



**G W Y D I R**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

**MINUTES ORDINARY MEETING**

**GWYDIR SHIRE COUNCIL**

**THURSDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2016**

**COMMENCING AT 4.00PM**

**NORTH STAR SPORTING CLUB**

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**Present:**

**Councillors:** Cr. John Coulton (Mayor), Cr. Catherine Egan (Deputy Mayor), Cr. Angela Doering, Cr. Stuart Dick, Cr Marilyn Dixon, Cr. Kerry McDonald, Cr. Jim Moore, Cr. Peter Pankhurst and Cr. Geoff Smith.

**Staff:** Leeah Daley (Deputy General Manager), Richard Jane (Director Technical Services), Ron Wood (Chief Financial Officer) and Glen Pereira (Director Development and Environmental Services)

**Public:** Various from 4 to 10 members of the public

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**OFFICIAL OPENING AND WELCOME – MAYOR**

**APOLOGIES Nil**

**CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES**

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION:  
MINUTE 6/16**

**THAT the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Thursday  
February 11, 2016 as circulated be taken as read and  
CONFIRMED.**

**(Moved Cr Pankhurst, seconded Cr Egan)**

**PRESENTATION**

**Several residents participated in a review of the future of the North Star  
Hall**

**CALL FOR THE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND CONFLICTS OF  
INTEREST**

**Cr Pankhurst declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest in  
Item 8 ‘Bora Road Update’**

**ADDITIONAL/LATE ITEMS**

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION:  
MINUTE 7/16**

**THAT the following items, namely:**

- 1. Quarterly Budget Review**
- 2. Investment and Rates Collection Report -  
January 2016**
- 3. Financial Statements for year ended 30 June  
2015**

**are accepted as late items onto this Agenda for discussion.**

**(Moved Cr Egan, seconded Cr Doering)**

**Item 1 IPART SRV Application**

**FILE REFERENCE**

**DELIVERY PROGRAM**

**GOAL:** 5. Organisational Management

**OUTCOME:** 5.1 CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

**STRATEGY:** 5.1.1 Financial management and accountability systems - CFO - internal

**AUTHOR** General Manager

**DATE** 15/02/2016

**STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST** Nil

**IN BRIEF/ SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

This report recommends the Council's endorsement of the Special Rates Variation application submitted to IPART that includes the modification to the adopted budget and Long Term Financial Plan to correct a technical oversight with regard to handling of the rating information.

**TABLED ITEMS** Part A of the IPART Submission

**BACKGROUND**

In preparing the rating income component of the proposed budget the rates' income forecast had a fundamental error in calculations – the 15% expiring SRV for 2015-2016 (\$718,783) was deducted after the proposed 30% SRV application rather than correctly deducting before the increase was applied.

On the positive side, this overstated the increase that would be applied to ratepayers. Even with this error there was support for the increase.

On the negative side, this overstated the Council's rates' income – the amount is relatively minor and can be considered immaterial.

This technical issue came to light during the completion of the Part A of the submission. Part B of the application is attached but Part A is the spreadsheet component and will be tabled at the meeting.

IPART has been contacted and the appropriate course of action is for the Council to lodge the application, noting the correction and ensuring that Part A contains the correct information, that a revised Long Term Plan (attached) is lodged no later than 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and that the Council confirm the revised documents at the next Council Meeting.

This is page number 4 of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 25 February 2016

Chairman .....

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Council endorses the Special Rates Variation application submitted to IPART that includes the modification to the adopted budget and Long Term Financial Plan to correct a technical oversight with regard to the handling of the rating information.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- AT- IPART B
- AT- Revised LTP

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION:  
MINUTE 8/16**

**THAT the Council endorses the Special Rates Variation application submitted to IPART that includes the modification to the adopted budget and Long Term Financial Plan to correct a technical oversight with regard to the handling of the rating information.**

**(Moved Cr Dixon, seconded Cr Moore)**



Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal

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## Special Variation Application Form – Part B

For 2016-17

Issued January 2016

**Insert Name of Council: Gwydir Shire Council**  
Date Submitted to IPART: 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016  
Council Contact Person: Ron Wood  
Council Contact Phone: 02 6724 2017  
Council Contact Email: rwood@gwydir.nsw.gov.au

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The Tribunal members for this review are:

Dr Peter J. Boxall AO, Chairman

Ms Catherine Jones

Mr Ed Willett

Inquiries regarding this document should be directed to a staff member:

Dennis Mahoney (02) 9290 8494

Tony Camenzuli (02) 9113 7706

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## 1 Introduction

IPART will assess each application against the criteria set out in the Office of Local Government's (OLG) *Guidelines for the preparation of an application for a special variation to general income for 2016/2017 (the Guidelines)*. Councils should refer to these guidelines before completing this application form.<sup>1</sup>

Each council must complete this Part B application form when applying for a special variation to general income either under section 508A or under section 508(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

In addition, councils must complete the Part B form with the Part A (spreadsheet) form for both s508(2) and s508A applications. The Guidelines also require the council to have resolved to apply for a special variation. You must attach a copy of the council's resolution. IPART's assessment of the application cannot commence without it.

If the proposed special variation includes increasing minimum rates above the statutory limit, or is to apply a higher rate of increase to an existing minimum rate than to its other rates, it is not necessary for the council to also complete the separate Minimum Rates Application form. However, this must be clearly identified and addressed in the special variation application. In such circumstances, councils are encouraged to discuss their proposed application with IPART as soon as possible.

As outlined in the OLG's Guidelines, councils that are the subject of merger proposals will not be eligible for a special variation for the 2016-17 rating year.

### 1.1 Completing the application form

This form is structured to provide guidance on the information we consider is necessary for us to assess a special variation application. To complete the form, the council will need to respond to questions and insert text in the boxed area following each section or sub-section.

The amount of information that a council provides will be a matter of judgement for the council, but it should be sufficient for us to make an evidence-based assessment of the application. Generally, the extent of the evidence should reflect the size of the variation sought. More complex applications or requests for a high cumulative percentage increase should be supported by stronger, more extensive evidence.

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<sup>1</sup> The Guidelines are available at [www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au)

Councils may submit additional supporting documents as attachments to the application (refer to section 8). These attachments should be clearly cross-referenced in Part B. We prefer to receive relevant extracts rather than complete publications, unless the complete publication is relevant to the criteria. If you provide complete documents when only an extract is relevant, we may ask you to resubmit the extract only. (You should provide details of how we can access the complete publication should this be necessary.)

We publish videos and Fact Sheets on how IPART assesses special variations and on the nature of community engagement for special variation applications. These will assist in preparing the application. The latest videos and Fact Sheets on these topics are available on IPART's website.<sup>2</sup>

We may ask for additional information to assist us in making our assessment. If this is necessary, we will contact the nominated council officer.

This application form consists of:

- ▼ Section 2 – Preliminaries
- ▼ Section 3 – Assessment criterion 1
- ▼ Section 4 – Assessment criterion 2
- ▼ Section 5 – Assessment criterion 3
- ▼ Section 6 – Assessment criterion 4
- ▼ Section 7 – Assessment criterion 5
- ▼ Section 8 – List of attachments
- ▼ Section 9 – Certification.

## 1.2 Notification and submission of the special variation application

### Notification of intention to apply

Councils intending to submit an application under either section 508(2) or section 508A should have notified us of their intention to apply, via the Council Portal, by Friday, 11 December 2015.

**Any councils that did not notify but intend to apply for a special variation for 2016-17 should contact us as soon as possible.**

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au).

**On-line submission of applications**

All councils intending to apply for a special variation must use the Council Portal on IPART's website to register as an applicant council and to submit an application.

The Portal is at [http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local\\_Govt](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local_Govt). The [User Guide](#) for the Portal will assist you with the registration and online submission process. If you experience difficulties please contact Himali Ranasinghe on (02) 9113 7710 or by email [himali\\_ranasinghe@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:himali_ranasinghe@ipart.nsw.gov.au)

File size limits apply on the Council Portal to each part of the application. For this Part B application form the limit is 10MB. The limit for supporting documents is 50MB for public documents and 50MB for confidential documents. These file limits should be sufficient for your application. Please contact us if they are not.

We will post all applications (excluding confidential content) on the IPART website. Confidential content may include part of a document that discloses the personal identity or other personal information pertaining to a member of the public or whole documents such as a council working document and/or a document that includes commercial-in-confidence content. Councils should ensure that documents provided to IPART are redacted so that they do not expose confidential content.

Councils should also post their application on their own website for the community to access.

**Hardcopy of application**

We ask that councils also submit one hardcopy of their application to us (with a table of contents and appropriate cross-referencing of attachments) at the following address:

**Local Government Team**  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
PO Box K35  
Haymarket Post Shop NSW 1240  
or  
Level 15, 2-24 Rawson Place, Sydney NSW 2000.

We must receive your application via the Council Portal no later than **COB Monday, 15 February 2016**.

## 2 Preliminaries

### 2.1 Focus on Integrated Planning and Reporting

Councils must identify the need for a proposed special variation to their General Fund's rates revenue as part of their Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) process. The IP&R documents will need to be publicly exhibited and adopted by the council prior to it submitting its application to us. Also refer to section 6 for a more detailed explanation.

The key IP&R documents are the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and, where applicable, the Asset Management Plan. A council's application may also include supplementary and/or background publications used within its IP&R processes. You should refer to these documents to support your application for a special variation where appropriate.

### 2.2 Key purpose of special variation

At the highest level, indicate the key purpose(s) of the proposed special variation by marking one or more of the boxes below with an "x".

