

Media release

Friday 12 February 2021

Strictly Embargoed until 12.01 AM Friday 12 February

NSW councils apply for rate increases

Eight councils across NSW have applied to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a special variation to increase their income from rates above the rate peg in 2021-22.

They are Central Coast, City of Canterbury-Bankstown, Georges River, Armidale Regional, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional, Federation, Liverpool Plains Shire and Tweed Shire Councils (details in table below).

“Some of the proposed increases have already caused strong community reaction. There have been more than 3,850 submissions about the Central Coast Council’s application and 175 about Liverpool Plains Shire Council,” said IPART Tribunal member Ms Deborah Cope.

IPART has set the rate peg for 2021-22 at 2.0%. The rate peg is the maximum percentage amount by which a council can increase its income from rates.

Councils requiring additional revenue are able to apply to IPART for increases above the rate peg, known as special variations. They are also able to apply to change the level of the minimum rate that they charge. IPART assesses applications against criteria established by the NSW Office of Local Government.

Councils applying for both minimum rate increases and special variations are City of Canterbury-Bankstown and Georges River Council. Councils only applying for increases to minimum rates have until 1 March to submit applications.

IPART Tribunal member, Ms Cope, said IPART will determine all applications by mid-May.

“Councils are required to demonstrate the need for the additional revenue, evidence of community consultation and an assessment of the impact on affected ratepayers.

“Community members can continue to make submissions directly to IPART until 7 March and we will consider these submissions as part of our determination,” Ms Cope said.

Details about each council’s proposal can be found on the IPART [website](#).

The IPART website also has details about the assessment criteria for special variation and minimum rate applications, as well as instructions on how to lodge a submission.

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Council	Application types - Special Variation (SV) and Minimum Rate (MR)	% total increase including the rate peg and stated purpose
Armidale Regional	SV only	10.5% single year increase, retained permanently in the rate base, to maintain current service levels, fund renewal of infrastructure and ensure financial sustainability.
City of Canterbury Bankstown	SV and MR	36.34% cumulative increase over five years, retained permanently in the rate base, to improve service levels, fund ongoing maintenance and renewal of assets and new infrastructure. Minimum rates are currently \$636.80 and \$778.70 for residential and business ratepayers respectively in the former Bankstown area. In the former Canterbury area, they are \$713.90 for both residential and business ratepayers. The council proposes minimum rates of \$728.18 for residential and \$794.27 for business ratepayers in 2021-22, to increase to \$850 and \$990 for both categories in 2022-23 and 2023-24 respectively.
Central Coast	SV only	15% single year increase, retained permanently in the rate base, to improve financial sustainability.
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional	SV only	53.5% cumulative increase over four years, retained permanently in the rate base, to maintain service levels, fund asset renewals and improve financial sustainability.
Federation	SV only	8.0% single year increase, retained permanently in the rate base, to fund the ongoing costs of a new swimming pool in Corowa.
Georges River	SV and MR	32.6% cumulative increase over five years, retained permanently in the rate base, to maintain service levels, deliver key priorities in the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program, fund infrastructure maintenance and renewals, and improve financial sustainability. Minimum rates are currently \$586 in the former Hurstville area and \$967 in the former Kogarah area. The council proposes minimum rates of \$965.80 for residential, \$1,500 for CBD business and \$1,100 for other business ratepayers for 2021-22.
Liverpool Plains Shire	SV only	25.97% cumulative increase over three years, retained permanently in the rate base, to improve financial sustainability, improve and facilitate maintenance and increase capacity to renew deteriorating assets. The council notes the SV will also reduce its reliance on grant funding for asset renewals.

Tweed Shire	SV only	4.35% single year increase, retained permanently in the rate base, to fund long-term maintenance and management of environmental protection lands. The SV is to be recovered through a special rate only levied on ratepayers within the new Kings Forest subdivision.
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