

**Results for survey: Special Rate Variation for 2012/13****Responses**

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Upper Hunter Shire Council - Special Rate Variation for 2012/13 Survey

It is proposed to apply to IPART for a special rate variation on the general portion of Council's rates.
The following survey will assist Council in determining community feedback on the proposal.

Please feel free to add any comments for each question.

Question 1*

Do you believe Council needs to spend more on roads and bridges infrastructure to bring them to an improved standard?

Yes	116		86.57%
No	18		13.43%

ID	View Survey	
8867342	View	Level of spending is inadequate.
8922824	View	Better work practices are needed to make effective any increase
8953261	View	Roads need improving
8974602	View	Not until Council has carried out a study to assure itself that existing methods of road and bridge maintenance are managed in a cost efficient manner.
9058394	View	Sometimes it is necessary to increase rates by more than the allowed limit.
9060564	View	Yes, but the Council needs to do the job right the first time, and understands the rural roads requirements so that the money is spent correctly the first time. Its not good enough to just grade the road and push the sand back on the road knowing that it will be back at the edges within a few days. Roads need the proper surfacing, and base if tarred, unlike some of the half backed efforts so far.
9061320	View	yes the roads for years have needed major infrastructure work like resheeting but never gets done
9066750	View	Council should fund the increase by winning some internal efficiencies.
9068354	View	the govt can pay up, we pay huge taxes while the govt wastes millions on stupid projects in the big cities and looking after the fat cats.
9088736	View	Although just recently a patch up effort was made to Merriwa unsealed roads I believe it needs further work to ensure the future safety of these roads.
9124527	View	Yes, not only to upgrade them in the first instance, but to maintain them to a standard that supports the initial investment and ensures long term benefits.
9163691	View	They are not spending enough initially, cheaping out. Alabama St is relatively new and worse than most other existing streets. Stop cutting corners and wasting money on frivolous things like Park St. Ridiculous and didn't need to be done (like the new council building)!
9249447	View	Not on a "business as usual" model. Greater private sector involvement (accountable contractual arrangements) is essential for effective use of scarce resources.
9318553	View	As long as it doesn't forget that Merriwa is also part of the shire
9401203	View	better use of the resources available would have the same effect as spending more money ie. better bang for your buck
9420665	View	Do it right the first time
9420815	View	yes but as a long term project. a bit at a time
9480009	View	By reducing other areas of their budget, ie. vehicles, wages, just like any other company that is unable to meet its requirements, not just squeezing the families further.
9549195	View	The priorities of Council have been incorrect. The proportion of rate money allocated to rural roads needs to change before any increase in rates.
10050985	View	The industries that are using the facilities should be expected to contribute for the damage they cause - particularly heavy vehicles from the mining industry,
10052714	View	Broads Xing has been down for months. This seriously affects all traffic to and from some of the major horse studs and the Dam. This sort of maintenance should have superceded road projects like the traffic lights in Scone.
10054417	View	No not necessarily. I beleive council needs to work more efficiently and prioritise road works rather than wasting funds on unimportant tasks.eg Sending the mechanised streetsweeper to sweep the leaves out of the gutters on Middlebrook Rd roundabout, Using the mechanised pothole patching machine in wet weather to fill in potholes.This engages two employees. One driver and one spotter. The "fill" simply flies out of the potholes when first hit by traffic. Just two examples of waste and not being cost effective!!!
10056717	View	don't forget town roads, some of which are too rough to drive on
10071294	View	LET THE MINES AND RAILWAYS PAY FOR THE DAMAGE THEY CAUSE
10076773	View	You should be managing your infrastructure funds better and seeking grants where available eg. RTA.
10079227	View	Waverley Street Scone is a disgrace and has been for the last 20 years. Half the streets in Scone need work - if the job was done properly in the first place instead of bandaaid patching it would cost less in the long run.