Maintain existing services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Enhance financial sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental services or works	<input type="checkbox"/>
Infrastructure maintenance / renewal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reduce infrastructure backlogs	<input type="checkbox"/>
New infrastructure investment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

You should summarise below the key aspects of the council's application, including the purpose and the steps undertaken in reaching a decision to make an application.

Council made a previous application to IPART for a 2 x 15% (cumulative 32.25%) increase over 2 years commencing 2015-2016. IPART approved a temporary increase of 15% for 2015-2016.

This application will essentially achieve the same results as our initial application and address the shortfalls in that application as identified by IPART.

Following last year's submission, a round of community meetings were held in regarding the State Governments Fit For the Future program and Gwydir Councils evaluation.

It was clear from these meetings (which were well attended) that two things were evident once our situation was explained - at the close of the meetings a poll was taken and there was overwhelming support for a) Councils continued existence, b) the services provided and c) given what was at stake, support for the rate increase (unfortunately this support was after our submission was provided to IPART).

Further, given that our performance in community consultation was questioned by IPART, the University of Technology Sydney, Centre for Local Government was engaged to address the community engagement issue. Once the attendees were explained and worked through the relevant issues, there was overwhelming support for what the Council does and for the SRV application of 30% in 2016-2017 being presented to IPART for consideration.

Council has also addressed the issue of costing service level reductions and has provided a ten year plan where surplus results are achieved each year in the plan. Some fine tuning is still required to ensure operating results are stabilised and/or show a slight upward trend, but this is a major turn-around for council where past results have shown operational losses every year - the highest in recent years was a \$7.5m loss (\$9.3m before capital grants) in the 2013-2014 financial year.

It is clear that if Council continues with 'Business as usual' without a Special Rate Variation increase and without changes in service levels, it falls far short in almost every measure of sustainability.

However, with the proposed Special Rate Variation and the proposed changes to services, Council will, or be very near meeting all sustainability measures. With fine tuning, which will take time and further community consultation regarding service levels, these targets can now be achieved.

### 2.3 Capital expenditure review

You should complete this section if the council intends to undertake major capital projects that are required to comply with the OLG's Capital Expenditure Guidelines, as outlined in OLG Circular 10-34. A capital expenditure review is required for projects that are not exempt and cost in excess of 10% of council's annual ordinary rates revenue or \$1 million (GST exclusive), whichever is the greater.

A capital expenditure review is a necessary part of a council's capital budgeting process and should have been undertaken as part of the Integrated Planning and

Reporting requirements in the preparation of the Community Strategic Plan and Resourcing Strategy.

Does the proposed special variation require council to do a capital expenditure review in accordance with OLG Circular to Councils, Circular No 10-34 dated 20 December 2010	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, has a review been done and submitted to OLG?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

### 3 Assessment Criterion 1: Need for the variation

Criterion 1 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*The need for, and purpose of, a different revenue path for the council's General Fund (as requested through the special variation) is clearly articulated and identified in the council's IP&R documents, in particular its Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan where appropriate. In establishing need for the special variation, the relevant IP&R documents should canvass alternatives to the rate rise. In demonstrating this need councils must indicate the financial impact in their Long Term Financial Plan applying the following two scenarios:*

- *Baseline scenario – General Fund revenue and expenditure forecasts which reflect the business as usual model, and exclude the special variation, and*
- *Special variation scenario – the result of implementing the special variation in full is shown and reflected in the General Fund revenue forecast with the additional expenditure levels intended to be funded by the special variation.*

*Evidence to establish this criterion could include evidence of community need /desire for service levels/projects and limited council resourcing alternatives.*

*Evidence could also include the assessment of the council's financial sustainability conducted by the NSW Treasury Corporation.*

The response to this criterion should summarise the council's case for the proposed special variation. It is necessary to show how the council has identified and considered its community's needs, alternative funding options (to a rates rise).

The criterion states that the need for the proposed special variation must be identified and clearly articulated in the council's IP&R documents especially the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and the Delivery Program, and, where appropriate, the Asset Management Plan (AMP). The purpose of the proposed special variation should also be consistent with the priorities of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

#### 3.1 Case for special variation - community need

Summarise and explain below:

- ▼ How the council identified and considered the community's needs and desires in relation to matters such as levels of service delivery and asset maintenance and provision.
- ▼ How the decision to seek higher revenues above the rate peg was made and which other options were examined, such as changing expenditure priorities or using alternative modes of service delivery.
- ▼ Why the proposed special variation is the most appropriate option: for example, typically other options would include introducing new or higher user charges and/or an increase in council loan borrowings, or private public partnerships or joint ventures.
- ▼ How the proposed special variation impacts the LTFP forecasts for the General Fund and how this relates to the need the council identified. Our assessment will also consider the assumptions which underpin the council's LTFP forecasts.

In addressing this criterion, you should include extracts from, or references to, the IP&R document(s) that demonstrate how the council meets this criterion.

There has been significant community engagement by Council over the past few years in relation to services provided and ratepayer satisfaction. The results from past engagement exercises were supported by the current community engagement process, where strong support for Council and the services provided is evident.

Council has been aware for some time that the mix of revenues and services provided was not sustainable for the long term, but has postponed the process of applying for a special rate variation in part due to the complex, costly and time consuming nature of the application process. The Fit for the Future program instigated by the State Government however and recent financial outcomes have brought into focus that action in reviewing revenue and service levels required urgent action.

Without changes in revenues and service levels, Council would remain in a very sorry state with no realistic and feasible way towards becoming sustainable.

Without the additional income associated with this application, expenditure and associated service levels of Council would need to be drastically reduced – not an outcome that would be palatable to the community.

The proposed increase has the support of the Gwydir Community.

**NOTE:** Upon completing the Part A template, an error was identified in our rate forecasting – the 15% expiring SRV for 2015-2016 (\$718,783) was deducted after the proposed 30% SRV application rather than correctly deducting before the increase was applied.

On the positive side, this overstated the increase that would be applied to ratepayers. Even with this error there was support for the increase.

On the negative side, this overstated our rates income – the amount can be considered immaterial.

This error has only come to light as we were completing Part A of our submission.

We phoned IPART as soon as practicable after the error was discovered and discussed the appropriate course of action with Tony Camenzuli.

It was agreed that we should lodge our application, noting the error with the following additional points. Part A should show the correct information. A revised LTP should be lodged no later than tomorrow afternoon. Further, we will require evidence that the changes have the support and approval of the General Manager and that the revised plans will be adopted by Council at the earliest opportunity, which will be the Ordinary meeting on 25 February. (File reference GM's endorsement.pdf).

This resulted in a drop in income of approximately \$200k or around 2% (immaterial). From the 2017-2018 financial year onwards 25% of this reduction was offset by reduced materials and contract costs and 75% in capital works expenditure.

Council is committed to further reviewing service levels and relevant income/expenditure. Fine tuning of results going forward is expected with resultant positive impacts on operating results and ratios.

### 3.2 Financial sustainability

The proposed special variation may be intended to improve the council's underlying financial position for the General Fund, or to fund specific projects or programs of expenditure, or a combination of the two. We will consider evidence about the council's current and future financial sustainability and the assumptions it has made in coming to a view on its financial sustainability.

You should explain below:

- ▼ The council's understanding of its current state of financial sustainability, its long-term projections based on alternative scenarios and assumptions about revenue and expenditure.
- ▼ Any external assessment of the council's financial sustainability, eg, by auditors, Treasury Corporation. Indicate how such assessments of the council's financial sustainability is relevant to supporting the decision to apply for a special variation.



- ▼ The council's view of the impact of the proposed special variation on its financial sustainability.

There have been numerous studies and reports of late into the local government sector sustainability. The empirical evidence clearly shows that Council is not sustainable without significant change.

With the increased revenue outlined in this application and the changes in service levels achieved over the past couple of years, as well as the proposed changes going forward, Council can achieve financial sustainability. This is a significant change from the results provided in the recent reports, including NSW Treasury Corporations assessment of Councils performance.

### 3.3 Financial indicators

How will the proposed special variation affect the council's key financial indicators (General Fund) over the 10-year planning period? Please provide, as an addendum to the LTFP, an analysis of council's performance based on key indicators (current and forecast) which may include:

- ▼ Operating balance ratio excluding capital items (ie, net operating result before capital grants and contributions as percentage of operating revenue before capital grants and contributions).
- ▼ Unrestricted current ratio (the unrestricted current assets divided by unrestricted current liabilities).
- ▼ Rates and annual charges ratio (rates and annual charges divided by operating revenue).
- ▼ Debt service ratio (principal and interest debt service costs divided by operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions).
- ▼ Broad liabilities ratio (total debt plus cost to clear infrastructure backlogs as per Special Schedule 7 divided by operating revenue).
- ▼ Asset renewal ratio (asset renewals expenditure divided by depreciation, amortisation and impairment expenses).

Without the approval of the proposed Special Rate Variation and implementation of identified savings, Council does not meet sustainability targets.

In most areas, in our proposed outcome, Council achieves, or goes very close to achieving benchmarks as shown in appendix C of the LTP. For the operating performance result, General Fund averages .164 from 2017-2026, compared to negative results prior. The benchmark for this measure is above zero.

General Fund own source revenue under the proposed option averages 57.3%, with a high of 59%. The benchmark for this measure is 60%.

Asset renewal averages 109% over the ten years. Note that this is all asset renewals against depreciation.

General Fund Debt Service Ratio ranges from 5% at the start of the ten years and drops to 2% at the end of the period, which is within the benchmark range of 0-20%.

At this point in time, no new borrowings are proposed and any new borrowings will only be sought if a strong business case supports that the borrowing costs can be met from the income generated by the activity been funded by the loan.

