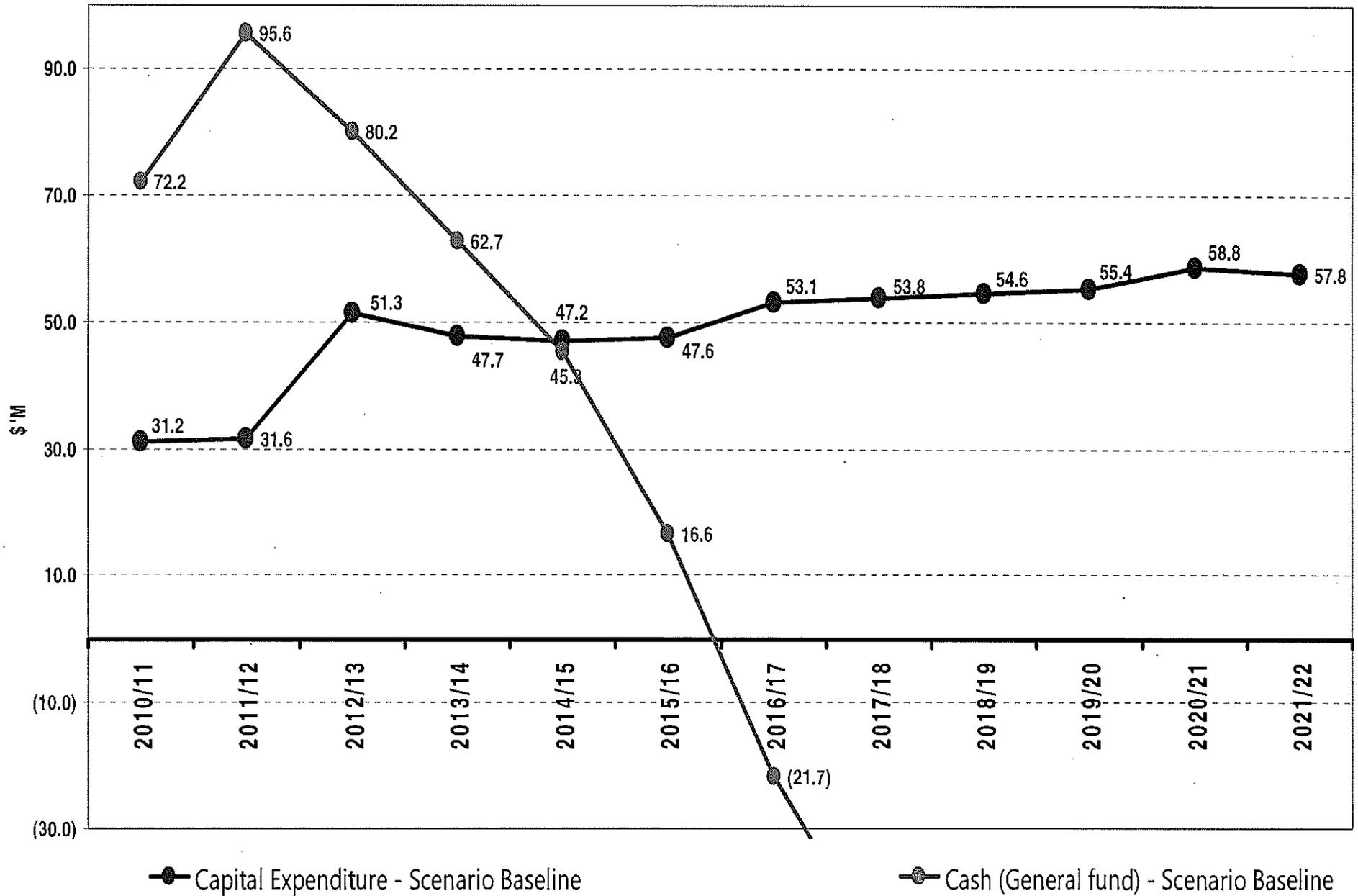


- Ordinary Rates (39%)
- Annual Charges - Waste Management (18%)
- Fees and User Charges (23%)
- Operating Grants and Contributions (15%)
- Interest and Other Income (5%)

General Fund Expenditure by Principal Activity (2012/13 \$'m)



General Fund - Impact of Capital Spend on Cash Reserves



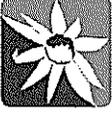
NSW Treasury (T-Corp) Report Confirmed the

Management View that Something had to Change –

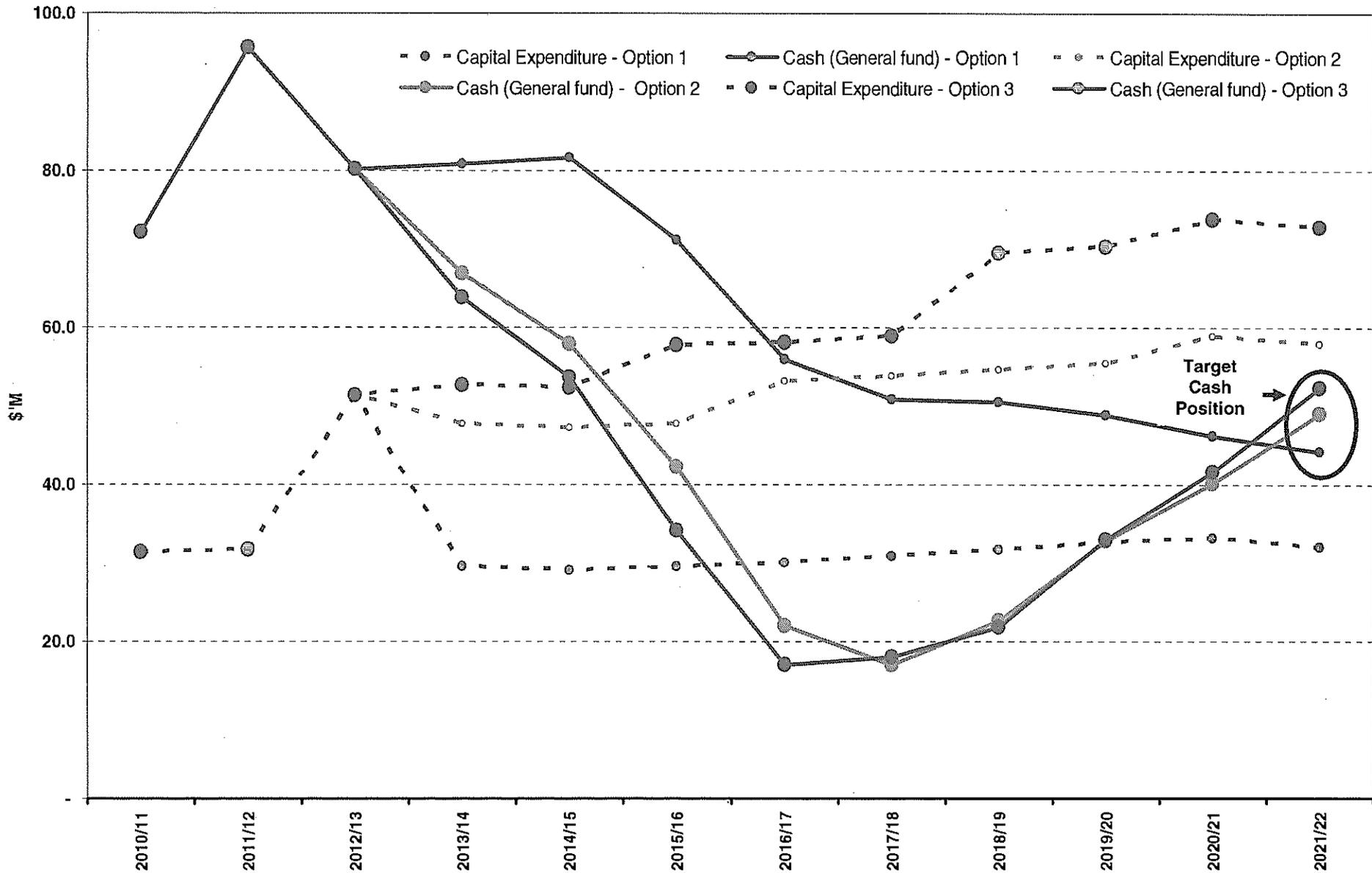
Direct Quote:

- Although Council has strong debt servicing abilities, as indicated by its high forecast DSCR and Interest Cover Ratios, its cash and investment levels are forecast to be exhausted by 2016.

- This is a serious liquidity issue which Council needs to consider, develop options and remodel. Should Council consider adjusting its capital expenditure program to an affordable level, source additional operating cash flow or reduce operating cash expense, then additional borrowing could be considered.



Numerous options were examined. 3 were chosen as preferable.

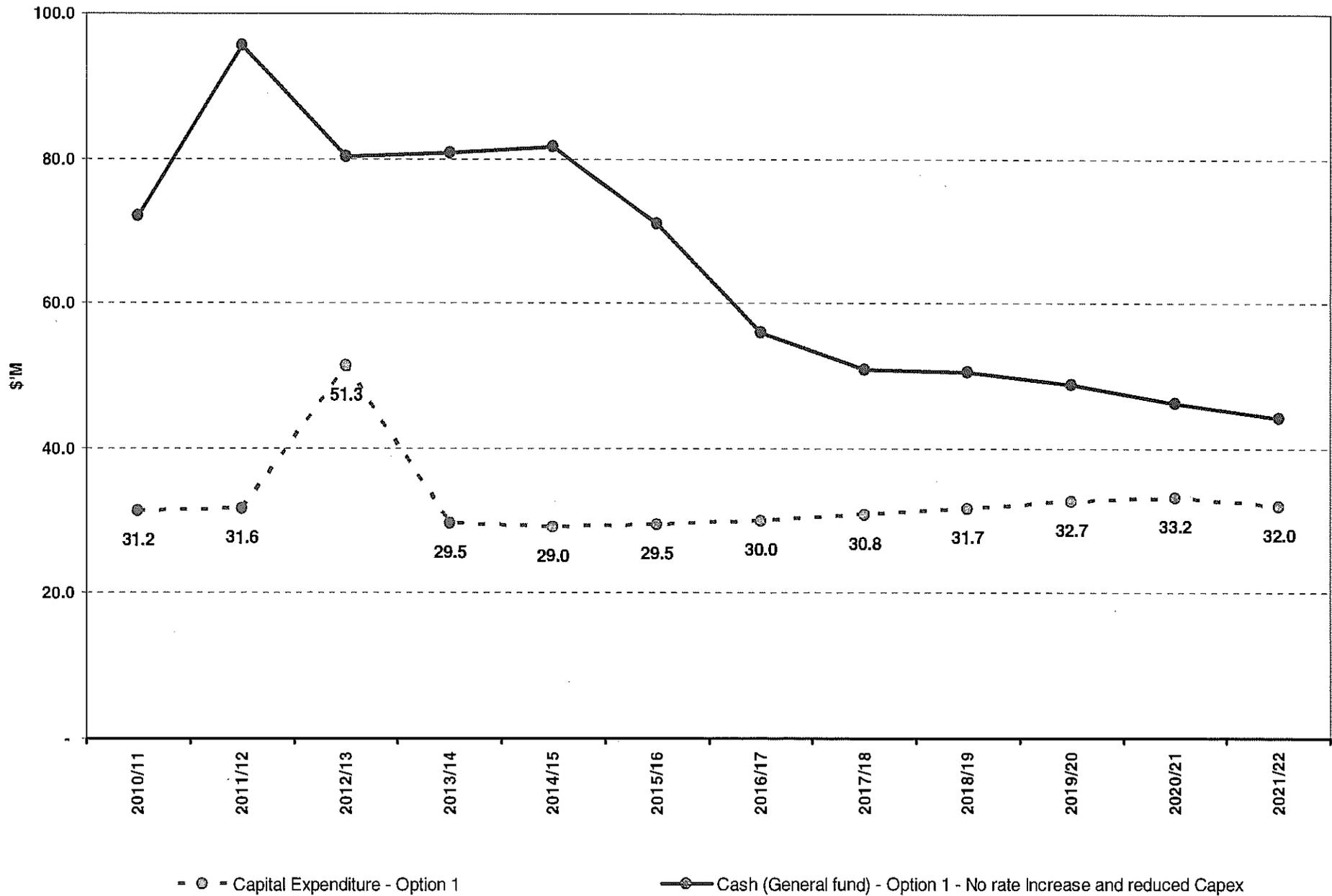


Focus on sustainability and having appropriate cash reserves to cater for unforeseen risks in the long term

Option 1: Reduce services, maintain rates

- The asset gap will not close and maintenance costs will rise as the asset condition worsens
- Asset condition will deteriorate – e.g. roads will return to the downward trend of pre 2008
- Reduced services
- Asset spending level is not affordable
- No capacity to close the asset gap
- No capacity to fund work on natural assets
- No significant new works