10091172	View	i believe rural roads are forgotten by the council, especially in the outlying areas of the shire. i believe council do need to spend more, however i beleive they need to restructure the budget to find this larger amount.
10091632	View	I don't believe that rate payers should pay extra money tho. I believe that council should evaluate and make changes to there existing budget, reduce spending on things like the unnecessarily massive council chamber, as well a projects like putting new gardens in private streets, the silhouettes throughout scone. Put these wasted funds on the roads and bridges especially in rural areas that have been neglected for far to long.
10091899	View	Council should have been worried about the roads and bridges before they spent \$7 million on a building that they hardly use.
10103753	View	I feel some of the burden should be shouldered by the mines. They are placing stress on the infrastructure requirements and yet reap significant profits.
10106721	View	They should apply to the State Government for money for these projects
10127411	View	how about spending money on the roads instead of putting stupid traffic lights in the middle of main streets and how many 50km signs do we need coming into aberdeen have any of you ever counted them from the bridge to the commercial hotel there is 5 just in that short space
10127613	View	Council must spend \$\$\$ on high prioty areas and cut spending in other areas
10138326	View	Rural roads are a disgrace
10138712	View	Council needs to be more transparent in terms of using rate payers funds
10155088	View	A lot of roads are neglected and dangerous. If there is an increase in rates, the road money should be spent across the whole shire. Adequate signage and verge mowing would be a good start
10156254	View	I believe that council should prioritise and spend wisely. At present some roads and bridges are 'let go' while others have lots of regular attention. Bridges such as Allan bridge have been almost ignored for the last 10 years, having nothing but the most basic maintenance and now we have to use it as a main road to Lake Glenbawn because the crossing from Rouchel rd has been damaged and not repaired.
10209376	View	More on unsealed roads but most of the bridges that have been improved in our area weren't really necessary and the money could have been spent making the roads between the bridges more drivable. Bridges are hugely expensive and should only be done when really necessary.
10224885	View	the road to glenbourne dam needs fixing but no one from the council lives there so nothen will get done.
10255905	View	Particularly replacing the floodway between Aberdeen and Segenhoe which was washed away in the recent floods and is now closed for the foreseeable future. Houses will shortly be built at the Trig Point estate so this access is urgent and vital.
10319550	View	Council needs to do more on roads and bridges , but they must be more efficient in what they do .Every one else has to improve the way problems are solved, Council should be no different.
10319959	View	In the past if much needed drainage infrastructure had been put in place many roads would not have deteriorated to such an extent.
10320229	View	We all have to make do in these difficult times and major capital works delayed until better general economic conditions.The pressure on our roads and bridges is a function of increased mining activity and the beneficiaries [NSW and Fed Govs] should pay for the infrastructural investment needed to support the movement of mining related traffic
10341414	View	Using the exisiting budget allowing for capital infistructure maintenance. not just sucking more from ratepayers
10380311	View	Why are they not up to standard already.
10484098	View	Yes, That should be a No 1 on councils budget spending and prioritize on jobs that affect drivers every day. "Not a park like garden in the middle of Park St"
10504169	View	But more importantly, improved work practices and use of quality materials and expertise of a higher standard.
10512216	View	The roads in the shire are in need of repair, as stated by the opus review. They ae dangerous and there is ,ore traffic on them now than 5 years ago
10590638	View	They are dangerous
10616288	View	Shouldn't council already be able to manage a budget to keep roads at a decent level without resorting to this?? It doesn't inspire confidence in management. The study that was completed should also include ways to properly fund any road work, not just take the lazy way out and hike rates.