### 3.4 Contribution plan costs above the cap

You should complete this section if the proposed special variation seeks funding for contributions plan costs above the development contributions cap. Otherwise, leave this section blank.

Please explain how the council has established the need for a special variation to meet the shortfall in development contributions.

For costs above the cap in contributions plans, a council must provide:<sup>3</sup>

- ▼ a copy of the council's section 94 contributions plan
- ▼ a copy of the Minister for Planning's response to IPART's review and details of how the council has subsequently amended the contributions plan
- ▼ details of any other funding sources that the council is proposing to use, and
- ▼ any reference to the proposed contributions (which were previously to be funded by developers) in the council's planning documents (eg, LTFP and Asset Management Plan (AMP)).

This section is not applicable.

## 4 Assessment criterion 2: Community awareness and engagement

Criterion 2 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*Evidence that the community is aware of the need for and extent of a rate rise. The Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan should clearly set out the extent of*

<sup>3</sup> See Planning Circular 10-025 dated 24 November 2010 at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au) and for the most recent Direction issued under section 94E of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. See also Planning Circular PS 10-022 dated 16 September 2010.

*the General Fund rate rise under the special variation. The council's community engagement strategy for the special variation must demonstrate an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness and input occur. IPART's fact sheet includes guidance to councils on the community awareness and engagement criterion for special variations.*

Our fact sheet on the requirements for community awareness and engagement are available on the IPART website.<sup>4</sup>

In responding to this criterion, the council must provide evidence that:

- ▼ it has consulted and engaged the community about the proposed special variation using a variety of engagement methods and that the community is aware of the need for, and extent of, the requested rate increases
- ▼ it provided opportunities for input and gathered input/feedback from the community about the proposal, and
- ▼ the IP&R documents clearly set out the extent of the requested rate increases.

In assessing the evidence, we will consider how transparent the engagement with the community has been, especially in relation to explaining:

- ▼ the proposed cumulative special variation rate increases including the rate peg for each major rating category (in both percentage and dollar terms)
- ▼ the annual increase in rates that will result if the proposed special variation is approved in full (and not just the increase in daily or weekly terms)
- ▼ the size and impact of any expiring special variation (see Box 4.1 below for further detail), and
- ▼ the rate levels that would apply without the proposed special variation.

More information about how the council may engage the community is to be found in the OLG *Guidelines*, the IP&R manual, and IPART's *Fact Sheet Community Awareness and Engagement for special variation applications*, January 2016.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local\\_Govt/Special\\_Variations\\_and\\_Minimum\\_Rates](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local_Govt/Special_Variations_and_Minimum_Rates)

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**Box 4.1 Where a council is renewing or replacing an expiring special variation**

The council's application should show how you have explained to its community:

- ▼ There is a special variation due to expire at the end of the current financial year or during the period covered by the proposed special variation. This needs to include when the expiring special variation was originally approved, for what purpose and the percentage of (General Fund) general income originally approved.
- ▼ The corresponding percentage of general income that the expiring special variation represents for the relevant year.
- ▼ Whether the temporary expiring special variation is being replaced with another temporary or a permanent increase to the rate base.
- ▼ The percentage value of any additional variation amount, above the rate peg, for which the council is applying through a special variation.
- ▼ If the proposed special variation was not approved ie, only the rate peg applies, the year-on-year change in rates would be lower, or that rates may fall.

The council also must attach, to its application to IPART, a copy of the Instrument of Approval that has been signed by the Minister or IPART Chairman.

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**4.1 The consultation strategy**

The council is required to provide details of the consultation strategy undertaken, including the range of methods used to inform and engage with the community about the proposed special variation and to obtain community input and feedback. The engagement activities could include media releases, mail outs, focus groups, statistically valid random or opt-in surveys, online discussions, public meetings, newspaper advertisements and public exhibition of documents.

The council is to provide relevant extracts of the IP&R documents that explain the rate rises under the proposed special variation and attach relevant samples of the council's consultation material.

As mentioned above, during community meetings to discuss the Fit for the Future, participants were asked at the end of the meeting about their support for Council's continued operation, the services provided and whether there was support for a repeat application for the proposed Special Rate Variation. There was overwhelming support for Council for each item.

The University of Technology Sydney, Centre for Local Government (UTS:CLG) was also engaged to provide a higher quality community engagement process for Council. After consideration, workshops and discussions with Council, they determined that a deliberative panel supported by a community survey to be the best option. The report provided by the consultants demonstrates strong support

for Council services and for the proposed rate increase, supported by targeted expenditure cuts. The report reference is Deliberative Panel Report\_Final.pdf.

This report supports the conclusions that were taken from Councils prior Fit for the Future community meetings – that there is generally good support for Council and the services that are provided and that when the issues were explained, support for this Special Rate Variation application. The council report (File Ref CM\_11022016\_min\_at\_extra.pdf), demonstrates the community meetings in relation to the Fit for the Future, showing community support for a renewed SRV process - commences at page 23.

#### 4.2 Feedback from the community consultations

Summarise the outcomes and feedback from the council’s community engagement activities. Outcomes could include the number of attendees at events and participants in online forums, as well as evidence of media reports and other indicators of public awareness of the council’s special variation intentions. Where applicable, provide evidence of responses to surveys, particularly the level of support for specific programs or projects, levels and types of services, investment in assets, as well as the options proposed for funding them by rate increases.

Where the council has received submissions from the community relevant to the proposed special variation, the application should set out the views expressed in those submissions. Please refer to Section 1.2 concerning how the council should handle confidential content in feedback received from the community. The council should also identify and document any action that it has taken, or will take, to address issues of common concern within the community.

Public submissions are discussed in the council report CM\_11022016\_MIN\_AT\_EXTRA.pdf, item 2, page 10.

There was only one letter received in relation to the SRV, which is included in the file reference CM\_11022016\_MIN\_AT\_EXTRA.pdf page 14, which raised some suggestions for service level reviews, but nonetheless supported our proposal for the rate increase. This submission was from the Warialda and District Chamber of Commerce, which is significant as the Council modified the relative contributions between the various categories towards the rates’ burden and the Business Rating Category was increased from 2% to 4% with the consequent substantial increase for this category.

Resident polls during Fit For the Future community meetings where the need for increased rates was also discussed established widespread community support, as outlined in CM\_11022016\_MIN\_AT\_EXTRA.pdf from page 23.

The survey undertaken by UTS:CLG following the deliberative panel, also indicated support for Council's SRV application.

## 5 Assessment criterion 3: Impact on ratepayers

Criterion 3 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*The impact on affected ratepayers must be reasonable, having regard to both the current rate levels, existing ratepayer base and the proposed purpose of the variation. The Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan should:*

- clearly show the impact of any rises upon the community
- include the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay rates and
- establish that the proposed rate increases are affordable having regard to the community's capacity to pay.

The impact of the council's proposed special variation on ratepayers must be reasonable. To do this, we take into account current rate levels, the existing ratepayer base and the purpose of the proposed special variation. We also review how the council has assessed whether that the proposed rate rises are affordable having regard to the community's capacity and willingness to pay.

### 5.1 Impact on rates

Much of the quantitative information we need on the impact of the proposed special variation on rate levels will already be contained in Worksheet 5a and 5b of Part A of the application.

To assist us further, the application should set out the rating structure under the proposed special variation, and how this may differ from the current rating structure, or that which would apply if the special variation is not approved.

We recognise that a council may choose to apply an increase differentially among categories of ratepayers. If so, you should explain the rationale for applying the increase differentially among different categories and/or subcategories of ratepayers, and how this was communicated to the community. This will be relevant to our assessment of the reasonableness of the impact on ratepayers.

Councils should also indicate the impact of any other anticipated changes in the rating structure.

There are no proposed changes to the rating structure. The SRV will be applied under current differential rate apportionment.

**5.1.1 Minimum Rates**

The proposed special variation may affect ordinary rates, special rates and/or minimum rates.

As previously discussed, if the proposed special variation includes increasing minimum rates above the statutory limit, or is to apply a higher rate of increase to an existing minimum rate than to its other rates, it is not necessary for the council to also complete the separate Minimum Rates Application form. However, this must be clearly identified and addressed in the special variation application.

Does the council have minimum Ordinary rates? Yes  No

If Yes, does the council propose to increase minimum Ordinary rates by:

- The rate peg percentage
- The special variation percentage
- Another amount  Indicate this amount \_\_\_\_\_

What will minimum Ordinary rates be after the proposed increase? \_\_\_\_\_

The council must explain how the proposed special variation will apply to the minimum rate of any ordinary and special rate, and any change to the proportion of ratepayers on the minimum rate for all relevant rating categories that will occur as a result.

You should also explain the types of ratepayers or properties currently paying minimum rates, and the rationale for the application of the special variation to minimum rate levels.

Not applicable.

**5.2 Consideration of affordability and the community's capacity and willingness to pay**

The council is required to provide evidence through its IP&R processes, and in its application, of how it assessed the community's capacity and willingness to pay the proposed rate increases. This is to include an explanation of how the council established that the proposed rate rises are affordable for the community.

Evidence about capacity to pay could include a discussion of such indicators as SEIFA rankings, land values, average rates, disposable incomes, the outstanding rates ratio and rates as a proportion of household/business/farmland income and expenditure, and how these measures relate to those in comparable or neighbouring council areas.

As many of these measures are highly aggregated, it may also be useful to discuss other factors that could better explain the impact on ratepayers affected by the proposed rate increases, particularly if the impact varies across different categories of ratepayers.

We may also consider how the council's hardship policy (see Section 5.3 below) might reduce the impact on socio-economically disadvantaged ratepayers.