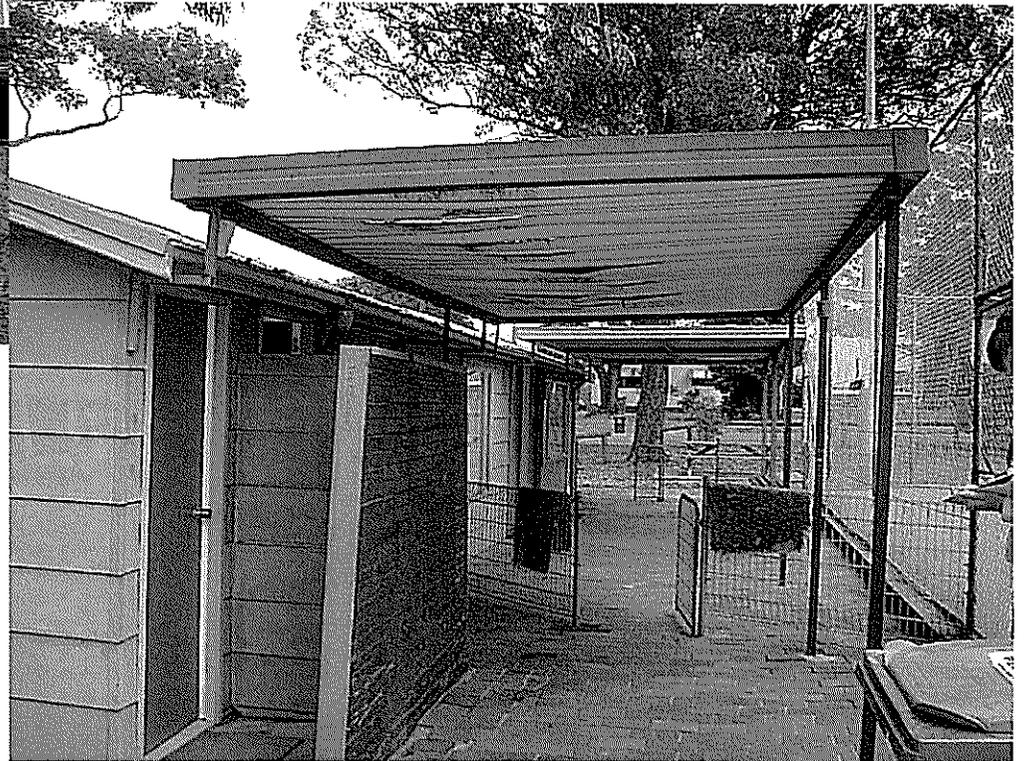
Option 1: Reduce services, maintain rates (no new income, but reduced capital spend levels)





Option 1: What will it look like

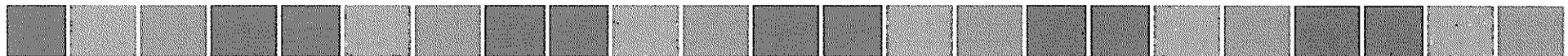
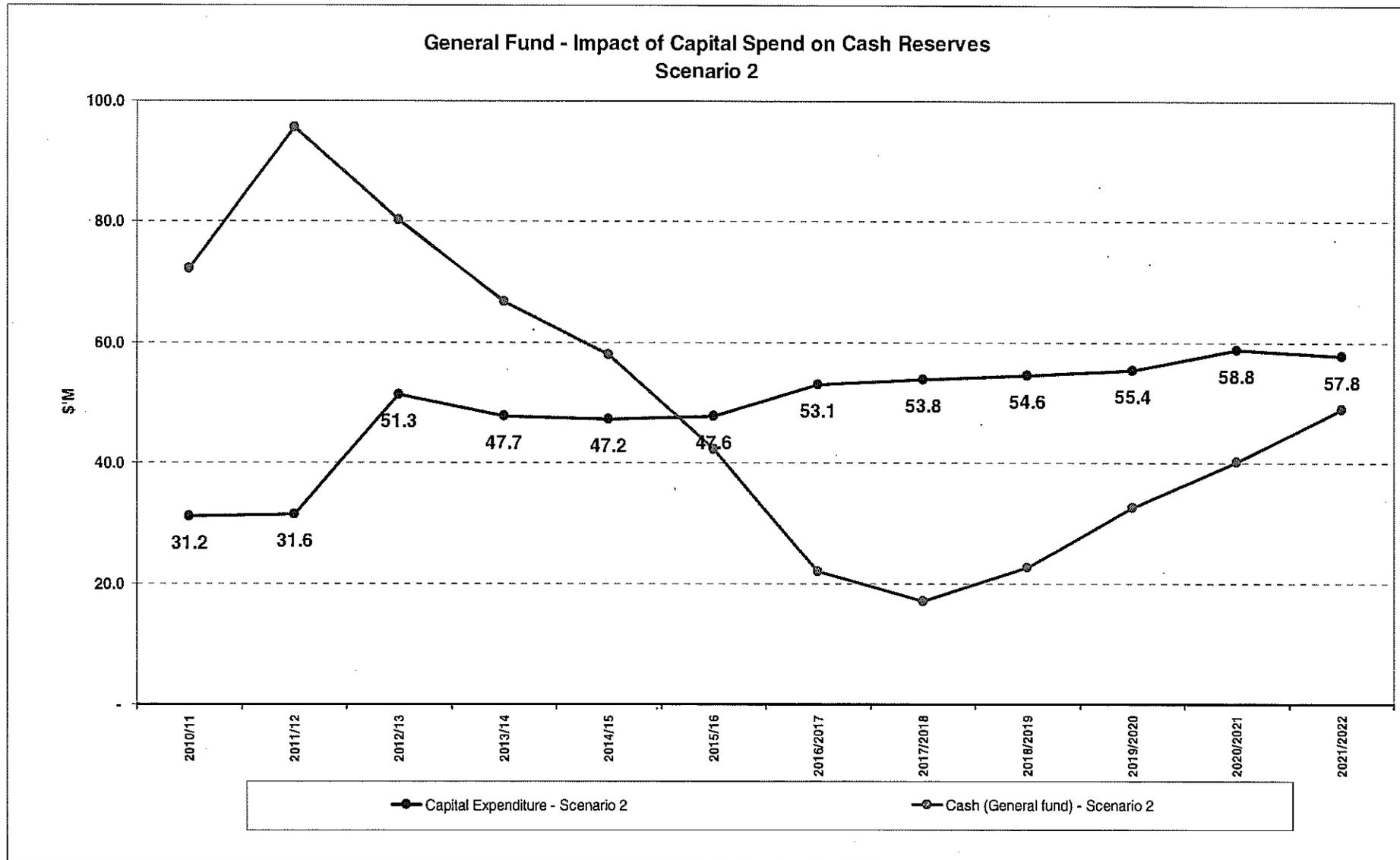
Option 1: What will it look like

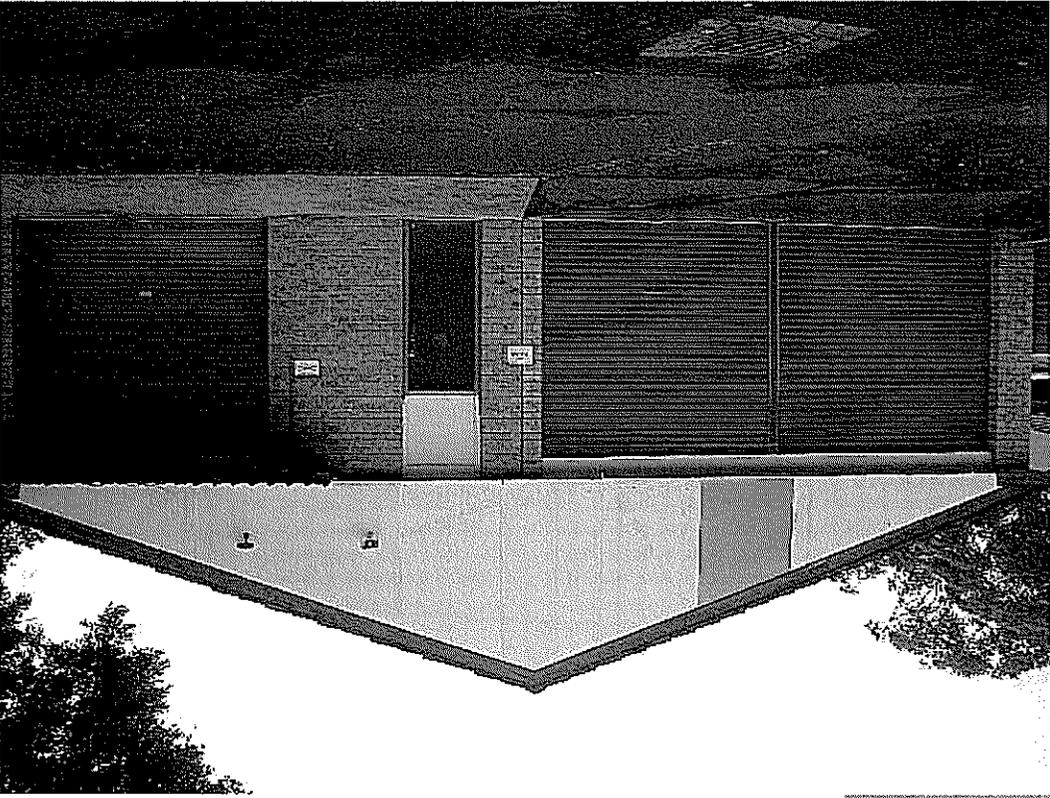
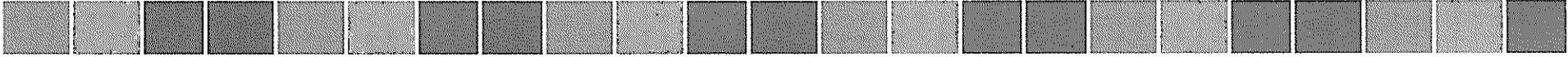


Option 2: Maintain assets, increase rates 9.5% increase (inclusive of Rate Peg), Each Year Over 7 Years

- Asset spending is affordable
- Allows for necessary new and upgrade work
- Asset condition will improve
- Allows some spending on natural assets
- After 7 years, when the asset gap is closed
- Asset maintenance can be reduced from \$17M to \$14M
- The \$17M previously spent on closing the gap may be able be spent on new work

Option 2: Reduced services, maintain rates (9.5% annual increase in rates)

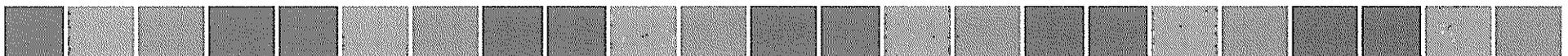




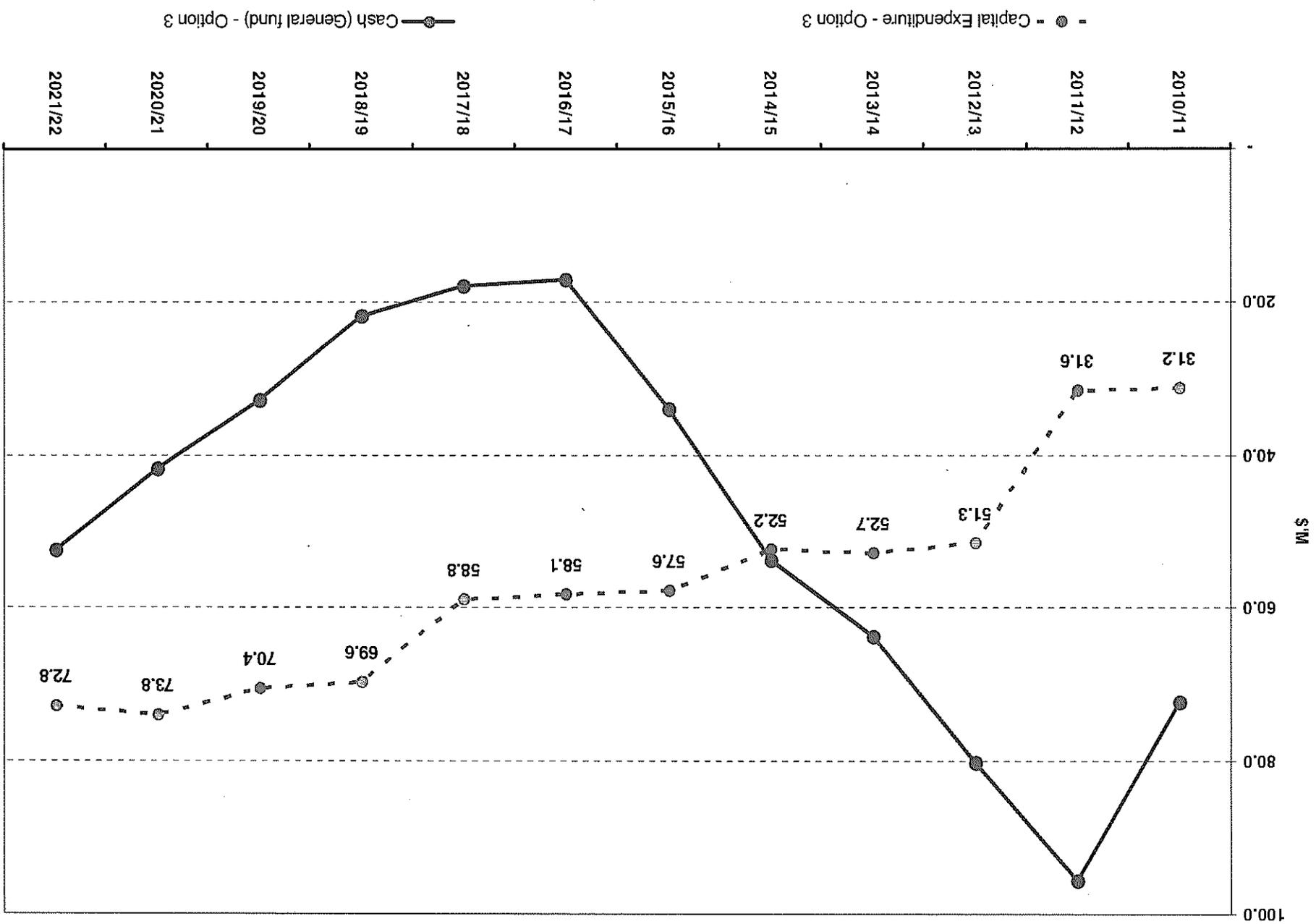
Option 2: What will it look like

Option 3: New assets, increase rates 12.5% increase (inclusive of Rate Peg), Each Year Over 7 Years

- Asset spending is affordable
- As per Option 2 but can now spend a further \$5.0M per year on new assets