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Question 2*

Do you believe that Council should be applying for a special rate variation outside the rate pegging limit?

Yes	36	26.87%
No	98	73.13%

ID	View Survey	
8922824	View	Only if the additional money is not wasted
8974602	View	But only if current methods are cost efficient.
9060564	View	Only if it is totally used for rural roads and not townships
9061320	View	yes only if council is genuine about this problem and don't waste the money on other things like beautifying around the streets near the office to make it look good
9088736	View	The UHSC rates are already more expensive per area then most. When Merriwa Shire was amalgimated the reasons for it were that the councils would be cheaper to run and still today the rates have never gone down and the state local infrastructure has fallen away. So where is the money going or was it a mistake to amalgamate the councils? Don't tell me you still need more money to complete basic services.
9124527	View	I don't believe it is possible to maintain these infrastructures without an injection of additional capital.
9163691	View	Learn to budget, we pay enough and never see anything decent being done. Why pay more and still see nothing that needs to be done get done?? Broads Crossing????!!
9249447	View	But Not if we are going to see the same approach to service provision we've seen for the last decade.
9401203	View	Particularly when ratepayers see that the initially , Federally funded Bicentennial Park was demolished to build a new Council Chambers, that in the words of a previous Councilor "was constructed to ward off a takeover by Muswellbrook" while the old Merriwa and Murrurundi buildings remain almost deserted
9420665	View	As a pensioner we allow for std rate rises and don't have much left over
9420815	View	Our rates are already higher than most. My mother in Sydney pays less.
9480009	View	We have a income and it should be used wisely as every day we see council wastage and unnecessary expense by council. prioritise work and do not waste rate payers money. Use tenders with private contractor far more as council is not a good manager of plant and equipment, leave it to the businesses that specialise in these areas, its time all levels of public service take responsibility for their expenses.
9549195	View	This will not achieve the desired outcome because the ratio setting for roads is incorrect.
9975294	View	Council should prioritise spending rather than impact the values of peoples homes
10050985	View	Like everyone else council needs to live within its limits and find savings.
10052714	View	We pay higher rates than most other towns and higher than some parts of the city. Why should we have to pay more rates to compensate for councils lack of fiscal efficiency.
10053587	View	Like many households,we have to budget on a very modest income, council should budget more effeciently with the money they have.
10055368	View	Councils track record for wasting money is alarming - how could you guarantee extra monies raised would not be also wasted ? In the past community opinion has been overruled by the Council officers.
10056717	View	as long as they spend the money on roads and bridges, and don't buy into things they should have nothing to do with. eg. the old court theatre.
10071294	View	wE PAY ENOUGH RATES FOR THE LITTLE SERVICE WE GET OUT 10KM OUT OF TOWN NO GARAGE SERVICE YET GET HIT WITH GARBAGE FEES NO WATER NO POTS FIXED
10076773	View	You've just squandered ratepayers millions on your Monument to Incompetence Offices.
10079227	View	More money should be spent on town & rural roads and less on employing overpaid office staff with no common sense who work in a \$5,000,000 palace.
10091172	View	i believe a rate increase of 10% is way to high. we are going through tough economic times and a rate increase at this stage is only going to put more of a burden on struggling families.
10091632	View	I believe that council should evaluate and make changes to there budget, as they are not spending it on the basic needs of community e.g roads and bridges yet spend the rate payers money on a unnecessary massive council chamber, as well a projects like putting new gardens in private streets, the silhouettes throughout scone.
10091899	View	No they should be looking in their own back yard for the money and not at the rate payers.
10106721	View	Our rates are already higher than my mother rates in Sydney! We have alot of farmers here that receive generous discounts on their rates and they live on most of the unsealed roads. A user pay system should be introduced for those roads.
10127411	View	i think we pay plenty of rates as it is
10127613	View	Any business must operate within the funds available Council has prepared unrealistic budgets in the past to arrive in this situation. No cost was spared on new chambers
10138326	View	If spent on the right things instead of great big administration buildings
10138712	View	This instance only then have a maintenance program which does not leave an unnecessary financial burden to ratepayers
10139758	View	Until Council can demonstrate they are spending the existing budget wisely, they should not be asking for any increase. Many examples of waste still exist.
10155088	View	Provided it benefits the whole shire, not gets one or two major projects done
10156254	View	Firstly I would like to see that council has scrutinised all of their budget areas and made savings where it is possible to do so. I am sure that there is waste in some areas. I understand that council is responsible for many things and that there is less and less support from Federal and State governments, however my taxes keep increasing - some more of this money needs to flow back to rural areas.
10209376	View	I believe that those of us who currently receive no services (no water, no sewerage, no garbage pick up, no local parks, etc) and have extremely poor roads (4WD in dry weather only) should not have to pay any more. We don't receive any council services for the rates we have paid so I don't think we should have to pay anything extra for services that we don't currently receive.
10224885	View	no we pay enough now if they spent more time and money on maintaining roads they will be still in good nick but no they spend all there money on mowing lawns around scone less lawn mowing and more maintaining roads .
10255905	View	If it means replacing the closed floodway - yes!
10256471	View	but they seem to waste so much money on crap and administration. Make sure all the money is spent on what it is raised for.
10319550	View	NO. I believe Council receives enough from the current rate level and should apply their funds and assets at their disposal in a much more efficient manner.
10319959	View	Not everyone has a "mining" income coming into the home.
10380311	View	This shows that council has a management problem if they cannot stay within the guidelines.
10462121	View	Stop spending money on new infrastructure that residents do NOT want or need (e.g. Park Street)
10484098	View	Not until council starts to understand the need for cutting back on other non immediate issues like all ratepayers have to in their everyday living expenses.
10504169	View	Better budgeting skills need to be adopted. Do away with unnecessary spending and waste of dollars and eliminate wasteful 'bandaid' activities. e.g. repairing the same section of road 3 times in 6 years.
10512216	View	I have gone over the Auditors report in detail. The report points out the council had spent more money than budgeted on employee expences by \$900,000. The management should be accountable for this.
10616288	View	This is unacceptable and would demonstrate a failure to manage basic services and budgets. This is far too drastic. To apply a blanket rate increase, it seems like the easy way out and has the appearance of further mismanagement towards ratepayers. It is also unfair and far too steep.