While the current application is for 30%, this will equate to an average increase of 15%, as ratepayers are currently subject to the temporary SRV of 15% approved by IPART for 2015-2016.

Despite some negative feedback on the SRV application to IPART last year, complaints received after the issue of rate notices for 2015-2016 with the increased rates were essentially non-existent.

Deliberative panel report file reference Deliberative Panel Report\_Final.pdf

Council report to adopt plans, including discussion on feedback CM\_11022016\_MIN\_AT\_EXTRA.pdf

As mentioned above, community support following the unsuccessful application to IPART last year has completely turned around and the community is now generally supportive of the proposed increase.

### 5.3 Addressing hardship

In addition to the statutory requirement for pensioner rebates, most councils have a policy, formal or otherwise to address issues of hardship.

Does the council have a Hardship Policy?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, is an interest charge applied to late rate payments?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the council propose to introduce any measures to reduce the impact of the proposed special variation on specific groups in the community?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

You should attach a copy of the Hardship Policy and explain below who the potential beneficiaries are and how they are assisted.

Please provide details of any other measures addressing hardship to be adopted, or alternatively, explain why no measures are proposed.

The council is also to indicate whether the hardship policy or other measures are referenced in the council's IP&R documents (with relevant page reference or extract provided).



The Council has a Debt Recovery Policy (file reference 12 7893 DEBT RECOVERY.pdf) and this policy is attached to this submission. This policy makes reference to 'hardship':

**PENSIONERS/HARDSHIP**

In the circumstances where the debtor is a pensioner or a person suffering from financial hardship, the ability of the debtor to make full or part payments shall be carefully examined. Subsequent demands or arrangements shall be made without causing further financial hardship. Information provided by debtors to enable an assessment of their overall financial position shall, at all times, be treated as 'Confidential'.

**CONCLUSION**

It is not the intention of Council to cause hardship to any ratepayer through implementation of this policy. At all times, consideration shall be given to clearing the debt by way of mutually agreed arrangements of payment with a view to clearing the debt prior to the end of the current financial year. This will minimise the possibility of compounding manageable repayment programs into long term debtor problem.

Gwydir Shire is always prepared to work with any ratepayer who is suffering genuine hardship. At the moment the Council has specific arrangements with a number of ratepayers who are in financial distress. It is the Council's practice to accept any reasonable attempt on the part of a ratepayer to address his or her outstanding rates, water and sewerage charges.

The Council's lenient attitude to assisting ratepayers in genuine distress is well known within this community and every avenue is explored to assist wherever the Council can assist. For example if ratepayers enter and maintain their agreed arrangement the Council adjusts the interest as an incentive for their continued involvement in the agreed arrangement.

The outstanding rates' percentage for the last 7 financial years is outlined in the following table. Drought conditions are usually reflected in a higher outstanding percentage.

Outstanding Rates as a percentage

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
9%	10.4%	8.1%	9.2%	10.3%	7.7%	6.7%	7.24%

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## 6 Assessment criterion 4: Public exhibition of relevant IP&R documents

Criterion 4 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*The relevant IP&R documents must be exhibited (where required), approved and adopted by the council before the council applies to IPART for a special variation to its general revenue.*

Briefly outline the significant IP&R processes the council has undertaken to reach the decision to apply for a special variation. Include the details of and dates for key document revisions, public exhibition period(s) and the date(s) that the council adopted the relevant IP&R documents.<sup>5</sup>

You should also include extracts from council minutes as evidence that the documents were adopted.

The council is reminded that the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program (if amended), require public exhibition for at least 28 days prior to adoption. Amendments to the Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan do not require public exhibition.<sup>6</sup> However, it would be expected that the Long Term Financial Plan would be posted, in a prominent location, on the council's website.

The draft documents were presented to Council for approval to exhibit on 17 December 2015 (file reference CM\_17122015\_MIN\_AT\_EXTRACT.pdf). The plans were intentionally left unfinished, with the intent of finalising our plans with community involvement. As the public exhibition period covered the Christmas/new year period, an extended period was adopted, with the closing date of 2 February 2016. The plans were available on Council's web site as well as Council offices.

More detailed financial information was provided to the deliberative panel.

## 7 Assessment criterion 5: Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies

Criterion 5 within the OLG Guidelines is:

<sup>5</sup> The IP&R documents are the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and where applicable, the Asset Management Plan.

<sup>6</sup> Office of Local Government (then Division of Local Government), *Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual for local government in NSW*, March 2013, pp 5-6.

*The IP&R documents or the council's application must explain the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years, and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period.*

In this section, you must provide details of any productivity improvements and cost containment strategies that you have implemented during the last two years (or longer) and any plans for productivity improvements and cost containment over the duration of the proposed special variation.

These strategies, which may be capital or operational in nature, must be aimed at reducing costs and/or improving efficiency. Indicate if any initiatives are to increase revenue eg, user charges. Please include below whether the proposed initiatives (ie, cost savings) have been factored into the council's LTFP.

Where possible, the council is to quantify in dollar terms the past and future productivity improvements and cost savings.

The council may also provide indicators of efficiency, either over time or in comparison to other relevant councils. We will make similar comparisons using various indicators and OLG data provided to us.

Savings were discussed with the community and deliberative panel (file reference copy of savings.xls). These discussed options for two scenarios – with the SRV being approved and without SRV approval. Where practicable, these savings have been embedded into the current Long Term Financial Plan.

The exception is possible disposal of land and buildings. With the exception of net \$200k disposals in the financial year 2017-2018, no other asset sales are currently included in the LTP.

## **8 List of attachments**

The following is a list of the supporting documents to include with your application.

Some of these attachments will be mandatory to all special variation applications eg, extracts from the Community Strategic Plan.

Other attachments will be required from some, but not all, councils. For example, extracts from the Asset Management Plan would be required from a council seeking approval of a special variation to fund infrastructure.

Councils should submit their application forms and attachments online through the Council Portal in the following order. Councils may number the attachments as they see fit.

- **Debt Recovery Policy.** 12 7893 DEBT RECOVERY.pdf
- **Council Minutes – adoption of plans and resolution for SRV.**  
CM\_11022016\_MIN\_EXTRA.pdf
- **Council Minutes – approval to display draft.**  
CM\_17122015\_AT\_Extract.pdf
- **Savings identified through consultation.** Copy of Savings.XLSX
- **Deliberative panel report.** Deliberative Panel Report\_Final.pdf
- **Delivery and Operational Plan, with LTP.** Delivery Operational Program  
2016-2020 updated.pdf.
- **Fees and charges.** Draft 2016-2017 Fees and Charges.pdf
- **Workforce plan.** Draft Workforce Plan 2016.
- **Ratios.** FFTF Ratios.XLSM
- **LTP Scenario with no SRV.** NoSRV\_Option Budget.pdf
- **LTP Scenario with SRV.** PreferredBudget.pdf
- **General Manager approval regarding error.** GM’s endorsement.pdf
- **IPART notification of 2015-2016 application.** 15 8756 Notification - Ipart  
- Instrument Of Approval And Full Report For Special Variation 2016.pdf
- **Newspaper examples.** Newspaper articles.zip
- **Revised LTP information - includes Consolidate and General Fund  
operating statements, cash flows, balance sheets and ratios.** Revised  
LTP Information.zip
- **Community Strategic Plan.** 15 2334 Adopted – Community Strategic  
Plan.pdf
- **NSW Treasury Corporation report on Gwydir.** Gwydir Shire Final  
Sustainability Report.docx

<b>Item</b>	<b>Included?</b>
<b>Mandatory forms and Attachments</b>	
Part A Section 508A and Section 508(2) Application form (Excel spreadsheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Part B Application form (Word document) – this document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Relevant extracts from the Community Strategic Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delivery Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Long Term Financial Plan with projected (General Fund) financial statements (Income, Cash Flow and Financial Position) in Excel format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NSW Treasury Corporation report on financial sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Media releases, public meeting notices, newspaper articles, fact sheets relating to the rate increase and proposed special variation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Community feedback (including surveys and results if applicable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hardship Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resolution to apply for the proposed special variation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Certification (see Section 9)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other Attachments</b>	
Relevant extracts from the Asset Management Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Past Instruments of Approval (if applicable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resolution to adopt the revised Community Strategic Plan (if necessary) and/or Delivery Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Chairman .....

**9 Certification**

**APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION**

To be completed by General Manager and Responsible Accounting Officer

Name of council: Gwydir Shire Council

We certify that to the best of our knowledge the information provided in this application is correct and complete.

General Manager (name): Max Eastcott *Mr Eastcott*

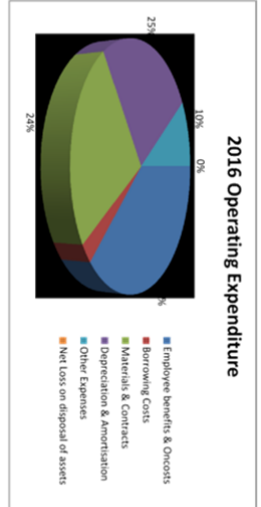
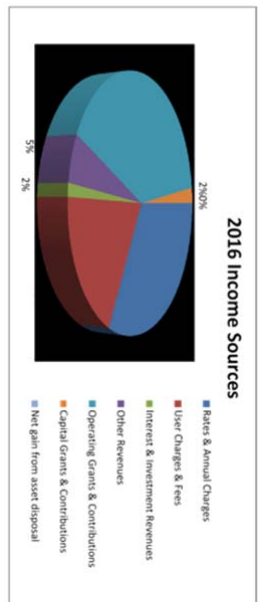
Signature and Date: 15 February 2016

Responsible Accounting Officer (name): Ron Wood

Signature and Date: 15 February 2016 *R Wood*

Once completed, please scan the signed certification and attach it as a public supporting document online via the Council Portal on IPART's website.