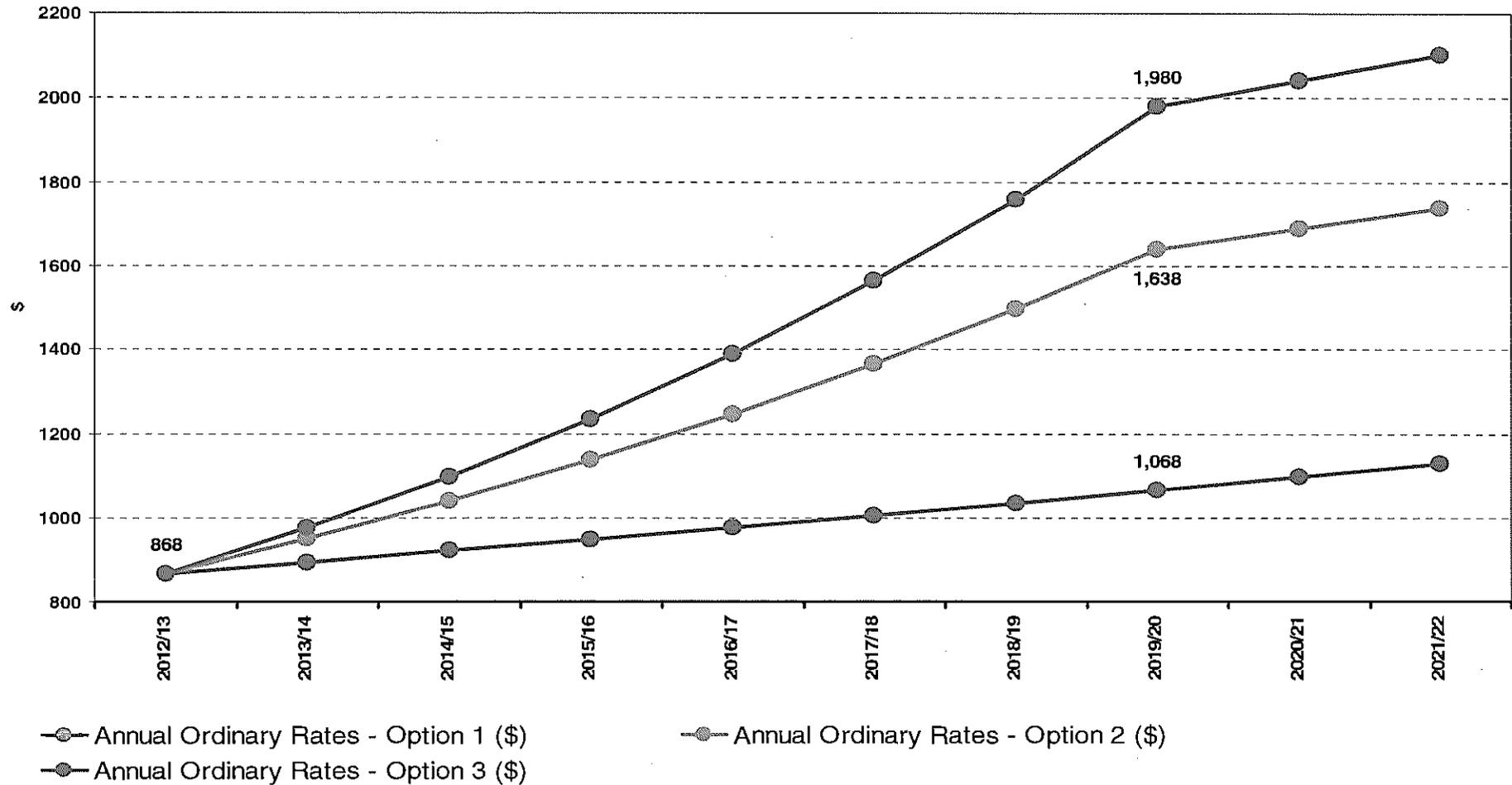
Option 3: New assets, increase rates (12.5% annual increase in rates)



What does this mean to my Annual Ordinary Rates?

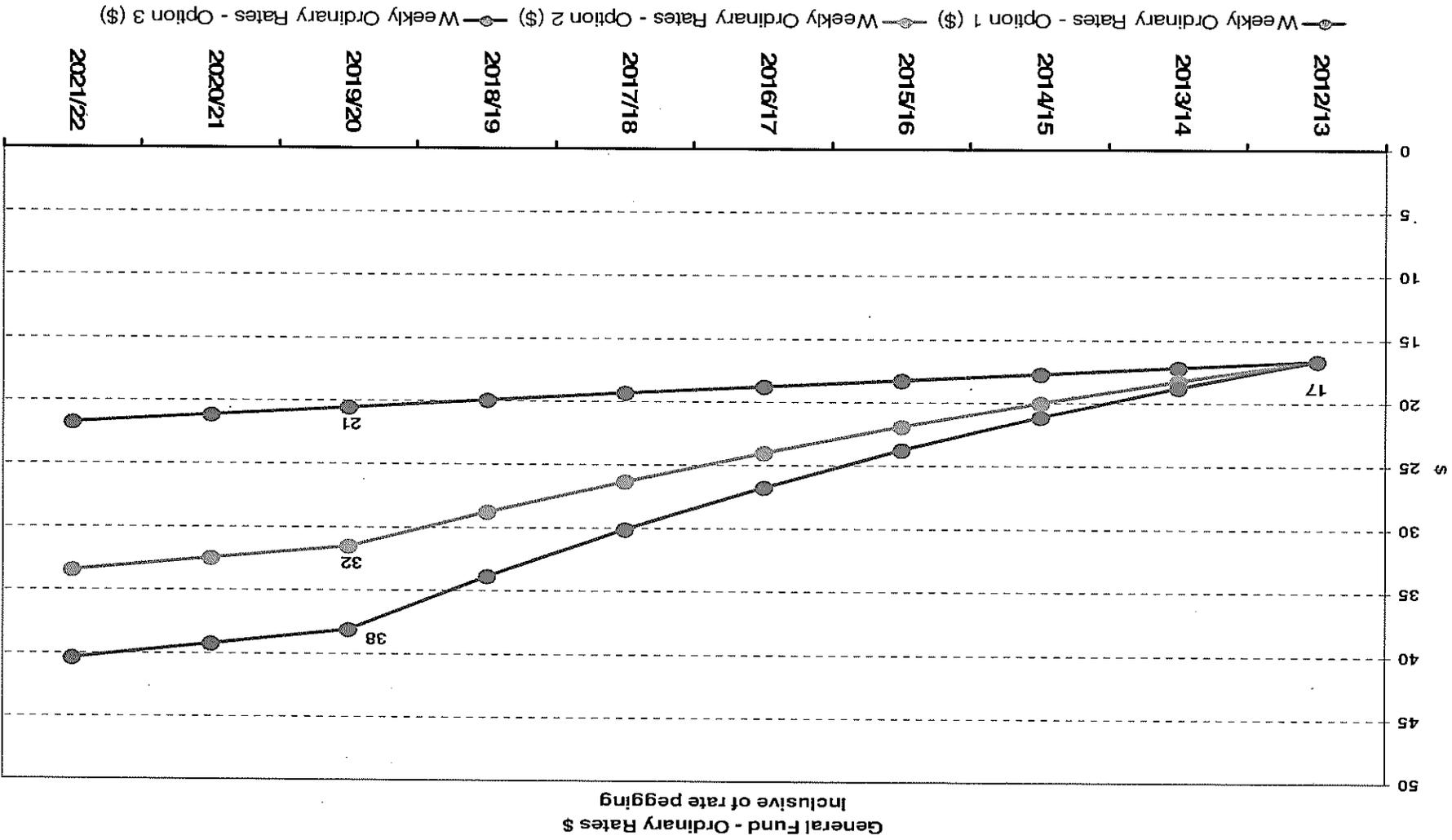
Average Ordinary rates	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Annual Ordinary Rates - Option 1 (\$)	868	894	921	948	977	1,006	1,036	1,068	1,100	1,133
Annual Ordinary Rates - Option 2 (\$)	868	950	1,041	1,140	1,248	1,366	1,496	1,638	1,688	1,738
Annual Ordinary Rates - Option 3 (\$)	868	977	1,099	1,236	1,390	1,564	1,760	1,980	2,039	2,100

General Fund - Ordinary Rates \$
Inclusive of rate pegging



What does this mean to my WEEKLY Ordinary rates cost?

Average Ordinary rates	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Weekly Ordinary Rates - Option 1 (\$)	17	17	18	18	19	19	19	20	21	22
Weekly Ordinary Rates - Option 2 (\$)	17	18	20	22	24	24	26	29	32	33
Weekly Ordinary Rates - Option 3 (\$)	17	19	21	24	27	30	34	38	39	40



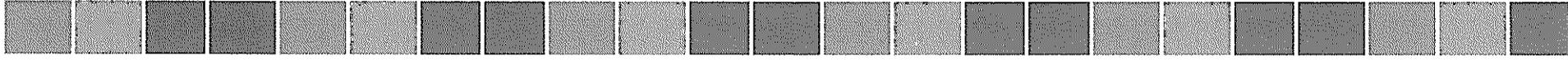
Small Group Discussion

- What stood out for you about the dilemma the Wyong community faces?
- What one thing have you learned about Council's finances?



Reflection on the Priorities

- Can you identify one priority that your group thinks is most important to the Wyong community?



The Decision-Making Criteria

- Cost and affordability
- Level of benefit to the community
- Cost-effective use of the funds
- Meeting community needs.



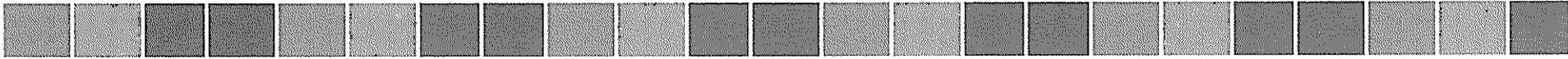
Funding Option One: Rate Peg Only

Criteria	Definition	Positives	Negatives	Score out of 10 (10 is high)	Comments
1. Cost and affordability	How affordable is the proposed cost increase to the community?	Lowest cost Affordable	Raises least money	9	
2. Level of benefit to the community	Are the benefits spread across the community? Are there spin-off benefits such as employment, generation, community capacity building?	Least impact on low income earners	Doesn't close the gap	1	
3. Cost-effective use of the funds	Will this allow for best use of funds? Will results be financially sustainable?			2	
4. Meeting community needs.	Does this meet demonstrated community needs			2	
		Total Score			

Positives and Negatives - Striking the Balance

- What are the positives and negatives of each scenario?
- As a group, can you agree on which scenario strikes the best balance between:
 - Closing the asset gap
 - Affordability
 - Meeting the aspirations of the community
 - Willingness to pay
- Try for a consensus position
- Write your reasoning and onto sticky wall





Which option do you support

- Option 1
- Option 2
- Option 3

Group Feedback

- Comments and questions





Wrap-Up

- Where to next
- Goodnight

20 January 2013



An important question about future rates and the Wyong Shire community

Council has some important decisions to make about rates, assets and services. As a ratepayer, we are asking for your input to help with those key decisions.

Council has notified the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) of its intent to submit an application for a special rate increase of up to 9.5%, to allow us to bring the community's ageing assets such as roads, playgrounds, parks, and community buildings up to a satisfactory standard.

If approved, this means rates would increase above the usual maximum amount allowed each year by the NSW Government (usually around three percent) for seven years.

We have already been out to ask our community about this in November 2012. Council is now providing more information and doing further consultation direct to all ratepayers in January and February 2013. Your responses to this consultation *will be considered* when Council makes its final decision on 27 February this year.

Originally we asked people to decide between three funding Options. Council has now decided not to proceed with Option 3 which was for a 12.5% increase. To make an informed decision on the other two Options, you said:

- you wanted more information about what services would be reduced in Option 1;
- if we raised rates in Option 2, you wanted to know what the money would be spent on;
- you wanted to know why only three Options were provided and how they were calculated;
- and you wanted to know what we had already done to save money in Council.

Inside this booklet is some further information to help you decide on the best Option for the community.

Your response now will make a difference. This is your chance to influence Council's final decision.

See the voting form in this booklet for details on how to respond by the deadline of 15 February 2013. We also encourage you to attend one of our two Community Information Sessions in February to ask questions and find out more before voting for your preferred Option. See the response form in this booklet for session dates and locations.

We look forward to receiving your feedback on this important issue for the future of our Shire.

Michael Whittaker
General Manager

What's this all about?

Over \$2.5b worth of Council assets - such as roads, drainage, playgrounds, parks and community buildings - help provide a safe, comfortable lifestyle for the 154,000 people living in Wyong Shire.

Some of these assets are quite old, deteriorated and are wearing out more quickly than we can replace them.

Assets are deteriorating at a rate that means we have no way to maintain them without cutting off money to other services the community is accustomed to. Older assets are not only more costly to maintain, but also more costly to operate and replace.

Council's business analysis shows we need \$121m of extra funds to bring assets up to a satisfactory standard across the Shire.

Put simply, we cannot fund this work from our current income. Since 2010, Council has been advising the community that it does not have enough income to maintain existing assets, let alone build new ones.

There is also pressure on assets from population growth. Over the last two decades, our population has grown faster than the state average. Over the next 20 years, 70,000 more people are expected to move into the area.

So what's next?

Council has to make some tough decisions about whether to increase its general rates income, **OR** reduce asset repairs and cut some associated services.

If we do neither, and continue to provide current levels of service while also improving assets, financial models show **we will run out of cash by 2016-17.**

So we have developed two possible future Options:

Option 1 - keep general rates income at the annual Rate Cap set by IPART and reduce asset repair / services; **OR**

Option 2 - Increase General Rates by up to 9.5%, per year, over the next seven years, to provide the additional income needed to improve assets.