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Question 3*

Are you willing to pay additional rates to improve Council's roads and bridges?

Yes	40		29.85%
No	94		70.15%

ID	View Survey	
8922824	View	Only if what is happening now is improved on. Minimal gravel has been put on roads for the past 5 years - why. There has been minimal commitment to get value for money out of operations.
8974602	View	Provided that a program of special works are identified and publicly available and that regular monitoring of costs is carried out and ratepayers informed accordingly.
9001524	View	if they stopped wasting money in the main street there wouldnt be a problem with the roads.
9007145	View	If there is an actual, budgeted proposal that is acted upon in a timely, efficient manner and maintenance is provided within the usual budget in subsequent years (not have the infrastructure deteriorate so that this exercise needs to be repeated regularly)
9027828	View	I already pay high rates in Muswellbrook considering what services are provided. My Muswellbrook rates are \$414 my City of Lake Macquarie rates are \$307.60 and my Maitland rates are \$189 honestly what do you think of the rates and the services that are provided locally. Not much I say
9060564	View	Only if it is totally used for rural roads and not townships, and a proper job is done the first time. I believe that the council has all the right equipment now and therefore should spend the additional money received on constructing better road base.
9061320	View	only if council don't waste the money on new cars serve no purpose than taking up car space
9068354	View	rates are too high now. many people are struggling with high electricity prices as well as the cost of rates.
9088736	View	As a land owner our rates already total \$16,000.00 /year for which very few council services are recieved. We still have to pay to use the tip, pool and now you expect us to pay more for the up keep of council roads!
9148543	View	Definitely not. The council needs to work within it's present budget structure. If council believes the road & bridge network is not good enough, it needs to make savings in other areas to faciliate it's change of priorities. There certainly are areas where savings could be made. Slashing the roadsides, with 1 person & tractor, followed up within 2 weeks with a chemical spray slashing with 3 people & 3 vehicles is a complete waste of some shire resourses. This shire appears to me to be THE only shire in NSW where chemical slashing is practiced. The practice also damages the tar verge/gravel line, especially when vehicles are continually gravitating onto the gravel because of the narrow tar surface. The grass holds the gravel in place against the tar, stopping the gravel from being eaten away by continuous tyre damage. If the gravel is in place the tar itself is not broken away, stopping the ever narrowing of the tar surface.
9157889	View	As long as the money is actually used for roads and the figures are provided in detail to rate payers.
9163691	View	Who would? WE PAY ENOUGH!! Again, stop wasting money on "proposals" and get to business (eg Liverpool/Kelly St train overpass? Money wasted on traffic lights that did nothing to solve problem plus money wasted "beautifying" Kelly St) WASTE OF OUR MONEY!!! Helps us how??
9249447	View	I note that the business levy/rate would increase and would hope that the infrastructure spend is not limited to just roads and bridges, but to CBD improvement program too.
9318553	View	Not until they improve current services to outer areas of the shire
9401203	View	I live beside a major highway that has no funding contributed by Council. I do however pay a garbage levy to Council for supposedly clean up of roadside rubbish,(I don't have a rubbish pick up). I still pay \$8.70 to travel 8 kms to Scone every Sunday to take my wheeley bin to the tip, and I see the roads littered with rubbish, that I am paying a levy to Council, to have them clean the roads up.It is just not happening, but I am still paying, and if I pick it up myself, as I often do, the Scone Tip charges me to dump it. Redirect this mony to road maintainance
9420815	View	Like all other business find ways to save money. The FAT cow head office seems to have to many staff already. Charge the land holders more as they do get a discount already.
9480009	View	Council and Governments all think the answer to their short falls are just slug the ratepayer more. This wrong, cut overheads, operate smarter, stop the gravy train. If we are not careful we will end up like Britain.
9480801	View	as long as the extra money is spent on the rural roads and bridges
9549195	View	Rural properties pay an unfair amount of rates now.
9576890	View	I beleive the money they spend should be spent more wisely, less perks (eg cars) for staff and cut other unnecessary spending to cover roads and bridges
9975294	View	NO, again ,council should prioritise. Scone Council rates are already 50% higher than the NSW average.
10050985	View	I believe my rates are too high.
10052714	View	We pay massively inflated rates as it is. Higher than other towns and some parts of the cities. Council need to use the funds better.