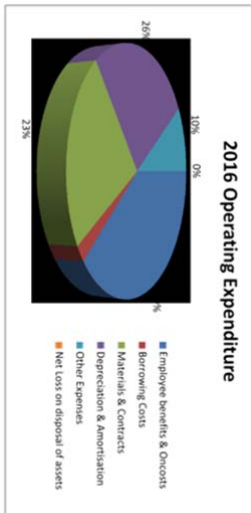
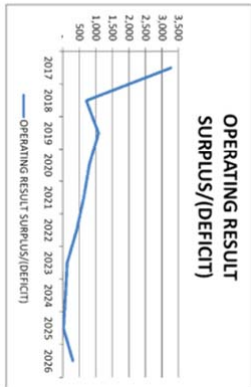
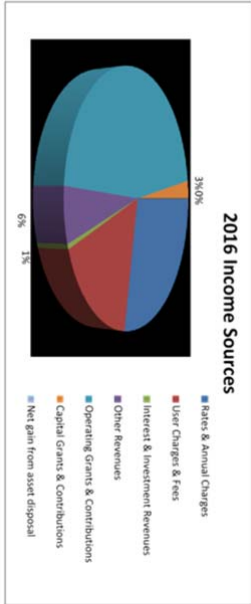
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
<b>Operating Results</b>												
<b>Revenue</b>												
Rates & Annual Charges	9,110	10,331	10,333	10,550	10,783	11,020	11,240	11,476	11,717	11,952	12,191	
User Charges & Fees	5,009	5,297	5,459	5,624	5,785	5,963	6,152	6,342	6,527	6,733	6,901	
Interest & Investment Revenues	229	425	581	710	859	1,062	1,184	1,290	1,378	1,495	1,533	
Other Revenues	1,731	1,990	1,624	1,702	1,747	1,798	1,853	1,908	1,962	2,022	2,073	
Operating Grants & Contributions	11,060	12,340	10,504	10,692	10,876	11,081	11,306	11,528	11,738	11,970	12,270	
Capital Grants & Contributions	1,632	682	426	433	440	447	448	450	451	452	463	
Net gain from asset disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>28,770</b>	<b>30,465</b>	<b>28,928</b>	<b>29,210</b>	<b>30,490</b>	<b>31,371</b>	<b>32,183</b>	<b>32,995</b>	<b>33,773</b>	<b>34,624</b>	<b>35,431</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>												
Employee benefits & Orocuts	10,273	10,180	11,129	11,636	12,395	13,075	13,856	14,632	15,531	16,319	16,745	
Borrowing Costs	827	678	577	402	425	356	298	248	199	165	134	
Materials & Contracts	5,363	6,313	6,813	6,983	7,217	7,517	7,722	7,949	7,993	8,004	8,032	
Depreciation & Amortisation	8,982	6,594	6,138	5,887	5,748	5,672	5,631	5,608	5,595	5,588	5,584	
Other Expenses	2,737	2,588	2,656	2,728	2,804	2,882	2,966	3,052	3,142	3,233	3,040	
Net loss on disposal of assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>28,181</b>	<b>26,533</b>	<b>27,312</b>	<b>27,656</b>	<b>28,589</b>	<b>29,503</b>	<b>30,472</b>	<b>31,488</b>	<b>32,460</b>	<b>33,310</b>	<b>33,535</b>	
<b>OPERATING RESULT SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>4,112</b>	<b>1,615</b>	<b>2,075</b>	<b>1,901</b>	<b>1,868</b>	<b>1,710</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>1,313</b>	<b>1,315</b>	<b>1,896</b>	
<b>OPERATING RESULT BEFORE CAPITAL GRANTS</b>												
		<b>3,430</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>1,642</b>	<b>1,461</b>	<b>1,421</b>	<b>1,262</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>1,432</b>	
<b>Cash Reserves</b>												
Transfer to reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Renewals	7,168	8,506	6,473	5,565	6,047	5,513	5,272	5,012	4,899	4,955	5,593	
New Assets	1,755	345	46	48	49	51	52	54	55	-	-	
Loan principal	974	912	967	1,077	1,155	1,116	981	827	789	670	616	
<b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>9,897</b>	<b>9,763</b>	<b>7,486</b>	<b>6,690</b>	<b>7,251</b>	<b>6,680</b>	<b>6,305</b>	<b>5,893</b>	<b>5,743</b>	<b>5,625</b>	<b>6,209</b>	



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Chairman .....

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>Operating Results</b>											
Revenue	6,558	7,521	7,672	7,833	8,005	8,181	8,345	8,520	8,699	8,873	9,051
Rates & Annual Charges	4,007	4,359	4,498	4,639	4,778	4,931	5,093	5,257	5,417	5,594	5,734
User Charges & Fees	58	149	247	300	412	514	597	651	701	775	794
Interest & Investment Revenues	1,706	1,572	1,606	1,683	1,779	1,833	1,888	1,941	1,941	2,001	2,051
Other Revenues	10,964	12,241	10,403	10,588	10,770	10,972	11,194	11,414	11,621	11,850	12,147
Operating Grants & Contributions	1,632	682	426	433	440	447	448	450	451	452	454
Capital Grants & Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain from asset disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>24,986</b>	<b>26,525</b>	<b>24,852</b>	<b>25,507</b>	<b>26,134</b>	<b>26,824</b>	<b>27,510</b>	<b>28,179</b>	<b>28,831</b>	<b>29,546</b>	<b>30,230</b>
Employee benefits & Orocosts	9,397	9,191	10,109	10,581	11,303	11,943	12,682	13,413	14,268	15,011	15,404
Borrowing Costs	616	489	402	239	278	224	180	143	108	85	63
Materials & Contracts	4,600	5,249	5,678	5,820	6,029	6,302	6,477	6,676	6,492	6,474	6,699
Depreciation & Amortisation	8,504	6,085	5,658	5,423	5,294	5,222	5,183	5,162	5,150	5,144	5,140
Other Expenses	2,394	2,240	2,300	2,364	2,432	2,502	2,577	2,654	2,734	2,815	2,623
Net Loss on disposal of assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>25,510</b>	<b>23,253</b>	<b>24,147</b>	<b>24,427</b>	<b>25,336</b>	<b>26,193</b>	<b>27,059</b>	<b>28,048</b>	<b>28,753</b>	<b>29,528</b>	<b>29,929</b>
<b>OPERATING RESULT SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(524)</b>	<b>3,272</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>301</b>
<b>OPERATING RESULT BEFORE CAPITAL GRANTS</b>	<b>(2,156)</b>	<b>2,589</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>(37)</b>	<b>(318)</b>	<b>(373)</b>	<b>(435)</b>	<b>(152)</b>
<b>Cash Revenues</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Renewals	6,145	8,313	6,401	5,485	5,970	5,371	5,190	4,927	4,793	4,864	5,432
New Assets	1,755	295	46	48	49	51	52	54	55	-	-
Loan principal	791	727	777	881	955	907	769	609	619	550	544
<b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>8,692</b>	<b>9,335</b>	<b>7,224</b>	<b>6,414</b>	<b>6,974</b>	<b>6,329</b>	<b>6,011</b>	<b>5,590</b>	<b>5,468</b>	<b>5,415</b>	<b>5,976</b>