Council already decided, on 12 December 2012, **not to proceed** with a third Option, to raise rates by 12.5%.

Council has not made a final decision. Council is concerned about the community's capacity to pay more rates. We are also concerned about the need to provide long term sustainable services to make Wyong Shire a good place to live for all residents, young and old, rich and poor. Finding this balance is what we are asking you to help us with.

Council decisions so far

At its meeting on 12 December 2012, Council decided to notify the IPART that it intends to apply for a rate increase of up to 9.5%. This includes the Rate Peg (or increase cap) of around 3% per annum that is allowed by IPART for all NSW councils. In 2013-14, the Rate Peg is 3.4%.

Council had to notify IPART **of our intent to apply** by December 14 2012. **Council will decide on 27 February if an application will be submitted.**

Council may still choose not to make an application, **OR**, Council could choose to proceed with a rate increase application of any percentage up to 9.5%.

Council also decided to provide more information and do further consultation direct to all ratepayers in January-February 2013. Your responses *will be considered* when Council makes its final decision on 27 February this year.

That's why your response to this booklet is so important. Make sure you have your say!

What you have said so far?

In November and December 2012, Council asked the community which of three funding Options they preferred.

This consultation was advertised extensively; there was also a telephone survey of random residents; an online survey; and three community workshops. Over 1,850 people responded to this consultation.

It was clear the community is divided over the best approach:

- 83% percent of people who heard detailed information at the workshops supported a rate increase.
- 54% of people who responded to the telephone survey said they would be "somewhat supportive" of a rate increase.
- 66% of people who mailed in their survey and 68% of people who completed the online survey were not supportive of a special rate increase.
- Option 3, for a 12.5% rate increase, received little support.

Generally, we were told that it was hard to make an informed decision and they needed more information.



What you asked us

- **Show how we've saved money in our business first**
- **What services would be at risk in Option 1**
- **What would we spend the money on in Option 2**
- **How did we work out these percentages**

This booklet provides answers to these questions.

How we've saved money so far!

Council has saved millions by changing the way it works. In two years, we have slashed nearly \$20m from our operating deficit. This means in future **we will continue to save \$20m every year**. Our plan is to save another \$10m in the coming two years, to break-even on the annual Operating Budget by 2015. This means total ongoing savings of \$30m per year after 2015.

We have made and will continue to make big and small savings across the board. Some examples include:

- Recycling old road pavement materials as road base for heavy patching, reducing costs from \$118 per sqm to \$21 per sqm, enabling us to renew six times the amount of paving for the same budget;
- Staff have done more with less. We saved money by not replacing staff on maternity or other leave; and reduced staff numbers by 9.5% between 2011 and 2013. Our employee costs as a % of our business are below the state average for councils;
- We banked \$300,000 by bringing legal services internal; cut \$250,000 off project management; and dramatically reduced overall use of external consultants;
- New energy efficient lighting in Council buildings will save \$1.2m (over 10 years);

While these and other savings are moving our operating budget towards a healthy position, they will not be enough to provide the extra \$121m needed to bring identified assets up to a satisfactory condition to deliver the services you need.

How did we come up with the percentage for the increase?

- Council's Asset Management Strategy identifies which assets most need improvements over the next seven years.
- This is based on the current condition of the asset and how important it is in terms of people needing or using the asset.
- So if you have a sportsfield, for example, with high use, the roads to the sports field, the car parks, fencing, and clubhouse, are all assets that support the active healthy lifestyle that people say they love about this Shire.
- A program of needed works costing \$121 million will bring these identified assets up to a satisfactory standard over seven years.
- We would need a total 9.5% increase in rates (including the Rate Peg) over seven years to fund that work.
- Seven years is the optimum time span to halt the accelerating decline while minimising the annual increases.

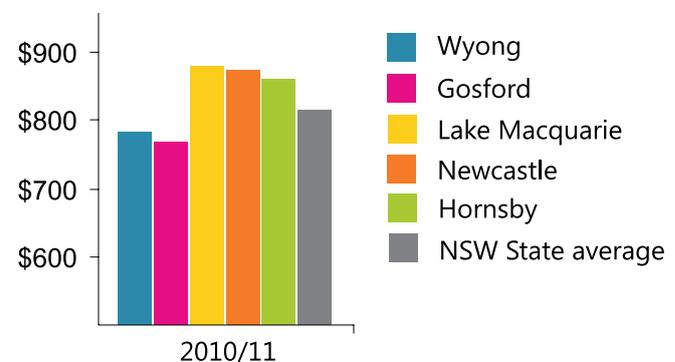
What assets and services are covered in each Option?

- Option 2 provides an extra \$17m for asset upgrades in 2013-14, and a further \$104 million will be spent over the next six years.
- In this booklet you will find a table summarising the assets that the extra \$17m are proposed to be spent on in 2013-14.
- All these works would be at risk with Option 1.

How do your rates compare?

This proposed increase would only apply to the Ordinary General Rates part of your total rate bill. It does not apply to any other charges on your annual rates bill.

Wyong Shire's average Ordinary General rate is quite low in comparison to a number of neighbouring Councils and the NSW average (see graph below).



Source: latest Division of Local Government annual comparison of Council data

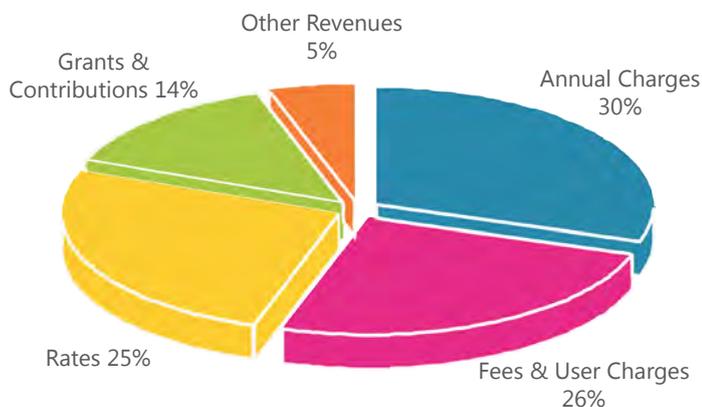


How do we get our income?

Council's income comes from a number of areas (see graph below).

Much of our income is fixed or limited in some way:

- Annual charges for services like waste collection, are set by IPART and cannot be increased.
- Fees and user charges for "user pays" services, such as swimming pools and sporting facilities, are limited by market demand.
- Council is always looking for new grants and subsidies to supplement income, this made up 14% of income in 2011-12.



Developers pay too!

Council charges developers to help build or improve assets for new developments. These "developer contributions" pay for works on community infrastructure, like kerb and guttering, roads and drainage, and parks and playgrounds, in and around new developments. This means these are funded out of developer profits rather than ratepayer funds.

Council still has to find \$121m over and above developer contributions to fund asset repair.

Increasing State costs a burden

State Government activities and requirements are now more of a burden on Wyong Shire residents than ever. The State Government has moved various functions from being funded by the State, to being paid for by Council.

From local emergency management to animal management and controlling noxious weeds, this has shifted more than \$23 million of annual costs from the tax payer (State) to the ratepayer (Council) in Wyong Shire.

What happens with your vote?

- We need to hear from you about what you think the right future is for our Shire.
- Your vote will be collated and a report outlining the results will go to Council on 27 February 2013.
- After hearing what you have to say, Council will consider if a Special Rate Variation submission will be made to IPART.
- If a submission is made, IPART will determine if a rate increase will occur, and the community will have another opportunity to provide their feedback directly to IPART after March.

For more information go to www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/RatesOptions

Reduce Services - Maintain Rates

01

Option 1 means Council would not be able to bring its older assets up to a satisfactory standard or fund work on natural assets such as the Lakes. It also means Council would not be able to do any significant new asset works. Maintenance costs will rise as the condition of assets deteriorates over time.

What services could be impacted?

A detailed table on the other side of this brochure shows what asset works would be at risk of not going ahead under Option 1. In practical terms it would mean some of the following:

- when a playground breaks, it would not be able to be fixed, and may need to be closed for safety reasons.
- new sub-soil drainage would not be installed to fix waterlogged sports fields, reducing playing hours in extended wet weather.
- wharves and jetties may deteriorate. Public access to our waterways is likely to reduce.
- road upgrades would be very limited and many planned road projects would not go ahead. The overall condition and safety of the roads is likely to decline.
- maintenance and upgrades of community buildings, such as halls and community centres, would be very limited. Some facilities may need to be closed, others will have limited use.
- more jobs would be lost at Council.
- few environmental works will go ahead to protect our lakes and natural areas.
- planned town centre upgrades may not go ahead, possibly leading to less tourism, less new development and fewer local jobs.

For a detailed list of at risk projects, visit our website at:

www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/RatesOptions

OR come along to one of our Community Information Sessions in February 2013 to find out more and ask questions.

Residential Rates Calculator

Option 1: Reduce Services Maintain Rates

			2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Increase on previous year				3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Rateable Value	Number of Properties	Land Value For Rates Calc.								
\$0 to \$99,999	6,426	50,000	357.45	368.17	379.22	390.60	402.31	414.38	426.81	439.62
\$100,000 to \$149,999	19,364	125,000	641.63	660.87	680.70	701.12	722.15	743.82	766.13	789.12
\$150,000 to \$199,999	21,063	175,000	831.08	856.01	881.69	908.14	935.38	963.44	992.35	1,022.12
\$200,000 to \$299,999	8,418	250,000	1,115.25	1,148.71	1,183.17	1,218.66	1,255.22	1,292.88	1,331.67	1,371.62
\$300,000 to \$499,999	4,759	400,000	1,683.60	1,734.11	1,786.13	1,839.72	1,894.91	1,951.75	2,010.31	2,070.62
\$500,000 to \$999,999	1,196	750,000	3,009.75	3,100.04	3,193.04	3,288.84	3,387.50	3,489.13	3,593.80	3,701.61
\$1,000,000 to \$1,999,999	183	1,500,000	5,851.50	6,027.05	6,207.86	6,394.09	6,585.91	6,783.49	6,987.00	7,196.61
\$2,000,000 and greater	19	2,000,000	7,746.00	7,978.38	8,217.73	8,464.26	8,718.19	8,979.74	9,249.13	9,526.60

Provide no additional funding for Your Future

We will Need to **CUT** existing Services

Stop Council going broke by reducing spend on upgrades to Council facilities/service.

Option 1

Ordinary Rates increase by around 3% per year (as set by the normal State Government annual Rate Peg)

Average Rates will increase from \$17 per week in 2013 to \$21 per week by 2020 (from \$868 to \$1,068 p.a.)



Option 2 will allow increased spending on necessary upgrade work, which will improve existing asset conditions. Asset maintenance costs will be reduced as the condition of assets improves, meaning money can then be spent on new works.

Why Council needs extra income?

- to secure future assets and services for the community
- to support economic development across the Shire and create jobs
- to ensure Council's financial sustainability continues
- to provide safe assets for the use of the community and prevent them from deteriorating to a point where they cannot be repaired
- to preserve the lifestyle that our residents told us they value and is important to them.

What will we spend the money on?

We will spend the money on the priority areas that the community has told us they want money spent on:

- roads
- drainage
- community buildings
- sport leisure and recreation facilities
- town centres
- the natural environment
- parks, playgrounds and open space

See the list on the following page.

We will tell you regularly how we are spending the money and progressing towards the community vision.

Provide additional funding for Your Future

We can MAINTAIN existing services only

Council remains sustainable and assets are improved

Option 2

Ordinary Rates increase by 9.5% each year for 7 years (around 6.5% above the normal State Government annual Rate Peg)

Average Rates will increase from \$17 per week in 2013 to \$32 per week by 2020 (from \$868 to \$1,638 p.a.)



Residential Rates Calculator

Option 2: Maintain Assets - Increase Rates

Increase on Previous Year			2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
				9.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%
Rateable Value	Number of Properties	Land Value For Rates Calc.								
\$0 to \$99,999	6,426	50,000	357.45	391.41	428.59	469.31	513.89	562.71	616.17	674.71
\$100,000 to \$149,999	19,364	125,000	641.63	702.58	769.32	842.41	922.44	1,010.07	1,106.03	1,211.10
\$150,000 to \$199,999	21,063	175,000	831.08	910.03	996.48	1,091.15	1,194.80	1,308.31	1,432.60	1,568.70
\$200,000 to \$299,999	8,418	250,000	1,115.25	1,221.20	1,337.21	1,464.25	1,603.35	1,755.67	1,922.46	2,105.09
\$300,000 to \$499,999	4,759	400,000	1,683.60	1,843.54	2,018.68	2,210.45	2,420.45	2,650.39	2,902.18	3,177.88
\$500,000 to \$999,999	1,196	750,000	3,009.75	3,295.68	3,608.77	3,951.60	4,327.00	4,738.07	5,188.18	5,681.06
\$1,000,000 to \$1,999,999	183	1,500,000	5,851.50	6,407.39	7,016.09	7,682.62	8,412.47	9,211.66	10,086.77	11,045.01
\$2,000,000 and greater	19	2,000,000	7,746.00	8,481.87	9,287.65	10,169.97	11,136.12	12,194.05	13,352.49	14,620.97

What will the money be spent on?