10053587	View	Everything in the Upper Hunter Shire is geared to miners wages, ie: rent & house prices. Its all getting beyond the average family and a rate increase will only make these things worse.
10055117	View	I realise this work needs to be done, but we are already crippled by very high rates, high energy costs and ever increasing food costs. Scone has the highest rates of any town I have ever lived in. We simply cannot afford any more money without our families suffering. Please find the money from another source.
10071294	View	TIMES ARE TOUGH ENOUGH ON RURAL PROPERTIES NOW WITHOUT WASTING MORE MONEY ON NO SERVICE
10076773	View	UHSC needs to develop far better relations with its amalgamated residents and address their depleted needs; before crawling to us for more road-repair money. If you want more money, start at the top!
10077451	View	Set off costs to improve roads and bridges by small reduction in staff. You have to have the will to make change and give consideration to alternative methods rather than think that the ONLY way is to increase rates!
10079227	View	If more ratepayers money was spent on roads, bridges & productive outdoor workers and less on overpaid unproductive office managers the work would get done with no need for a rate variation.
10089970	View	Only if they fix Broads Crossing it is crazy that it has been out of action for this long not acceptable !
10091172	View	i believe that council should look at their budgeting and restructure the budget to allow for these without having to take it from the rate payers
10091632	View	No. Especially now when we are going through tough economic times, this will only place extra pressure on struggling families. Friends of mine have got a new job in the mines and are looking to buy a new house in the hunter region as well as investment properties, and have clearly stated that if that if the shire increases the interest rates higher than the usual increase that they will not be buying in the shire, especially for the investment properties. If this view is held by many there will be no or little influx to our shire thus have a negative impact on the community. E.g take scone rental problem to a new high.
10091899	View	No counil should have taken more care and kept up the maintance and the roads and bridges wouldnt be in such a bad way.
10103753	View	This is a very bad time to be increasing rates. We all like to have good roads BUT at this time of economic downturn it is better to be frugal with the funds you have and not WASTE money on other silly projects.
10106721	View	I live in town my roads are fine. Those who choose to live out of town should pay for the roads to their door.
10127411	View	i live in aberdeen and what the hell gets done here sweet stuff all how long since any one of you have driven up graeme street ohh lets just fill in the holes and they'll be happy
10139758	View	Council should be seeking increased federal and state government funding for roadworks. The tax burden is already high enough, it just needs to be spent more appropriately.
10155088	View	Providing it is for everybody, keeping in mind that not everybody travels to Scone or it's local area
10156254	View	It seems that council is asking ratepayers to foot the bill rather than looking at cost savings and grants and allowances from other areas. I understand that the amounts per property are relatively small, however I would also like to know that our council is actively working to find funding from other places and spending what we currently give wisely. We pay many tens of thousands of dollars of taxes and rates and although I believe the largest waste is at federal rather than local level, I also believe that councils also need to lobby federal and state governments so that rural areas are as well supported as urban ones. Population density means that urban councils have bigger budgets, but we equally need safe roads and many of the area's roads are unsafe and cause accidents every year - changing lives and creating suffering for the families involved.
10192905	View	This would increase my rates by \$300 a year - Despite asking for years I cannot even get curb and guttering on my property despite my high rates. Small business just cannot cope with any more charges - we are all hurting enough
10205396	View	ONLY if money from Merriwa, Cassilis and Murrurundi is actually reinvested into those areas and NOT JUST Scone!!
10209376	View	We already pay rates and we have very poor roads. We live on the eastern end of Edmonds Lane Timor and have NEVER had any road maintenance. None of the eastern end of the road is accessible to 2wd vehicles and it is extremely precarious to even 4wd vehicles in wet weather. Waverly Rd is not maintained to a usable standard either. We have been on our property for 4 years and have noticed some work in some sections only 3 times in that time. The work that is done is substandard and results in little real improvement to the road.
10214300	View	As long as there is a long term plan in place for this work. The current haphazard approach is totally unacceptable. If we are to pay increased rates there has to be some certainty about the timeframe within which the work will be done.