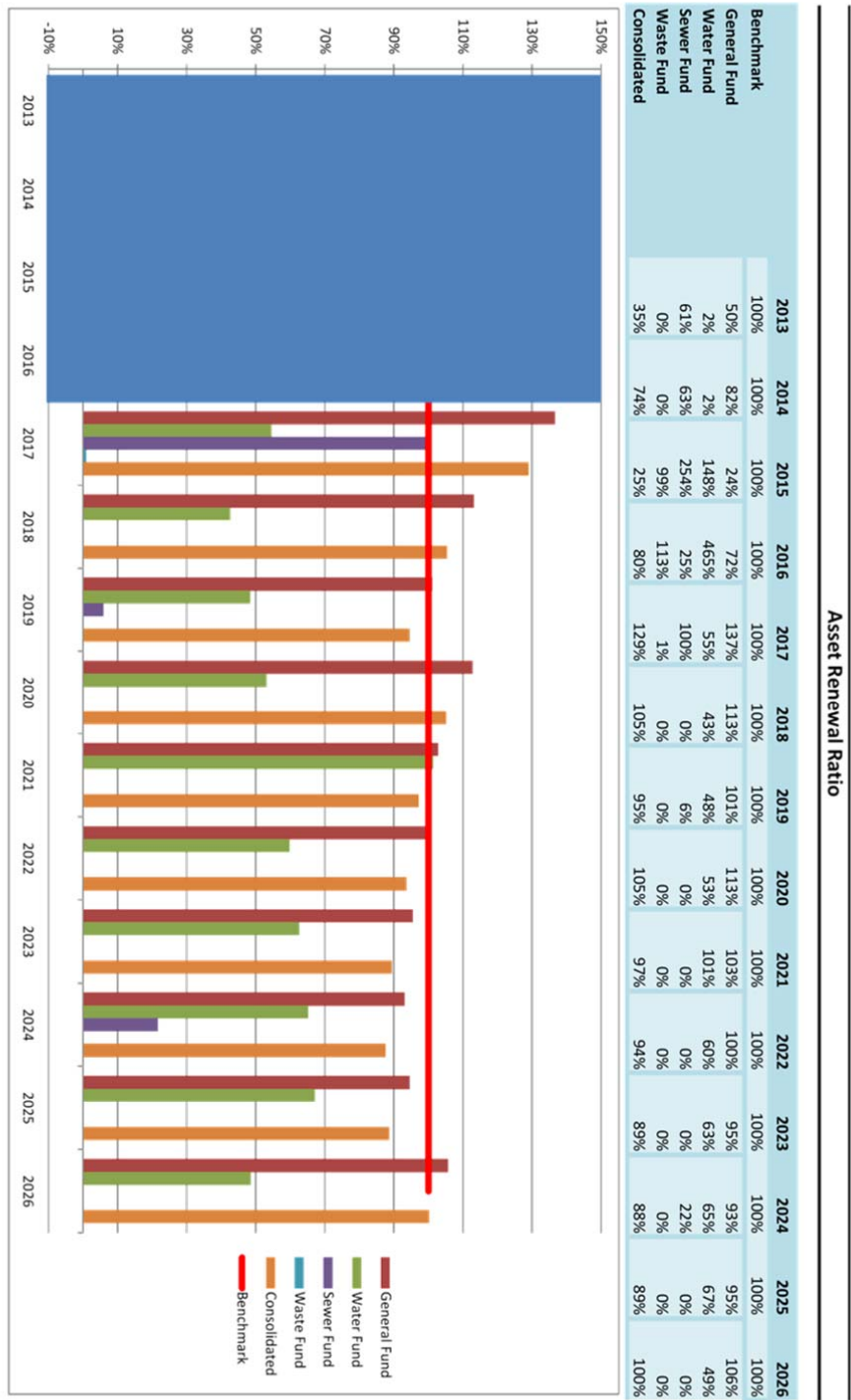




		Consolidated Projected Cash Flow										
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>From Operating Activities</b>												
<b>Receipts:</b>												
Rates & annual charges		9,110	10,131	10,333	10,550	10,783	11,020	11,240	11,476	11,717	11,952	12,191
User charges & fees		5,009	5,297	5,459	5,624	5,785	5,963	6,152	6,342	6,527	6,733	6,901
Investment revenue and interest		229	425	581	710	859	1,062	1,184	1,290	1,378	1,495	1,533
Grants & contributions		12,692	13,022	10,930	11,125	11,316	11,528	11,754	11,977	12,189	12,423	12,733
Other		1,731	1,590	1,624	1,702	1,747	1,798	1,853	1,908	1,962	2,022	2,073
<b>Payments:</b>												
Employee benefits & oncosts		(10,273)	(10,180)	(11,129)	(11,636)	(12,395)	(13,075)	(13,856)	(14,632)	(15,531)	(16,319)	(16,745)
Materials & contracts		(5,363)	(6,313)	(6,813)	(6,983)	(7,217)	(7,517)	(7,722)	(7,949)	(8,004)	(8,032)	(8,032)
Borrowing costs		(827)	(678)	(577)	(402)	(425)	(356)	(298)	(248)	(199)	(165)	(134)
Other		(2,737)	(2,588)	(2,656)	(2,228)	(2,804)	(2,882)	(2,966)	(3,052)	(3,142)	(3,233)	(3,040)
<b>Net Cash provided (or used) in operating activities</b>		<b>9,571</b>	<b>10,706</b>	<b>7,753</b>	<b>7,961</b>	<b>7,649</b>	<b>7,540</b>	<b>7,341</b>	<b>7,114</b>	<b>6,908</b>	<b>6,903</b>	<b>7,480</b>
<b>From Investing Activities</b>												
<b>Receipts:</b>												
Sale of investments		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment		266	422	717	368	455	492	480	477	477	477	477
Sale of interests in joint ventures/associations		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from Boundary adjustment		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Payments:</b>												
Purchase of investments		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment		(8,923)	(8,851)	(6,519)	(5,612)	(6,096)	(5,563)	(5,324)	(5,066)	(4,954)	(4,955)	(5,593)
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Cash provided (or used) in investing activities</b>		<b>(8,657)</b>	<b>(8,429)</b>	<b>(5,802)</b>	<b>(5,245)</b>	<b>(5,640)</b>	<b>(5,071)</b>	<b>(4,845)</b>	<b>(4,589)</b>	<b>(4,478)</b>	<b>(4,478)</b>	<b>(5,117)</b>
<b>From financing activities</b>												
<b>Receipts:</b>												
Borrowings & advances		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Payments:</b>												
Borrowings & advances		(974)	(912)	(967)	(1,077)	(1,155)	(1,116)	(981)	(827)	(789)	(670)	(616)
Lease liabilities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		(974)	(912)	(967)	(1,077)	(1,155)	(1,116)	(981)	(827)	(789)	(670)	(616)
<b>Net Cash provided (or used) in financing activities</b>		<b>(1,948)</b>	<b>(912)</b>	<b>(967)</b>	<b>(1,077)</b>	<b>(1,155)</b>	<b>(1,116)</b>	<b>(981)</b>	<b>(827)</b>	<b>(789)</b>	<b>(670)</b>	<b>(616)</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash &amp; cash equivalents</b>		<b>(60)</b>	<b>1,365</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>1,639</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>1,353</b>	<b>1,516</b>	<b>1,698</b>	<b>1,641</b>	<b>1,755</b>	<b>1,747</b>
<b>Cash &amp; cash equivalents at start of period</b>		<b>8,046</b>	<b>7,986</b>	<b>9,351</b>	<b>10,334</b>	<b>11,974</b>	<b>12,827</b>	<b>14,180</b>	<b>15,696</b>	<b>17,394</b>	<b>19,035</b>	<b>20,790</b>
<b>Cash &amp; cash equivalents at end of period</b>		<b>7,986</b>	<b>9,351</b>	<b>10,334</b>	<b>11,974</b>	<b>12,827</b>	<b>14,180</b>	<b>15,696</b>	<b>17,394</b>	<b>19,035</b>	<b>20,790</b>	<b>22,537</b>

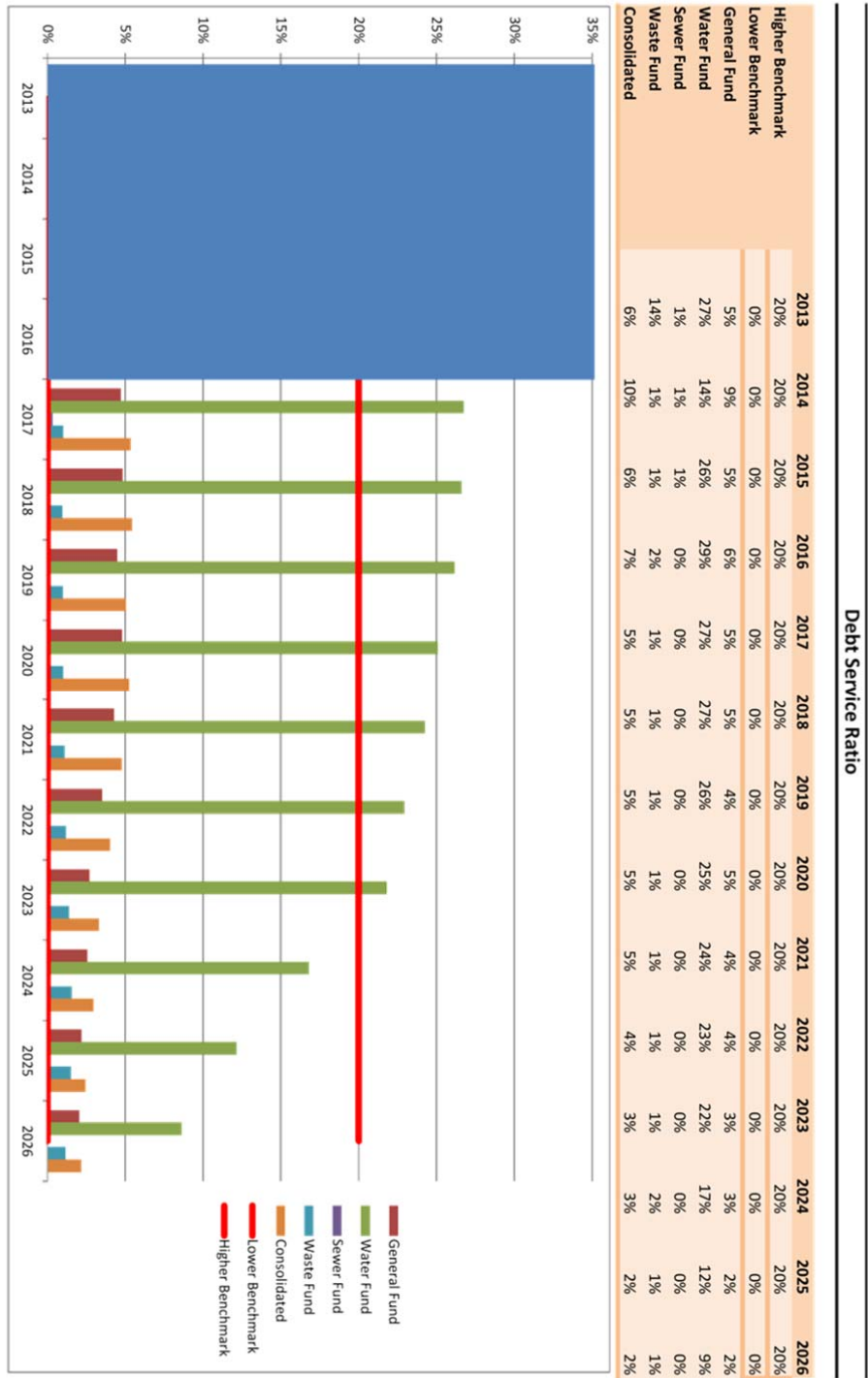
		General Fund Projected Cash Flow										
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>From Operating Activities</b>												
<b>Receipts:</b>												
Rates & annual charges		6,558	7,521	7,672	7,833	8,005	8,181	8,345	8,520	8,699	8,873	9,051
User charges & fees		4,067	4,359	4,498	4,639	4,778	4,931	5,093	5,257	5,417	5,594	5,734
Investment revenue and interest		58	149	247	330	412	514	597	651	701	775	794
Grants & contributions		12,596	12,924	10,829	11,021	11,210	11,419	11,643	11,863	12,072	12,303	12,600
Other		1,706	1,572	1,606	1,683	1,729	1,779	1,833	1,888	1,941	2,001	2,051
<b>Payments:</b>												
Employee benefits & oncosts		(9,397)	(9,191)	(10,109)	(10,581)	(11,303)	(11,943)	(12,682)	(13,413)	(14,268)	(15,011)	(15,404)
Materials & contracts		(4,600)	(5,249)	(5,678)	(5,820)	(6,029)	(6,302)	(6,477)	(6,676)	(6,492)	(6,474)	(6,699)
Borrowing costs		(616)	(489)	(402)	(239)	(278)	(224)	(180)	(143)	(108)	(85)	(63)
Other		(2,994)	(2,240)	(2,300)	(2,364)	(2,432)	(2,502)	(2,577)	(2,654)	(2,734)	(2,815)	(2,623)
<b>Net Cash provided (or used) in operating activities</b>		<b>7,980</b>	<b>9,356</b>	<b>6,363</b>	<b>6,502</b>	<b>6,092</b>	<b>5,854</b>	<b>5,595</b>	<b>5,293</b>	<b>5,228</b>	<b>5,161</b>	<b>5,441</b>
<b>From Investing Activities</b>												
<b>Receipts:</b>												
Sale of investments		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment		266	422	717	368	455	492	480	477	477	477	477
Sale of interests in joint ventures/associations		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from Boundary adjustment		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Payments:</b>												
Purchase of investments		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment		(7,900)	(8,608)	(6,447)	(5,533)	(6,019)	(5,422)	(5,242)	(4,981)	(4,849)	(4,864)	(5,432)
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Cash provided (or used) in investing activities</b>		<b>(7,635)</b>	<b>(8,186)</b>	<b>(5,730)</b>	<b>(5,165)</b>	<b>(5,564)</b>	<b>(4,929)</b>	<b>(4,763)</b>	<b>(4,504)</b>	<b>(4,372)</b>	<b>(4,388)</b>	<b>(4,955)</b>
<b>From financing activities</b>												
<b>Receipts:</b>												
Borrowings & advances		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Payments:</b>												
Borrowings & advances		(791)	(727)	(777)	(881)	(955)	(907)	(769)	(609)	(619)	(550)	(544)
Lease liabilities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		(791)	(727)	(777)	(881)	(955)	(907)	(769)	(609)	(619)	(550)	(544)
<b>Net Cash provided (or used) in financing activities</b>		<b>(1,582)</b>	<b>(727)</b>	<b>(777)</b>	<b>(881)</b>	<b>(955)</b>	<b>(907)</b>	<b>(769)</b>	<b>(609)</b>	<b>(619)</b>	<b>(550)</b>	<b>(544)</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash &amp; cash equivalents</b>		<b>(446)</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>(145)</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>(427)</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>(58)</b>
<b>Cash &amp; cash equivalents at start of period</b>		<b>1,950</b>	<b>1,503</b>	<b>1,947</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>2,259</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>1,849</b>	<b>1,912</b>	<b>2,092</b>	<b>2,329</b>	<b>2,552</b>
<b>Cash &amp; cash equivalents at end of period</b>		<b>1,503</b>	<b>1,947</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>2,259</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>1,849</b>	<b>1,912</b>	<b>2,092</b>	<b>2,329</b>	<b>2,552</b>	<b>2,493</b>