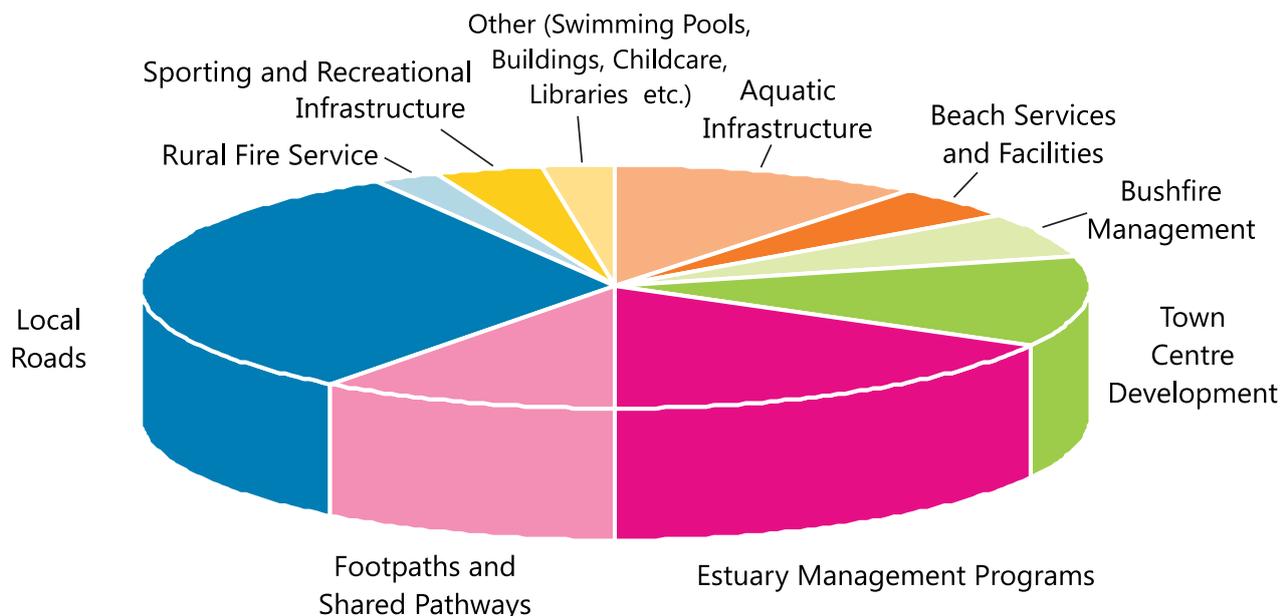
Council has developed a draft four year business plan from 2013 to 2017. It is important to note that this is a draft plan. Council won't make final decisions on this plan until later this year, once the community has had a chance to comment.

This draft plan proposes an annual capital spend of \$31m on assets funded by your General Ordinary Rates in the first year (2013-14), in addition to general maintenance costs.

An additional \$17m worth of projects to upgrade ageing assets is proposed to be funded if the rate rise of 9.5% outlined in Option 2 in this booklet goes ahead.

There are 26 projects for A Ward; 40 projects for B Ward and 12 projects Shire wide; making a total of 78 extra projects proposed to improve assets.

Below is a chart that shows where the Option 2 rate increase money is proposed to be spent.



Types of projects within these areas include:

Product area	Proposed works
Roads Local roads and drainage	More than 15 planned upgrades to roads and stormwater drainage across the Shire to improve road safety and condition as well as decrease flooding.
Roads Footpaths and shared pathways	Replacement of two timber footbridges to improve leisure facilities for walkers, runners and cyclists.
Town centres Town Centre development	Undertake projects in the town centres of Budgewoi, Bateau Bay, Lakehaven, Toukley and Long Jetty. These are aimed at stimulating tourism and investment and generating local jobs.
The natural environment Estuary management	Retrofit or replace existing foreshore Gross Pollutant Traps to improve the water quality in our lakes and waterways.
Sport, leisure and recreation Aquatic Infrastructure	Replace the only ocean boat ramp in the Shire. Design and construct trailer parking to boat ramps and improve jetties, boat ramps or swimming nets in areas across the Shire.
Sport, leisure and recreation Beach services and facilities	Complete landscape works including pathways, landscaping, fencing and picnic facilities and provide paving and landscape improvements outside the two new surf clubs.
The natural environment Bushfire management	Upgrade and improvement of fire trails and Asset Protection Zones to reduce fire risk to our residents.
Community buildings Child care and education	Improvements to buildings at two child care and education centres to increase security and meet legislative requirements.
Parks, playgrounds and open space	Upgrade or replacement of playgrounds in public parks and make improvements to skate parks across the Shire.
Miscellaneous	Other smaller capital works around the Shire.

HAVE YOUR SAY

**Voting closes 5pm
15 February 2013**

We encourage you to attend a Community Information Session to find out more and ask questions before casting your vote. These sessions will also discuss new planning documents for Wyong Shire.

Thursday 7 February 2013
Council Civic Centre
2 Hely Street, Wyong

6:30pm - overview of draft Wyong Local Environment Plan 2012 and other new planning legislation

7:30pm - information about Your Place Your Say Your Future decisions

Tuesday 12 February 2013
Halekulani Hall
107 Scenic Drive, Budgewoi

Alternatively, **you can vote online by** going to www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/RatesOptions **OR** **fill out the form below** and post it to the address below before 5pm, 15 February 2012.

My Suburb: _____

Age: _____ Gender: F M

My Email: _____

Yes I would like to become a member of Council's Resident ePanel?

Tick here if you are willing to receive communications from Council via email

Considering the impact on your rates and services in each of these options, which option do you prefer most?
(please tick the box next to your preferred option)

Reduce Services - Maintain Rates **01** **I only want the rates to be increased by the NSW Rate Peg**

I recognise that Council needs to increase rates above the Rate Peg to spend more to improve assets, but I can't afford a 9.5% rate increase. I would support an increase of a lesser amount. I understand that this means some asset works listed in this booklet and on our website may not go ahead.

Previously, the community has told us there were seven asset areas that were most important to them. Council would like to know from you which are most important to help us prioritise. (please number 1 to 7, where 1 is most important and 7 is least important):

Sport, leisure & recreation facilities

Community buildings

Town centres

Parks, playgrounds & open space

The natural environment

Other _____

Roads

Maintain Assets - Increase Rates **02** **I support an increase amount of 9.5%**

Other suggested ways for Council to save money?

Post your completed form in an envelope.

No postage stamp is required if addressed as follows:

Your Place. Your Say. Your Future Project

Wyong Shire Council

Reply Paid 20

WYONG NSW 2259

For more information go to www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/RatesOptions

Rate Options - Your Place, Your Say, Your Future - online survey



1. What is your suburb?

		Response Percent	Response Count
ALISON		0.2%	6
BATEAU BAY	▒	7.2%	278
BERKELEY VALE	▒	6.6%	256
BLUE BAY		1.3%	51
BLUE HAVEN	▒	2.7%	104
BUDGEWOI	▒	2.5%	98
BUFF POINT	▒	2.3%	88
BUSHELLS RIDGE		0.0%	1
CANTON BEACH		0.4%	16
CEDAR BRUSH CREEK		0.1%	4
CHAIN VALLEY BAY	▒	1.3%	52
CHARMHAVEN	▒	1.5%	58
CHITTAWAY BAY	▒	1.4%	55
CHITTAWAY POINT	▒	1.1%	43
DOORALONG		0.2%	6
DOYALSON		0.3%	13
DOYALSON NORTH		0.1%	2
DURREN DURREN		0.1%	3
FOUNTAINDALE		0.4%	17
GLENNING VALLEY	▒	2.1%	79
GOROKAN	▒	4.1%	159
GWANDALAN	▒	2.1%	81

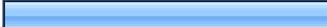
HALEKULANI		1.0%	39
HALLORAN		0.1%	2
HAMLYN TERRACE		2.9%	113
JILLIBY		1.5%	56
KANGY ANGY		0.1%	3
KANWAL		1.8%	68
KIAR		0.0%	0
KILLARNEY VALE		3.7%	143
KINGFISHER SHORES		0.2%	8
KULNURA		0.3%	10
LAKE HAVEN		1.7%	67
LAKE MUNMORAH		2.8%	109
LEMON TREE		0.1%	2
LITTLE JILLIBY		0.1%	2
LONG JETTY		3.5%	133
MAGENTA		0.1%	4
MANNERING PARK		1.7%	67
MARDI		2.6%	101
NORAH HEAD		0.8%	30
NORAVILLE		1.5%	59
OURIMBAH		2.7%	104
PALM GROVE		0.1%	5
PALMDALE		0.2%	6
RAVENSDALE		0.1%	2
ROCKY POINT		0.3%	10
SAN REMO		1.7%	65
SHELLY BEACH		0.9%	35

SUMMERLAND POINT	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.7%	67
TACOMA	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.7%	27
TACOMA SOUTH	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.3%	12
THE ENTRANCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.7%	104
THE ENTRANCE NORTH	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.5%	58
TOOWOON BAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.5%	21
TOUKLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.0%	116
TUGGERAH	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.7%	28
TUGGERAWONG	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.9%	36
TUMBI UMBI	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.9%	152
WADALBA	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.2%	46
WALLARAH	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.3%	11
WARNERVALE	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.7%	28
WATANOBBI	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.2%	84
WOONGARRAH	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.4%	131
WYONG CREEK	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.6%	25
WYONG	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.8%	109
WYONGAH	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.5%	56
YARRAMALONG	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.4%	17
I LIVE OUTSIDE THE WYONG SHIRE	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.3%	12
answered question			3,853
skipped question			10

2. What is your age group?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18 years of age		0.3%	12
18 - 24 years		2.1%	80
25 - 34 years		12.7%	489
35 - 44 years		17.9%	691
45 - 54 years		22.7%	875
55 - 64 years		23.8%	917
65 - 74 years		16.5%	635
75 years +		4.0%	154
		answered question	3,853
		skipped question	10

3. What is your gender?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Female		48.1%	1,854
Male		51.9%	1,999
		answered question	3,853
		skipped question	10

4. I am a:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Resident		9.1%	352
Ratepayer		22.3%	860
Both		68.5%	2,641
answered question			3,853
skipped question			10

5. What is your email address?

	Response Count
	2,627
answered question	2,627
skipped question	1,236

6. Would you like to become a member of Council's Resident ePanel?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes please!		15.4%	594
No thanks - I'm already a member		4.0%	155
No thanks - I'm happy as I am		80.6%	3,104
answered question			3,853
skipped question			10

7. Are you willing to receive communications from Council via email?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes please		42.5%	1,636
No thanks		57.5%	2,217
answered question			3,853
skipped question			10

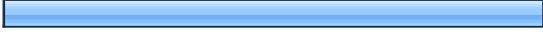
8. An information brochure was sent to all ratepayers and is available on Council's website and at the start of this survey. Have you read the information brochure about this issue? To see a copy of this brochure visit www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/RatesOptions

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		95.0%	3,634
No		5.0%	190
answered question			3,824
skipped question			39

9. Did you attend an information session held by Council about this issue?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		13.7%	187
No		86.3%	1,176
answered question			1,363
skipped question			2,500

10. Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services, which option do you most prefer?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Option 1 - Reduce services and maintain rates		86.6%	3,118
Option 2 - Maintain assets and increase rates by 9.5% (including the Rate Peg) each year for seven years		13.4%	481
		answered question	3,599
		skipped question	264

11. I recognise that Council needs to increase rates above the Rate Peg to spend more to improve assets, but I can't afford a 9.5% increase. I would support an increase of a lesser amount. I understand that this means some asset works listed in the booklet and on the website may not go ahead and services will be impacted and probably reduced.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I recognise that Council needs to increase rates to improve the asset conditions and I support a lesser amount.		24.1%	739
No, I do not support a rate rise under any circumstances		75.9%	2,323
		answered question	3,062
		skipped question	801

12. Council would like to know from you which are the most important asset areas to help us prioritise funding and works in the future. Please number the following asset areas, where 1 is most important and 7 is least important

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Rating Count
Sport, leisure & recreation facilities	5.6% (150)	14.8% (394)	19.9% (530)	22.4% (597)	17.6% (469)	12.9% (343)	6.7% (178)	3.97	2,611
Town Centres	4.0% (105)	12.8% (339)	15.4% (409)	16.1% (428)	19.8% (524)	22.4% (595)	9.5% (253)	4.40	2,611
The natural environment	12.3% (326)	23.2% (615)	16.3% (433)	15.4% (409)	13.2% (349)	13.0% (345)	6.6% (176)	3.60	2,611
Roads & drainage	68.7% (2,011)	15.5% (453)	6.1% (179)	3.7% (107)	1.8% (52)	1.5% (45)	2.7% (80)	1.70	2,942
Community buildings	0.9% (24)	7.2% (190)	13.6% (359)	20.1% (529)	24.9% (657)	27.8% (732)	5.5% (144)	4.66	2,611
Parks, playgrounds & open space	5.4% (153)	21.2% (596)	25.9% (728)	18.3% (516)	15.8% (445)	11.3% (317)	2.1% (60)	3.60	2,841
Other	3.9% (92)	3.7% (86)	3.4% (79)	4.8% (113)	6.4% (150)	8.4% (195)	69.3% (1,616)	6.09	2,332
answered question									3,043
skipped question									71

13. Do you have any other comments, or any other suggested ways for Council to save money?

	Response Count
	1,984
answered question	1,984
skipped question	1,879



Long Term Resourcing

Wyong Shire Council

Prepared by: Micromex Research

Date: February 2013



Background

Background & Core Research Objectives

Wyong Shire Council has determined a requirement for a special rate variation (SRV) in order to maintain and improve the Shire's road and bridge infrastructure.

As part of the special rate variation application process, Wyong Shire Council conducted a robust community research survey, with the following key objectives:

1. To measure community support for the introduction of a special rate levy
2. To provide an avenue for feedback in order for residents to express their views on the proposed SRV



In order to assess the community's response to the special rate variation, Wyong Shire Council commissioned Micromex Research to conduct quantitative research within the LGA.