10224885	View	no they should have thought about the roads and bridges before spending 7 million dollars on the new council chambers which dose not get used. they could not run a chook raffle the council we have!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
10255905	View	Definitely. People living in the Segenhoe area are severely disadvantaged in heavy rains, particularly with one floodway now being closed.
10256471	View	reluctantly, i think if the place was managed better we probably wouldn't need to pay more.
10319550	View	Because council and councillors need to work out how to improve the system and achieve the results which their ratepayers require, without taking the easy way out. I do not think our representatives have put enough thought into finding a solution.
10319959	View	We feel that we currently pay our way and in actual fact receive very little in return for our outlay.
10380311	View	We pay taxes on fuel, vehicle registration and our rates already another tax is not the answer. Perhaps better management of these funds would be a better solution than increasing our rates.
10383632	View	I think the council should review the timing of their request due to the poor economical climate, and the impact higher than normal increase in rates would have families and small businesses already struggling.
10462121	View	Not when you are wasting money on work that is NOT required and NOT wanted by residents.
10484098	View	Not at this time until council can show cuts in its own expenditure.
10504169	View	Our rates on our rural property are \$9000 per year. I consider this a very substantial contribution, considering our gross earnings.
10512216	View	Another blow out in the budget was depreciation on equipment. The shire is purchasing too much plant. The shire can save money in capital and maintenance costs by employing more contractors to do infrastructure works an maintenance.
10590638	View	We already have no evidence that council intend to improve our road or provide services to the people in the Merriwa area.
10615544	View	We pay enough
10616288	View	Everybody wants good roads and services, of course. All the study indicates is that there is a shortfall in funds. If council want to increase rates I want to be sure existing road gangs are being managed adequately and efficiently.

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Question 4*

If so, what would you be comfortable with, bearing in mind that the rate pegging limit is anticipated to be 2.5% to 3.5% ?