Consolidated Projected Balance Sheet											
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>											
<b>Current assets</b>											
Cash and cash equivalents	7,986	9,351	10,334	11,974	12,827	14,180	15,696	17,394	19,035	20,790	22,537
Receivables	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098	2,098
Inventories	479	479	479	479	479	479	479	479	479	479	479
Other	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>10,579</b>	<b>11,944</b>	<b>12,927</b>	<b>14,567</b>	<b>15,420</b>	<b>16,773</b>	<b>18,289</b>	<b>19,987</b>	<b>21,628</b>	<b>23,383</b>	<b>25,130</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>											
Investments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables	458	458	458	458	458	458	458	458	458	458	458
Infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	423,798	426,055	426,437	426,162	426,510	426,401	426,094	425,552	424,911	424,278	424,287
Investments accounted for under equity method	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment property	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Intangible assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>424,256</b>	<b>426,513</b>	<b>426,895</b>	<b>426,620</b>	<b>426,968</b>	<b>426,859</b>	<b>426,552</b>	<b>426,010</b>	<b>425,369</b>	<b>424,736</b>	<b>424,745</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>434,835</b>	<b>438,457</b>	<b>439,822</b>	<b>441,187</b>	<b>442,388</b>	<b>443,632</b>	<b>444,841</b>	<b>445,997</b>	<b>446,997</b>	<b>448,118</b>	<b>449,874</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>											
<b>Current liabilities</b>											
Payables	1,930	1,951	1,971	1,971	1,971	1,971	1,971	1,971	1,971	1,971	1,971
Borrowings	779	912	967	1,077	1,155	1,116	981	827	789	670	616
Provisions	2,401	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>4,764</b>	<b>4,839</b>	<b>4,949</b>	<b>5,027</b>	<b>4,988</b>	<b>4,853</b>	<b>4,699</b>	<b>4,661</b>	<b>4,542</b>	<b>4,488</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>											
Payables	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowings	10,666	9,754	8,787	7,710	6,555	5,439	4,458	3,630	2,841	2,171	1,555
Provisions	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951	2,951
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>13,617</b>	<b>12,705</b>	<b>11,738</b>	<b>10,661</b>	<b>9,506</b>	<b>8,390</b>	<b>7,409</b>	<b>6,581</b>	<b>5,792</b>	<b>5,122</b>	<b>4,506</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>18,727</b>	<b>17,469</b>	<b>16,577</b>	<b>15,610</b>	<b>14,533</b>	<b>13,378</b>	<b>12,262</b>	<b>11,281</b>	<b>10,453</b>	<b>9,664</b>	<b>8,994</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>416,108</b>	<b>420,988</b>	<b>423,245</b>	<b>425,577</b>	<b>427,855</b>	<b>430,254</b>	<b>432,579</b>	<b>434,716</b>	<b>436,544</b>	<b>438,454</b>	<b>440,880</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>											
Retained earnings	287,584	292,202	294,199	296,272	298,293	300,435	302,504	304,386	305,959	307,616	309,790
Revaluation reserves	128,524	128,786	129,046	129,305	129,562	129,819	130,075	130,330	130,585	130,838	131,090
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>416,108</b>	<b>420,988</b>	<b>423,245</b>	<b>425,577</b>	<b>427,855</b>	<b>430,254</b>	<b>432,579</b>	<b>434,716</b>	<b>436,544</b>	<b>438,454</b>	<b>440,880</b>



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Chairman .....



This is page number 37 of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 25 February 2016

Chairman .....





## MEETING

Held at

**Liverpool Plains Shire Council**

**Thursday 4 February 2016 commencing at 9.30pm**

## MINUTES

- 
- PRESENT:**
- Tamworth Regional Council**  
Cr Col Murray, Mayor and Namoi Councils Chairperson, and Paul Bennett, General Manager
  - Narrabri Shire Council**  
Cr Conrad Bolton, Mayor and Namoi Councils Deputy Chairperson and Stewart Todd, General Manager
  - Gwydir Shire Council**  
Max Eastcott, General Manager
  - Gunnedah Shire Council**  
Cr Owen Hasler, Mayor and Eric Groth, General Manager
  - Liverpool Plains Shire Council**  
Cr Andrew Hope, Mayor and Ron Van Katwyk, Acting General Manager
  - Moree Plains Shire Council**  
Cr Katrina Humphries, Mayor (by phone) and Angus Witherby, Acting General Manager (by phone)

**Walcha Council**

Cr Janelle Archdale, Mayor and Jack O'Hara, General Manager

**Uralla Shire Council**

Cr Mick Pearce, Mayor

**NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet**

Alison McGaffin, Regional Coordinator

**Regional Development Australian Northern Inland**

Russell Stewart, Chairperson and Nathan Axelsson, Executive Officer

**1 REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

**1.1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were announced as having been received from Cr John Coulton, Mayor, Gwydir Shire Council, Lester Rodgers, General Manager, Moree Plains Shire Council and Damien Connor, General Manager, Uralla Shire Council

Declaration of Interest

Nil

**1.2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**MOTION**

**Moved Cr Bolton, Narrabri and seconded Cr Hope, Liverpool Plains**

**1/16 RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Meeting of Namoi Councils held on 27 November 2015, copies of which were circulated to all members, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings of the Meeting.

**1.3 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Nil

**1.4 OUTSTANDING ACTION LIST 31**

**MOTION**

**Moved Cr Bolton, Narrabri and seconded Cr Hasler, Gunnedah**

**2/16 RESOLVED**

That Outstanding Action List 31 be received and noted.