Specifics of the Survey

- A sample of n=600 residents were recruited by telephone to undertake this evaluation once they had received the information from Council
- Random telephone survey with n=400 residents aged 18 y/o +
 - The sample was weighted by age to reflect the 2011 ABS Census data
 - A sample size of 400 residents provides a maximum sampling error of approximately +/- 4.9% at 95% confidence
 - Participants were asked some profiling questions, then specific questions relating to the proposed special rate variation
- Fieldwork was conducted between 22nd January and 2nd February 2012

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

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

Questionnaire Structure

- QR1. Confirmation that respondent does not work for Council
- QA. Age group
- QB. Number of years lived in the area
- QR2a. Confirmation of booklet being received
- QR2b. Confirmation of booklet being read
- QR3. Agreeing to conduct the survey
- Q1. Satisfaction with the quality of infrastructure and facilities currently provided by Council
- Q2. Importance of Council implementing plans and programs to provide better infrastructure and facilities

CONCEPT READ

- Q3a. Preferred option
- Q3b. Reason for choosing that option
- Q4a. Support for a lesser increase in rates if Option 1 was preferred
- Q4b. Reason for the level of support chosen
- Q4c. Support for maintenance of various assets
- Q5. Home ownership
- Q6. Suburb
- Q7. Gender

Ratings questions

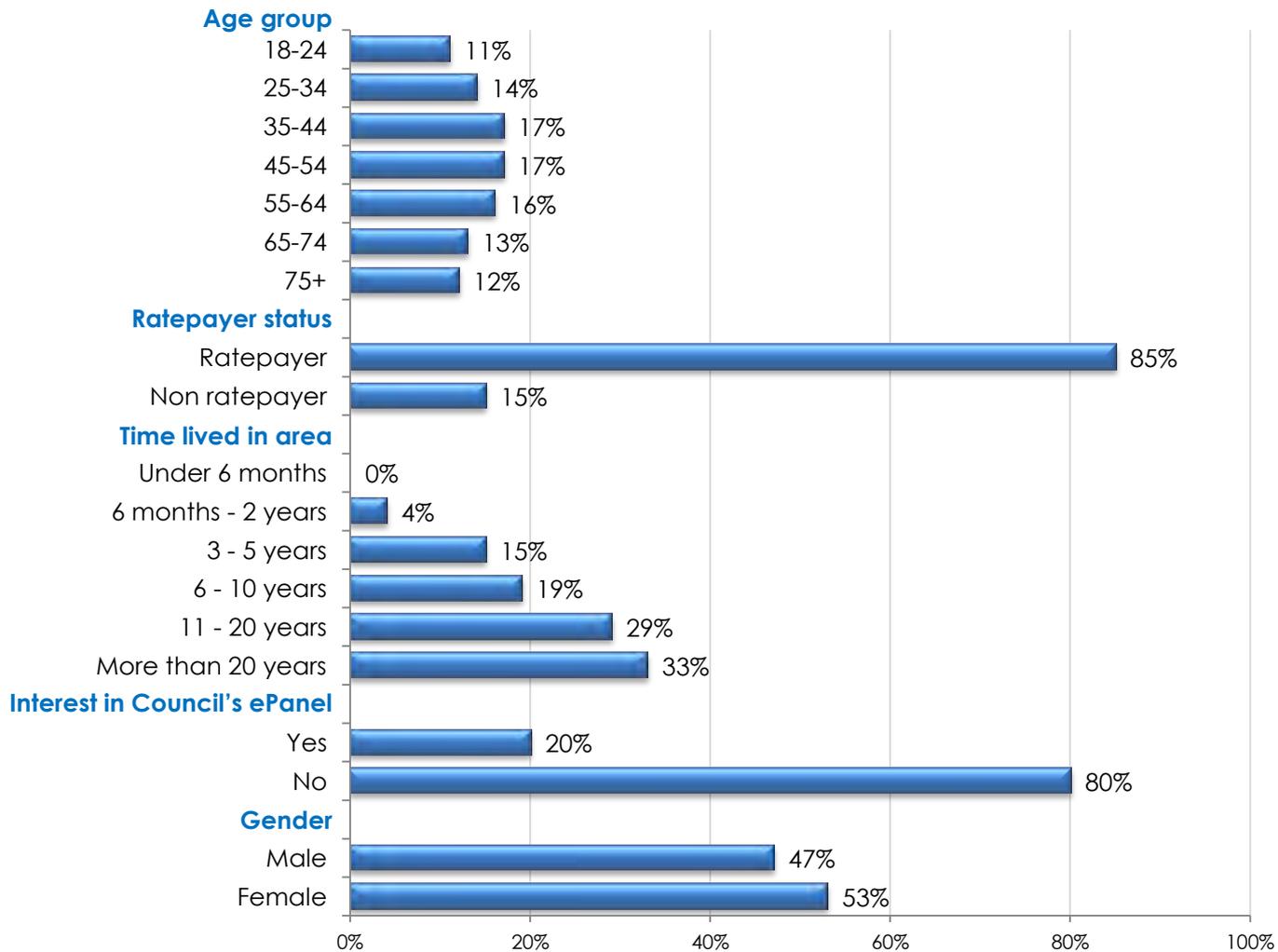
The Unipolar Scale of 1 to 5 was used in all rating questions, where 1 was the lowest importance, satisfaction or support and 5 the highest importance, satisfaction or support.

1.99 or lower	'Very low' level of importance/satisfaction/support
2.00 – 2.49	'Low' level of importance/satisfaction/support
2.50 – 2.99	'Moderately low' levels of importance/satisfaction/support
3.00 – 3.59	'Moderate' level of importance/satisfaction/support
3.60 – 3.89	'Moderately high' level of importance/satisfaction/support
3.90 – 4.19	'High' level of importance/satisfaction/support
4.20 – 4.49	'Very high' level of importance/satisfaction/support
4.50 +	'Extreme' level of importance/satisfaction/support



Profile of Sample

Sample Profile – The Sample Accurately Reflects The Demographics Of The Wyong Shire Council LGA



The sample has been weighted to reflect ABS Census data



Key Findings

33% of residents supported Option 2 (Maintain assets, increase rates)

⇒ Key drivers of support revolved around the need to stop the deterioration of Council assets

67% of residents supported Option 1 (Reduce services, maintain rates)

⇒ However, 60% of these residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Wyong Shire Council introducing rate variation of less than 9.5% to fund some level of infrastructure maintenance

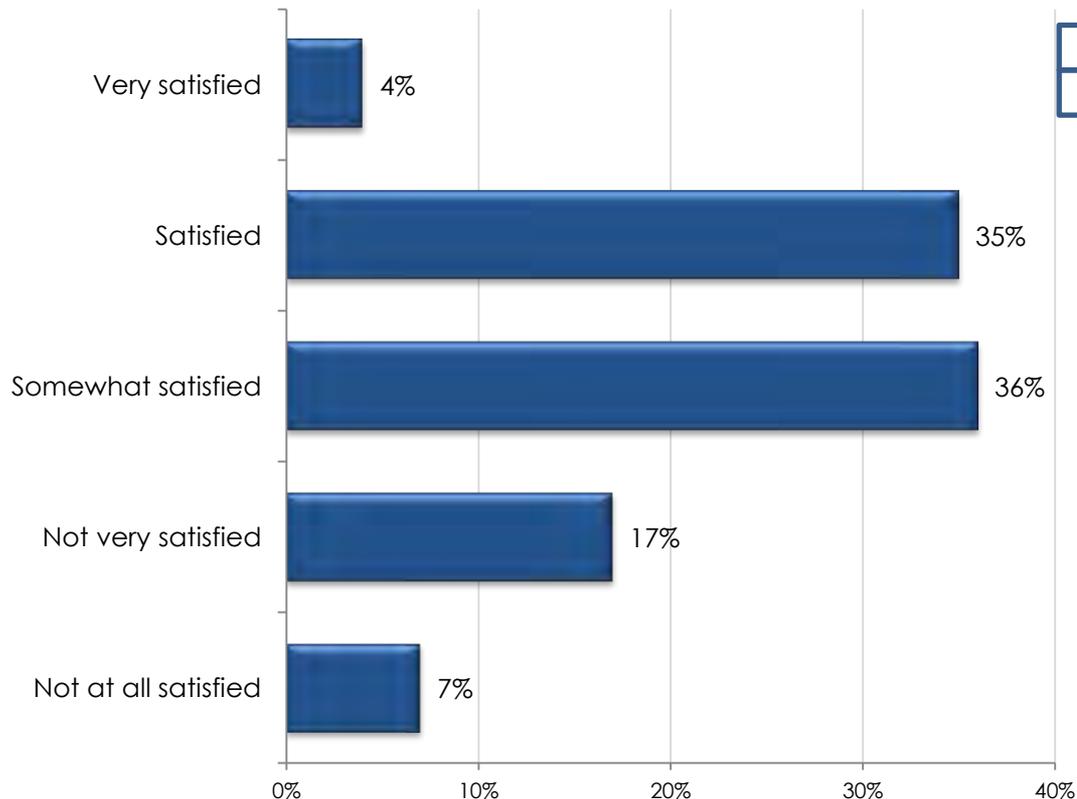
If we amalgamate the findings we can see that, in total, 74% of residents are at least somewhat supportive of some level of rate increase above the rate peg to allow Council the opportunity to address the quality of local infrastructure.



The Detailed Response

75% Of Residents Are At Least 'Moderately Satisfied' With The Quality Of Infrastructure & Facilities Currently Provided

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



	Dec 2012	Feb 2013
Satisfaction mean ratings	3.04	3.12

Mean ratings: 1=not at all satisfied, 5=very satisfied

- Non ratepayers are significantly more satisfied than are ratepayers
- Residents aged 18-34 are significantly more satisfied than are those aged 55-64

Base: n = 400

24% were less than somewhat satisfied

88% Of Residents Believe Council Should Implement Plans & Programs To Provide Better Infrastructure & Facilities, Compared To 97% In December

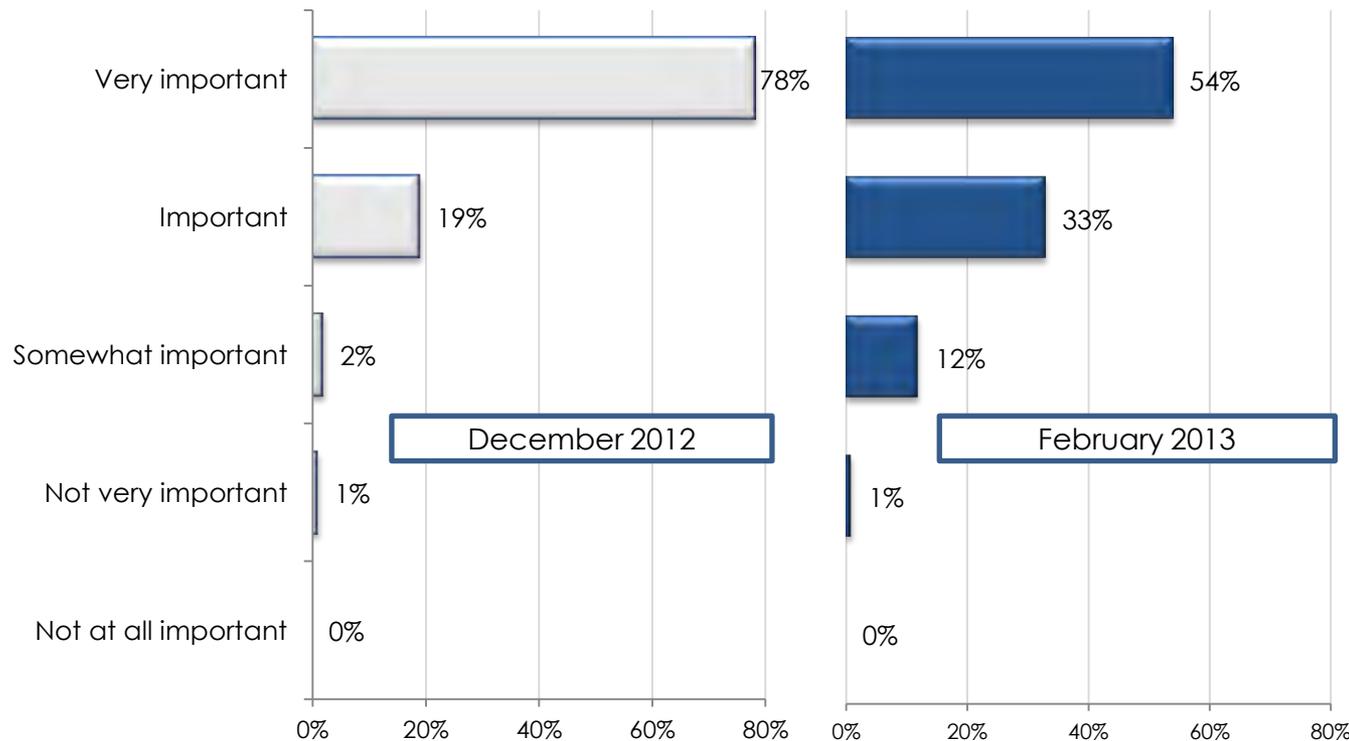
Q. How important do you believe it is for Council to implement plans and programs that will provide better infrastructure and facilities for the Wyong Shire?

	Dec 2012	Feb 2013
Importance mean ratings	4.72	4.38



Significantly higher result
Significantly lower result

Mean ratings: 1=not at all important, 5=very important



- Non ratepayers consider this significantly more important than do ratepayers
- Residents aged 18-24 consider this to be significantly more important than do those aged 25-34, 55-64 & 75+

Base: n = 400

The outcomes in this survey were significantly different compared to last December



Response to the SRV Concept

Council has a responsibility to plan for the future of the Wyong Shire and needs to act now to avoid more significant costs in the years ahead. Council wants your input to help make some decisions on the way forward.

Over the last two years, Council has reduced its operating deficit from \$30 million to just over \$12 million, however, Council is still not spending enough money to renew existing assets. If Council increases its spending on assets without extra income, it will face a cash crisis by 2016. There is a backlog of \$121M to be spent to bring assets up to a satisfactory condition.