Percentage Increase	* Average difference per urban property per annum	* Average difference per business per annum
As per rate pegging (2.5 % - 3.5%)	\$19.00	\$32.00
5%	\$31.00	\$53.00
10%	\$63.00	\$106.00
15%	\$94.00	\$159.00
20%	\$126.00	\$212.00

*Rural properties vary too much with land values and sizes to give averages. Individual differences can be supplied on request.

As per rate pegging	97	72.39%
5%	18	13.43%
10%	14	10.45%
15%	2	1.49%
20%	3	2.24%

ID	View Survey	
8922824	View	Please make sure that additional money is accounted for - not just to cover over expenditure.
8971202	View	As long as this is a short term increase, we need to know for how long the variation will be in force.
9060564	View	It would have been better if you provided what each % would provide as additional money received as an increase over-and-above the current allocation. That way a surveyor may select a higher %.
9068354	View	no rise thanks, the govt has plenty of our money they can use that!
9087768	View	There is no information provided as the the quantum raised by the various per cent age increases and difference this would make to the road program. Eg does a 5% increase make no material difference to road program or does 10% allow for all roads to be resurfaced and all bridges replaced within 12 months? Asking for a what percentage increase with out this information, while appreciated does not inform people as the the value they might get for their extra money spent.
9148543	View	Of the 3 Upper Hunter councils, this council appears to me to have a staff turnover far higher than the other 2, going on the adds appearing for staff in The Scone Advocate & The Hunter Valley News. Like every business it needs to live within it's budget, training staff all the time is expensive, another possible saving.
9163691	View	As if anyone will read these surveys and rate rise will happen no matter what we say as usual. Keep it as low as possible!!
9303456	View	As we are already paying \$2079 for our residence in Scone which has no footpath, while trees are being surrounded by concrete edges(Park St.)we cannot support a rate increase as we believe funds have been misdirected. We are surprised that the average urban rates appear to be about \$700 p.a. per residence according to the above chart.
9401203	View	I'm getting a little tired of paying rates with little return that I can take advantage of, at the same time seeing a new "palace" on the corner of Liverpool and Main street, where I can send letters to enquire about various aspects of Councils activities, and get no reply
9480009	View	I DO NOT AGREE THAT THERE IS ANY INCREASE REQUIRED AS THE COUNCIL COULD OPERATE WELL UNDER EXISTING INCOME IF THE MANAGEMENT WAS RUN BY EXPERIENCED BUSINESS OPERATORS. SO ABOVE IS ZERO, BUT YOU WILL NOT ACCEPT SURVEY WITHOUT A RESPONSE HERE. It is time to take a stand and prove you are worthy of representing the rate payers, get the budget balance or move over and let people who really have business experience run the council to make rate payers happy and get the job done that we require, forget the wastage and get back to Rubbish, roads and care of rate payers who are you employers.
9531303	View	People are struggling as it is. Should actively pursue ways to achieve greater efficiencies, plus alternatives to producing increased income.
9763545	View	Primary producers in the Merriwa district of the Upper Hunter Shire pay exhorbitant rates and receive almost no services in return. Merriwa rural properties should have their rates reviewed downwards and not increased. Upper Hunter Shire is spending too much money in relative terms on the Scone residential area at the expense of prioritising funding of the local roads. The Upper Hunter Shire Council should also tighten its belt and conduct a staffing review in preference to levying a further rate increase
9777888	View	The question was IF SO and should not have to be answered.
10052714	View	Other NSW councils are able to manage. Why cant this one?
10054417	View	Like the rest of us, Council has to realise it has to keep to a budget, making savings and adjustments to stick to the budget and eliminating waste and unnecessary spending.The direction by management is lacking and out of touch. Road and bridge staff are often hampered by lack of communication and also a lack of practical understanding of the workings of councils road and bridge maintenance and construction procedures. The lack of funds appears to be a bigger problem since management chose to build the enormous office complex, over extending the Council budget by building something unnecessarily expensive and over sized for Scone' requirements. After this massive investment and debt incurment, we are left with an oversized office building, with a lot of space that is under utilised. Scone still remains without a civic centre or Town Hall so that Civic receptions are held outdoors at the front of the office building in the open airwith everyone hoping for fine weather. The only regional town of it's size without a community hall or civic centre, but boy we have the largest Office building!!!! How frustrating!!! No, I do not agree with the Council's Application for a Special rate Variation Council has no right to do so while it continues to mis manage Ratepayers money.