Council wants to provide the community with quality roads, drainage, public space, recreation, sporting facilities and community buildings, but needs to find a way to deliver the best possible service while remaining financially secure. We need you to tell us which one of the following options is the best for the future of our community.

Option 1 - Reduce services and maintain rates: Keep the rate increase of around 3% as set each year by the State Government.

- This means we will not have enough money to improve our assets to the required condition, our maintenance and infrastructure backlog will increase significantly and services would be removed or reduced.
- Under Option 1, the average ratepayer will pay an increase of \$26 in 2013/14. In the 7th year, the average ratepayer will be paying \$200 more per year.

Option 2 - Maintain assets and increase rates: Seek an increased rate income of 9.5% (including the rate peg of around 3%) each year for seven years.

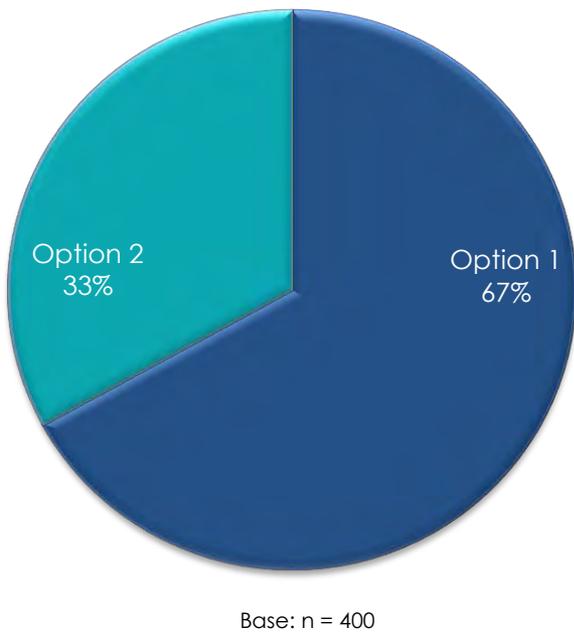
- This means asset condition will improve to a satisfactory standard over 7 years and asset maintenance costs will reduce
- Under Option 2, the average ratepayer will pay an increase of \$82 in 2013/14. In the 7th year, the average ratepayer will be paying \$770 more per year

(This increase only applies to ordinary rates i.e. not sewer, water or waste – The current pensioner rate subsidy will apply)

Residents were given the opportunity to have the statement read multiple times to ensure they felt comfortable that they understood the SRV concept

Option 1 – No Additional Increase Was Strongly Preferred

- Q. Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services, which option do you most prefer?
 Q. Why do you say that?



KEY REASONS FOR PREFERENCE	
OPTION 1	Base: n=268
• This option is more affordable	19%
• Could not afford a rate increase	17%
• Council need to manage their finances more effectively	12%
OPTION 2	Base: n=132
• Rate increase is necessary to improve the Shire	17%
• Infrastructure and services need to be improved and maintained	12%

Affordability Is The Key Concern For Residents

The Affordability Of A 7 Year 9.5% Rate Levy Is A Key Concern For Many Residents

- Q. Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services, which option do you most prefer?
Q. Why do you say that?

OPTION 1 (67%) Reduce services and maintain rates

"I have concerns as to where previous Council money has been spent which has left the Shire in such a financial struggle"

"If the rates were to go up by 9.5 % each year for the next 7 years we will not be able to afford to live in the Wyong Shire"

"A 9.5% increase is far too much to expect people to be able to afford"

"I believe that the services Council provide are already at a reasonable standard and such a large increase is not needed"

"Compared to other Council areas our rates are too expensive considering what we receive for them"

"With all the rate increases that we have faced I cannot understand how Council has let the Shire get to such an unsatisfactory standard"

"Council needs to invest what money they do have wisely rather than spending it on things that are not needed"

OPTION 2 (33%) Maintain assets and increase rates

"To improve the standard of services and infrastructure, primarily roads and drainage, particularly in Wyong itself"

"Services are already poor and if they are further reduced they will be non-existent"

"Our services and assets need to be maintained so our area can move forward"

"Option 2 allows Council to get the funding required to be able to maintain the Shire"

"We need to get our roads and parks back up to a satisfactory condition"

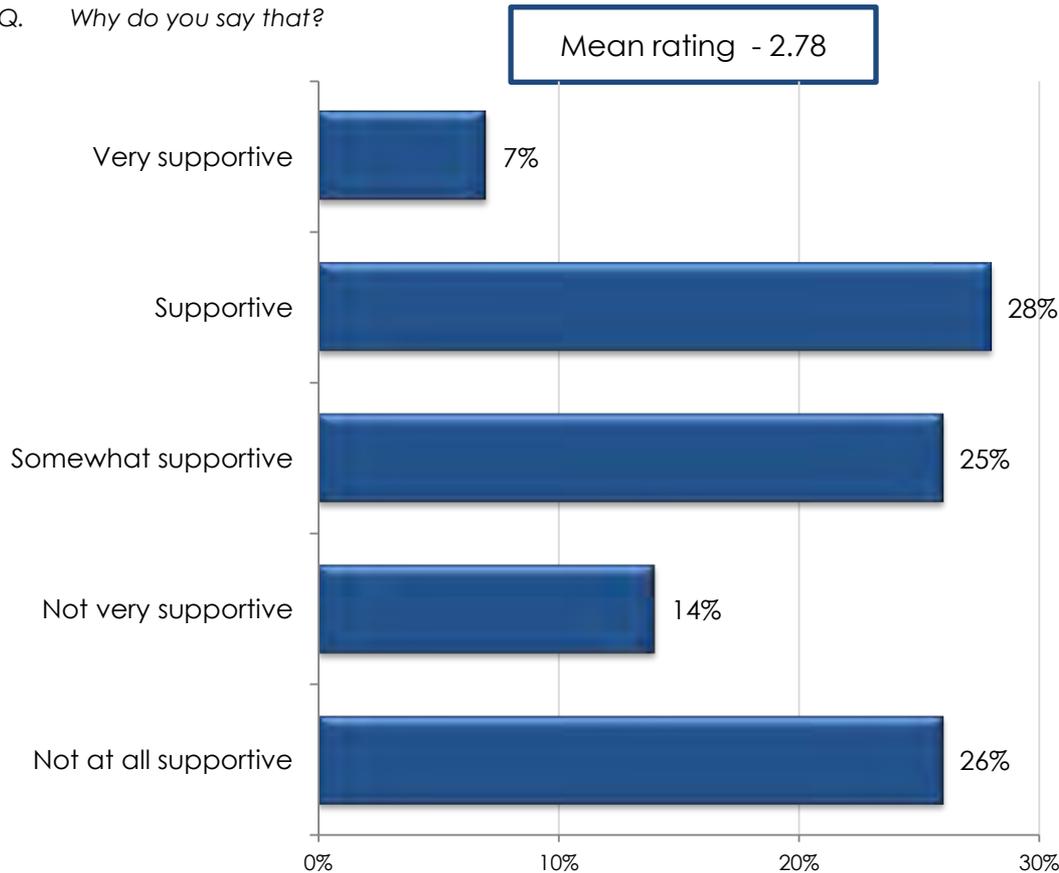
"It is better to start fixing these issues now rather than waiting a few years to find that option one has failed and this increase is introduced anyway"

Verbatim responses from: Qualitative Open Ended Question Q3b

A significant section of the community (33%) feel that something needs to be done to address failing service levels

60% Of Residents Who Rejected Option 2 Do At Least Somewhat Support Council Applying For a Rate Increase

- Q. Council understands that some residents feel that Council needs to continue to maintain local assets, but that they have concerns about the affordability of the proposed 9.5% increase. If Council was to determine that they needed apply to IPART for a special rate variation, how supportive would you be of a lesser increase in rates in order to allow Council to address some of the assets listed in the booklet?
- Q. Why do you say that?



KEY REASONS FOR LEVEL OF SUPPORT - Q4b	
Somewhat to very supportive: Nett 60% N=163	
• Smaller increase would be more affordable	25%
• Rate increase is necessary to improve and maintain the Shire	16%
Not very to not at all supportive: Nett 40% N=105	
• Cannot afford a rate increase	13%
• Council does not manage finances effectively	12%

Base: n = 268

Mean ratings: 1=not at all supportive, 5=very supportive

A Lesser Increase Would Be An Acceptable Compromise. It Is More Affordable For Residents And Provides Council Increased Funding To Maintain Some Services

- Q. Council understands that some residents feel that Council needs to continue to maintain local assets, but that they have concerns about the affordability of the proposed 9.5% increase. If Council was to determine that they needed apply to IPART for a special rate variation, how supportive would you be of a lesser increase in rates in order to allow Council to address some of the assets listed in the booklet?
- Q. Why do you say that?

Somewhat to very supportive (60%)

"I understand that Council need to increase their income in order to maintain and improve assets"

"I would like to see improvements in the Council area, but cannot afford 9.5%"

"A lower increase would be more affordable for the average ratepayer"

"We do need more funding to maintain the area and a lower increase would be more affordable"

"A rate increase of some kind is necessary but 9.5% is too high"

"I understand that Council needs to meet the demands of the area, which costs money. A smaller increase is more reasonable"

Not very to not at all supportive (40%)

"Council needs to find the funding elsewhere. I cannot understand where ratepayers' money has gone in the past for us to get in this situation"

"This leaves it open for Council to still apply for a rate increase as high as 9%, which is not affordable for the average ratepayer"

"I believe no matter what the rate increase would be, Chain Valley Bay would not see any of the benefits"

"As I live in a rural area, I still don't receive any services no matter what the increase is, I wouldn't see any benefit"

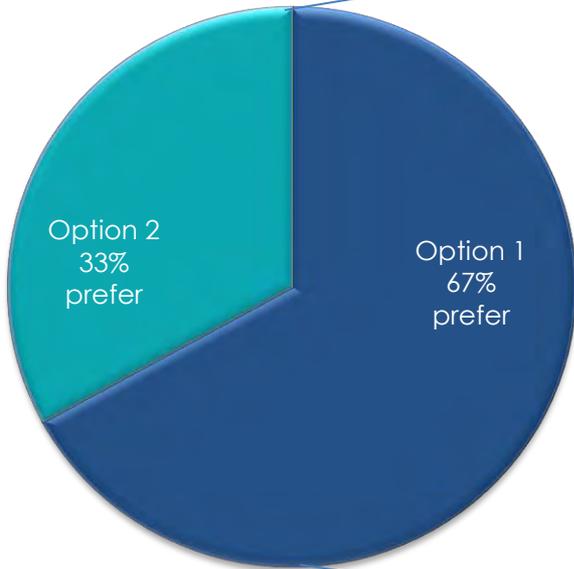
"Council should be spending its money more efficiently and apply for external funding"

Verbatim responses from: Qualitative Open Ended Question Q4b

Affordability, distrust and a lack of perceived personal benefit are the key themes for residents who reject any level of increase

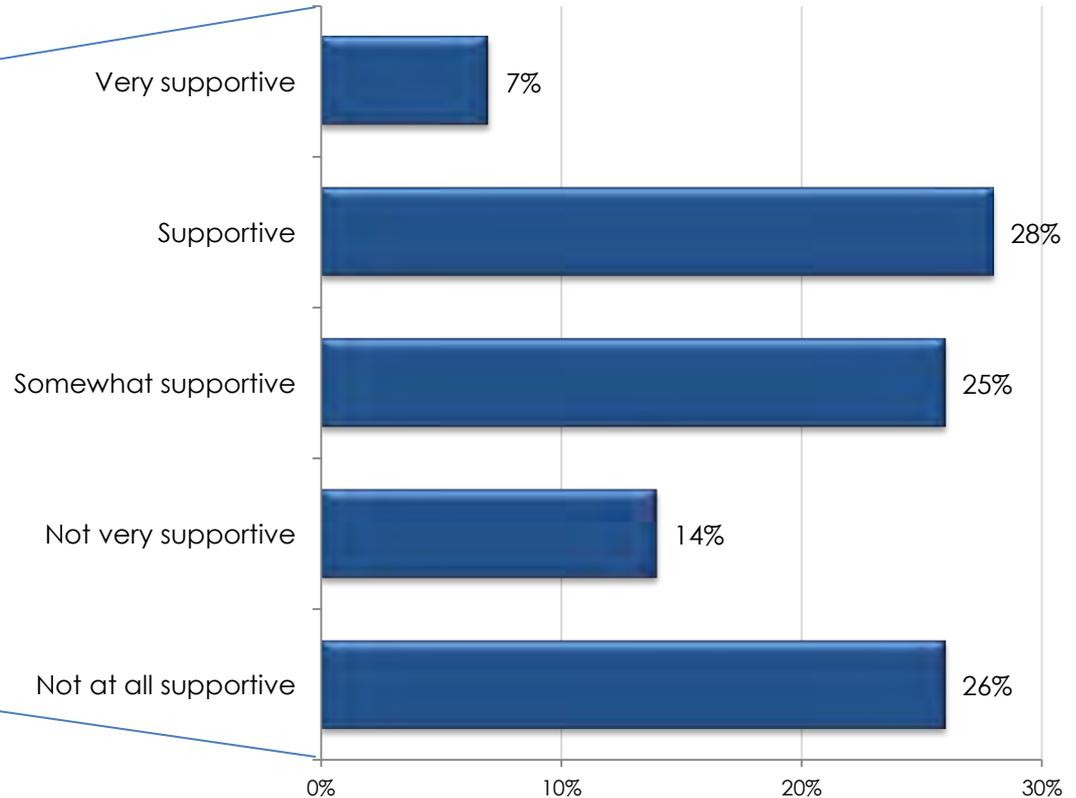
Summary Of Support For A Rate Increase

Option 1 – Reduce services and maintain rates
Option 2 – Maintain services and increase rates



Base: n = 400

Support for an increase lower than 9.5%



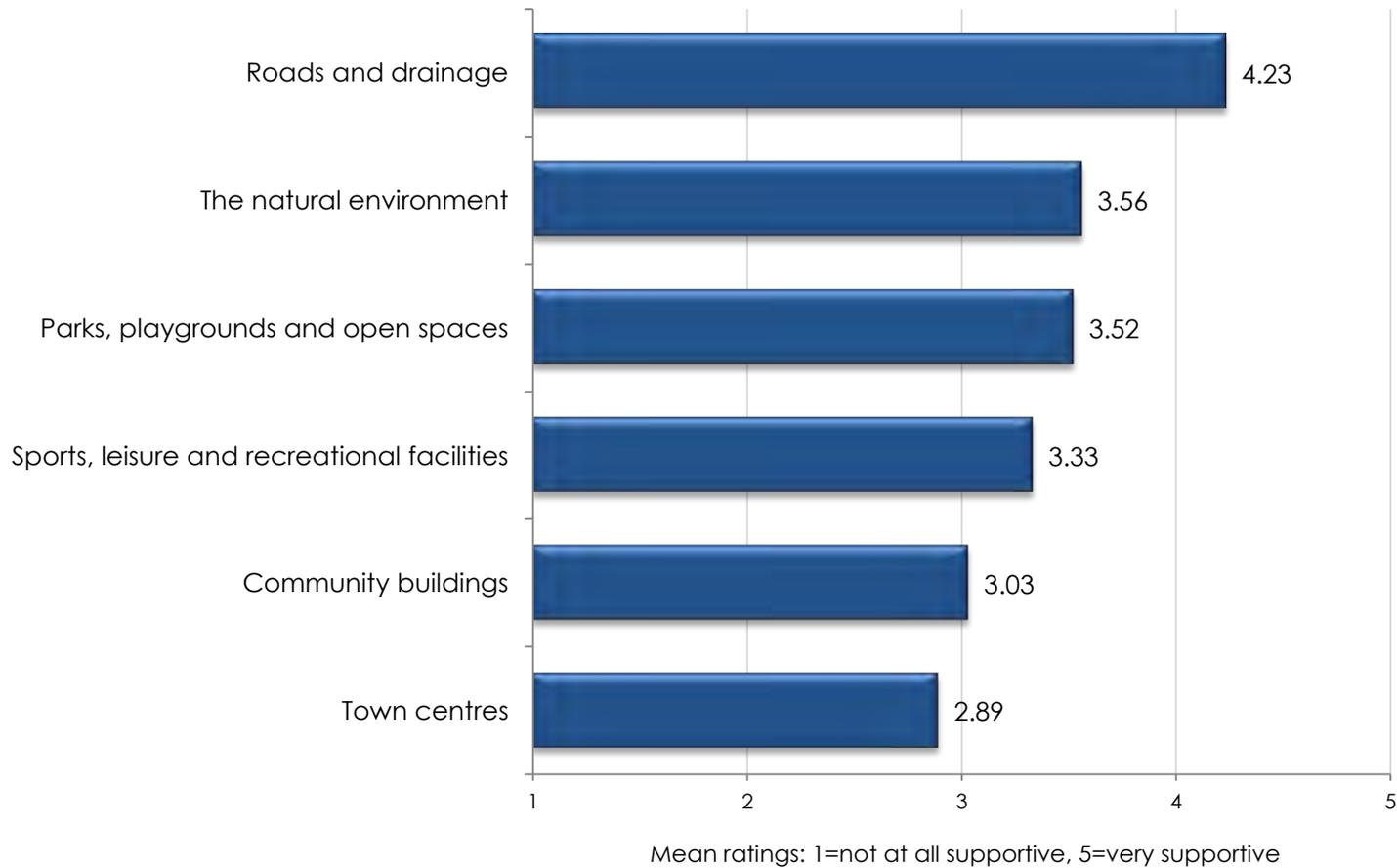
Overall, 74% are at least somewhat supportive of an increase

Base: n = 268

Residents acknowledge that some level of rate increase is required to address the need to maintain services and facilities

Roads And Drainage Is The Key Priority Area

Q. If Council was to develop a funding plan based on a lower rate increase, how supportive would you be of Council maintaining the following types of assets in Wyong Shire?

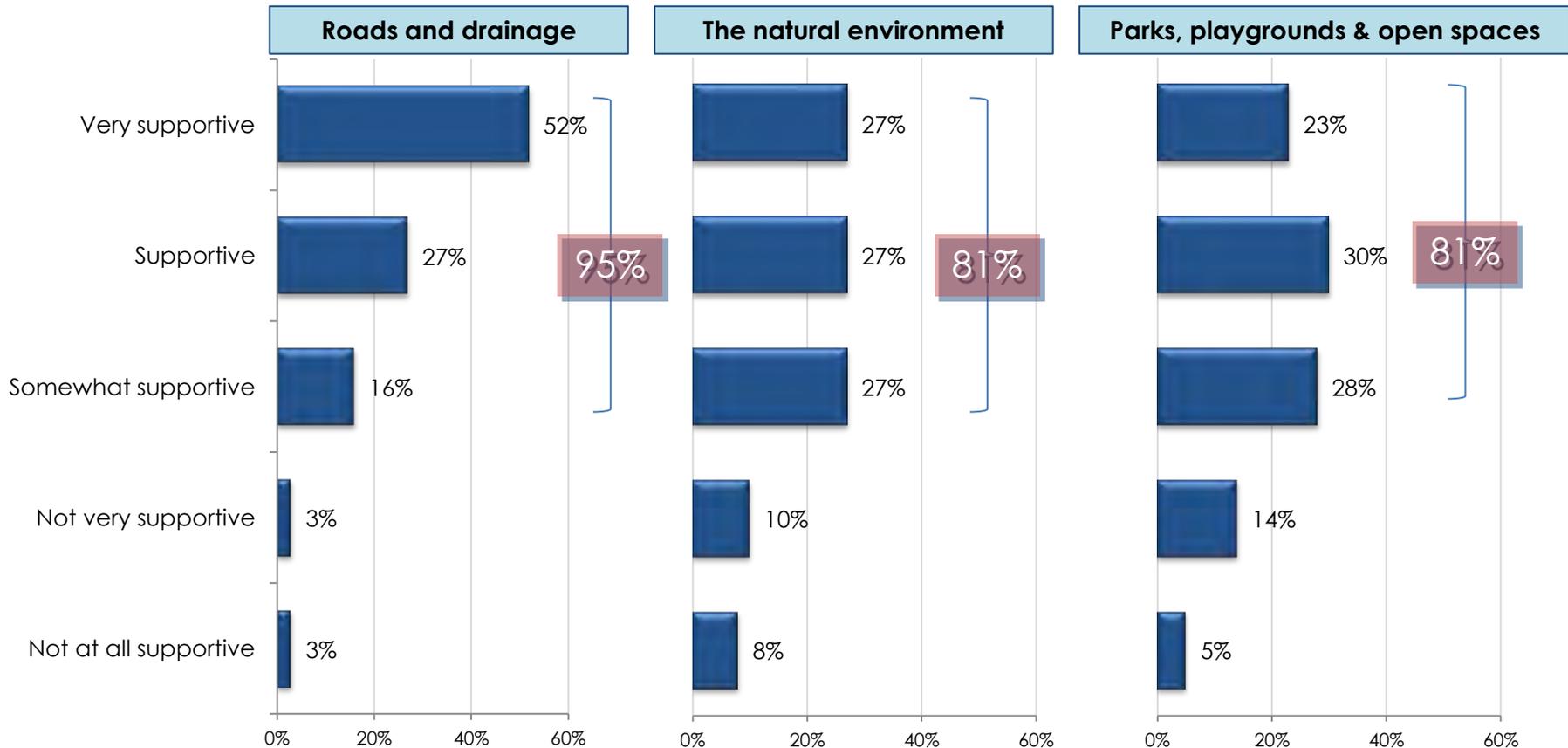


Base: n = 268

**The natural environment, parks and sport/recreational facilities
are all secondary priorities**

95% Of Those Who Rejected Option 2 Are At Least Somewhat Supportive Of Council Maintaining Roads And Drainage

Q. If Council was to develop a funding plan based on a lower rate increase, how supportive would you be of Council maintaining the following types of assets in Wyong Shire?

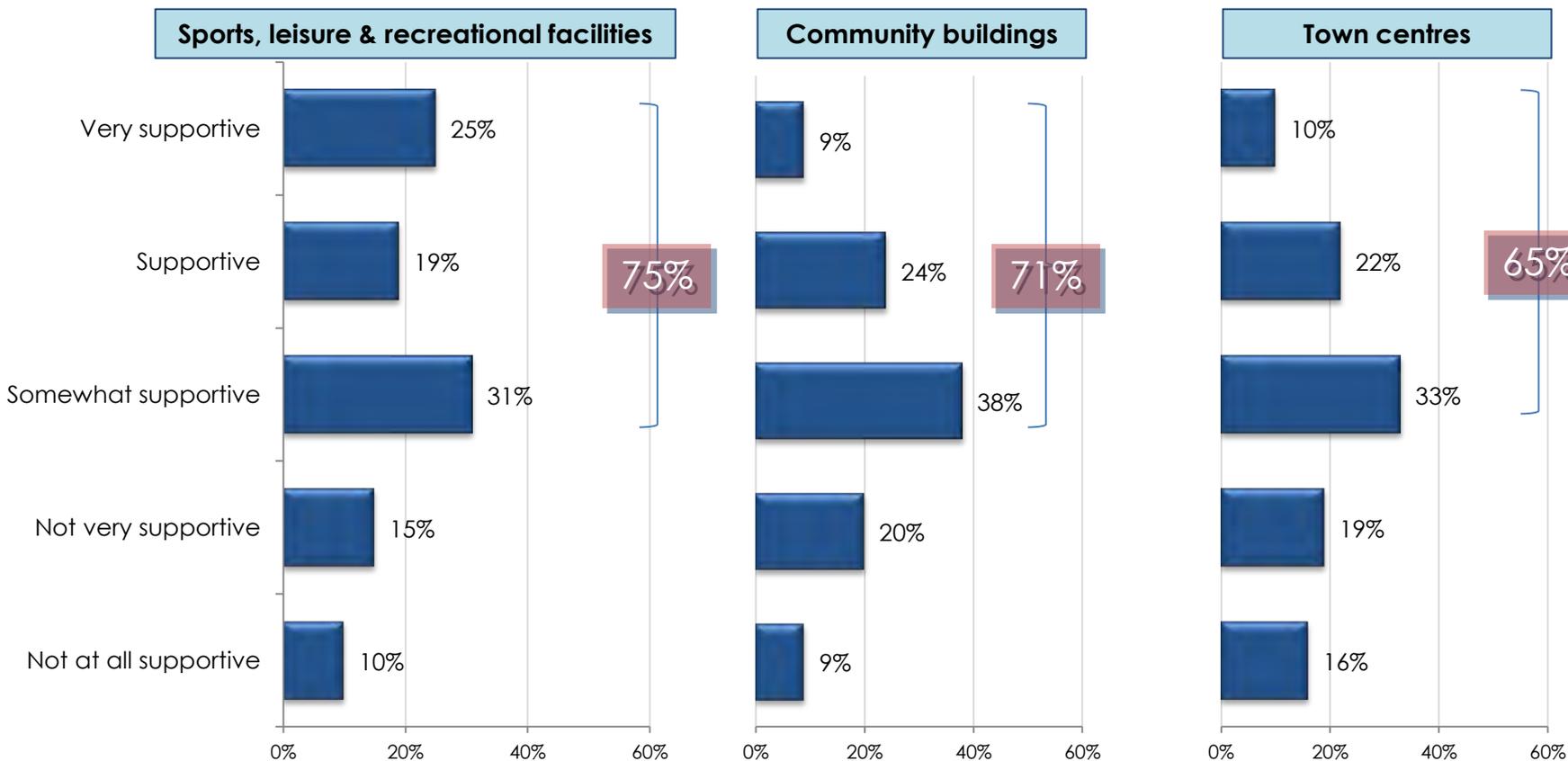


Base: n = 268

8 in 10 are also supportive of funding 'the natural environment' and 'parks playgrounds and open spaces'

75% Of Those Who Rejected Option 2 Are At Least Somewhat Supportive Of Sports, Leisure And Recreational Facilities

Q. If Council was to develop a funding plan based on a lower rate increase, how supportive would you be of Council maintaining the following types of assets in Wyong Shire?



Base: n = 268

Even though it has the lowest relative level of support, 65% of those surveyed are at least somewhat supportive of funding town centres



Summary

1. One third of residents supported Option 2 (Maintain assets, increase rates)
 - ⇒ Key drivers of support revolved around the need to stop the deterioration of Council assets
2. Two thirds of residents supported Option 1 (Reduce services, maintain rates)
 - ⇒ However 60% of these residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Wyong Shire Council introducing rate variation of less than 9.5% to fund some level of infrastructure maintenance

If we amalgamate the findings we can see that in total 74% of residents are at least somewhat supportive of some level of rate increase above the rate peg to allow Wyong Council the opportunity to address the quality of local infrastructure.

Overall, residents are generally supportive of some type of rate increase provided that it is affordable and that it is less than the proposed 9.5% for 7 years option

micromex research

The logo for micromex research features the word "micromex" in a bold, black, lowercase sans-serif font. A stylized compass rose is superimposed over the letter "o". The compass rose has a white center with black lines extending outwards. The top point of the compass rose is a red triangle pointing upwards. Below "micromex", the word "research" is written in a smaller, grey, lowercase sans-serif font.

Telephone: (02) 4352 2388 Fax: (02) 4352 2117
Web: www.micromex.com.au Email: stu@micromex.com.au