10055368	View	Have you considered reducing the number of employees that the Council has - it would appear to be somewhat top heavy when one sees "workers" performing tasks, one worker actually working whilst 4 look on.
10056717	View	i think 19 or 20dollars is fine, as a pensioner i can afford that,it's only a packet of cigs for those who smoke
10076773	View	We managed fine before we were amalgamated. It's your mess!
10077451	View	Live within your means. Why don't you (Yes, you!) take a small reduction in Salary? Did it occur to you that there's always another way to achieve goals?
10079227	View	More commonsense approach to wasteful spending would result in work the ratepayers need done getting done with no increase in rates required eg. recent total waste of time & money in Park Street Scone - who wanted this monstrosity in the middle of the street - the residents I DON'T THINK SO!!!!
10091172	View	the rate pegging is their for a reason, council are still getting increased fund from rate payers, i think it unnecessary to demand such a huge increase.
10106721	View	we already pay to much. soon we will have to pay for the water from the dam. You should find another way to raise money or we will soon have the most expensive rates in NSW
10127613	View	The literature indicates that this rate rise is 6% plus the allowable increase However the 6% is there for ever. As a rural rate payer I feel that council wastes \$\$\$ on studies on past studies for water systems Then cries poverty when Broads Crossing Collapses. Reorganise council funds to cover for the replacement of the crossing.
10156254	View	If this was a once only levy it may be different, however this is proposed to be a permanent increase, which gives a permanently higher base for the next increases. Although it has been proposed as a once only permanent increase - what guarantee do we have that it won't happen again? Discuss with the state govt why they have a cap that doesn't even always keep up with the cpi rather than just taxing your local ratepayers even more than they already donate to the Australian economy.
10192905	View	As above - I cannot afford any more - I have said no and yet this page will not send unless I respond here!! So that is why I have had to tick as per rate pegging
10214300	View	We need to be given better information about this proposal and a detailed plan of what is proposed.
10224885	View	0% as per question 2 no i will not be paying anymore
10255905	View	Bridges are expensive, but then so is the cost of living. There needs to be a balance.
10313002	View	We are rated more than most councils already and given the rich deposits that the Government profit from in this area they should grant more money. \$70 million Infrastructure Scheme should go a long way if it is not wasted.
10320229	View	Please supply a breakdown of rates paid in dollars by sector rural properties residentil mining and related engineering activities
10341414	View	NIL!!!
10380311	View	Hard times we all have to manage our affairs better.
10484098	View	xxx
10512216	View	My rates will go up by more than \$800. I cannot afford this increase. We are struggling to meet costs as it is. The councilors have to instruct management to have another look at the budget and improve on efficiencies.
10522981	View	As a small rural property my rates would increase by \$800.I find your survey and media releases very misleading.Being a grain growing property I have seen my income drop in front of my eyes by 40% due to wet harvests in the last two years and find this rate rise badly timed and just about the last straw.Our property is on the ringwood rd and have seen the traffic increase by 10 fold in recent years due to mine workers. I find it unfair that a miner earning \$100000plus who owns a house in town would have to pay \$40 more and a landowner struggling to make ends meet would have to pay \$800plus.IS THAT FAIR
10616288	View	Isn't this is higher than CPI? Ultimately, council has to realise that decisions like these have an effect on where people choose to live. Why would you choose the Upper Hunter when things like this happen? This indicates there is a problem with the rates system - and the reflex reaction should not be to dip into ratepayers pockets but to work out why our current rating system is not adequate.

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