**1.5 FINANCE REPORT**

**MOTION**

**Moved Cr Hasler, Gunnedah and seconded Cr Hope, Liverpool Plains**

- (i) That the Namoi Councils Financial Report as at 31 December 2015 be received and noted;
- (ii) That it be noted invoices totalling \$30,432.19 have been paid during the month of January and that a further \$100,000 has been invested bringing total funds invested to \$200,000, details of which will appear in the January 2016 Financial Report to be submitted to the March 2016 Board Meeting;



- (iii) That 2014 – 2015 Annual Financial Statements be received and noted and the Namoi Councils Joint Organisation Chairperson and Treasurer be authorised to sign the completed Statements
- (iv) That the advice from the Executive Officer that a claim for reimbursement of Namoi Pilot Joint Organisation expenses amounting to the sum of \$95,300 from the Pilot JO Grant of \$300,000 has been lodged leaving a an unexpended grant balance of \$155,000 which has been allocated to the following Board approved Pilot JO Projects yet to be completed:

Regional Freight Connectivity and Productivity Analysis -	\$ 75,000
Namoi Investment Prospectus	\$ 25,000
Video Conferencing System	<u>\$ 55,000</u>
	<b><u>\$155,000</u></b>

## 2 REGIONAL ADVOCACY

### 2.1 ISSUES SUBMITTED BY MEMBER COUNCILS

Cr Andrew Hope, Mayor, Liverpool Plains Shire Council requested support and representations to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure for upgrading and improvements to passenger train services to Quirindi and the wider New England North West. Cr Hope advised that a Briefing Note was being prepared by his Council identifying the passenger train services in urgent need of upgrading for the submission to the next Board Meeting.

### 2.2 REGIONAL MEDIA ISSUES

Nil

### 2.3 MEDIA RELEASES ISSUED

Nil

### 2.4 OUTWARD CORRESPONDENCE

#### MOTION

Moved Cr Hasler, Gunnedah and seconded Cr Hope, Liverpool Plains

**3/16 RESOLVED**

That Outward Correspondence Items 2.4.1 be noted

### 2.5 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

#### MOTION

Moved Cr Bolton, Narrabri and seconded Cr Hasler, Gunnedah

**4/16 RESOLVED**

That in Inward Correspondence Item 2.5.1 to 2.5.3 be received and noted.

**3 3 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION**

**3.1 NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet, Regional Coordinator, Alison McGaffin**

The NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet Regional Coordinator, Alison McGaffin, addressed the Board in relation to the following matters and issues:

The 2016 Key Themes of the Western Region Mining Taskforce is "Skills and Jobs" and "Revenue from Mining Operations".

A Meeting of the Western Region Mining Taskforce is scheduled for 22 February 2016 to develop a 2016 Work Plan incorporating the two Key Themes.

A Meeting of the Western Regional Leadership Group is scheduled for 17 February 2016 and it is proposed to the Executive Officer of the Namoi JO will make a brief presentation of the key 2015 Pilot JO process outcomes.

Release of the Regional Plan has been delayed and is anticipated to occur in April.

**3.2 VOLUNTARY PLANNING AGREEMENTS (VPAs)**

Board members discussed the current review by the Department of Planning and Environment of Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs) under s93F of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as an important planning tool to enabling Councils to obtain developer funding for public infrastructure, facilities and services to support rapid growth from mining development. Specific discussion centred around input to the review process by the Minerals Council of Australia and the Association of Mining Related Councils. Concern was expressed that it was essential the review process maintained independence and integrity, so as to avoid any fragmentation of the process and deliver the best possible outcome.

**MOTION**

**Moved Cr Bolton, Narrabri and seconded Cr Hope, Liverpool Plains**

**5/16 RESOLVED**

That Namoi Councils Joint Organisation make representations to the NSW Minister for Planning and Environment seeking a coordinated approach with input from all interested groups to finalisation of review of Voluntary Planning Agreements so as to avoid any fragmentation of the process and provide reforms to Planning Agreements which benefit Councils and communities experiencing rapid growth from mining development.

**3.3 NAMOI COUNCILS END OF PILOT FINAL REPORT**

**MOTION**

**Moved Cr Hope, Liverpool Plains and seconded Cr Pearce, Uralla**

**6/16 RESOLVED**

That the completion and submission of the Namoi Councils End of Pilot Final Report be noted.

## **4 REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PRIORITISATION**

### **4.1 GMAC REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS – MEETING 28.01.16**

#### **MOTION**

**Moved Cr Bolton, Narrabri and seconded Cr Archdale, Walcha**

**7/16**

#### **RESOLVED**

##### **Outstanding Action List 30**

That Outstanding Action List 30 be received and noted.

##### **Regional Strategic Priority:**

##### **Regional Freight Connectivity and Productivity Analysis**

##### **Sponsor: Moree Plains Shire Council**

That it be noted Moree Plains Shire Council as the Project Sponsor has invited Expressions of Interest (EOI) from selected firms to undertake a Regional Freight Connectivity and Productivity Analysis which closed on 18th January 2016 and that EOIs are currently being evaluated.

##### **Regional Strategic Priority:**

##### **Namoi Regional Investment Prospectus**

##### **Sponsor: Tamworth Regional Council**

That it be noted Regional Development Australia Northern Inland is currently engaged in preparation of a first draft of the Namoi Regional Investment Prospectus and that it is intended to hold a meeting of Project Governance Group in the near future.

##### **Regional Strategic Priority:**

##### **MR 357 Rangari Road**

##### **Sponsor: Gunnedah Shire Council**

That it be noted the Cost Benefit Analysis prepared by Regional Development Australia Northern Inland identified a Benefit Cost Ratio of .40 and the Project may now be considered completed. Further, that the Project be reviewed in 12 months to establish whether there has been any change to traffic counts which may result in an increased Benefit Cost Ratio.

##### **Namoi Councils Joint Organisation End of Pilot Final Report**

That completion and submission of the Namoi Councils Joint Organisation End of Pilot Final Report be noted and that the Executive Officer be requested to arrange for transfer of Pilot Grant Funding supported by expenditure acquittals to the Joint Organisation Bank Account.

##### **Namoi Regional Infrastructure Priority Matrix**

That GMAC be requested to consider future applications of the Matrix Priority tool to assist in determining Regional Infrastructure Priorities.

##### **2016 Namoi Councils Joint Organisation Work Plan**

- (i) That the Namoi Councils Board note that a 2016 Work Plan is under preparation and that GMAC will hold a strategic planning session in February to update the Namoi Councils Strategic Plan and finalise the 2016 Work Plan for submission to the March Board Meeting;
- (ii) That Paul Bennett/Tamworth Regional Council be requested to approach Stephen Blackadder and Associates to facilitate the strategic planning session; and

- (iii) That the Executive Officer be requested to convene a meeting of the Regional Roads Working Group to progress the Regional and Local Roads Funding Model with Richard Jane/Gwydir Shire Council as the Working Group Chairperson and Stewart Todd/Narrabri Shire Council as the Project Sponsor.

**Container Deposit NSW Legislation**

That the Executive Officer be requested to coordinate lodgement of a Namoi Councils Joint Organisation submission on the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), with input from all member Councils, by the due date of 26 February 2016.

**Electricity Supply Interruptions and Outages**

That Namoi Councils advise Essential Energy as having responsibility for the NSW Electricity Network, and Origin Energy as having responsibility for electricity customer supply services, that the current round of electricity supply interruptions and outages is unacceptable to member Councils to maintain Council operations and services to the community, the absence and lack of compensation or options for alternative power supply when planned interruptions and outages occur and that a copy of each letter be supplied to State Members of Parliament for Northern Tablelands, Tamworth, Upper Hunter and Barwon.

**5 NAMOI COUNCILS SHARED SERVICES**

Nil

**6 GENERAL BUSINESS**

**6.1 MERGER PROPOSAL - WALCHA COUNCIL AND TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Cr Janelle Archdale, Mayor, Walcha Council referred to the current merger proposal for Walcha Council and Tamworth Regional Council and requested support from Namoi Councils JO by way of a letter to the Minister for Local Government for Walcha Council to remain as an independent standalone Local Government Authority.

**MOTION**

**Moved Cr Archdale, Walcha and seconded Cr Humphries, Moree Plains**

**8/16 RESOLVED**

That the Namoi Councils Joint Organisation forward a "Letter of Support" to the Minister for Local Government advising that Walcha Council has been an active member of the Namoi JO and has contributed to driving new initiatives in regional strategic planning, regional leadership and advocacy, regional collaboration, resource sharing and that Walcha Council be afforded the opportunity to remain as an standalone Council and progressively work toward achieving scale and capacity.

**6.2 NAMOI REGION AIR QUALITY MONITORY PROJECT**

Cr Owen Hasler, Mayor, Gunnedah Shire Council provided an update of an project by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority known as the *Namoi Region Air Quality Monitoring Project* (NRAQMP) to provide community members with access to baseline ambient air quality data from existing privately owned monitoring stations located in the Namoi Region.

Ambient concentrations of particulate matter are continuously measured at four monitoring stations - Werris Creek, Breeza, Wilgai and Maules Creek – which is available in “real-time on-line” on the Office of Environment Heritage Website.

**6.3 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA NORTHERN INLAND**

The Chairperson of Regional Development Australia Northern Inland (RDANI), Russell Stewart, advised of the recent release of an RDANI initiative known as Agricultural Careers and Professions (AGCAP) which aimed at retaining Year 10 and 12 school leavers within the region to pursue careers and professions in the region’s key competitive advantage of Agriculture.

The RDANI initiative identifies the reasons school leavers relocate from the region and provides information about access to education services and facilities within the Region. The Board was advised that information on AGCAP is available on the RDANI website or via a freely available CD.

**7 DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT NAMOI COUNCILS BOARD MEETING**

**Date:** Thursday 3 March 2016 commencing at 9.30am

**Venue:** Gunnedah Shire Council

**Closure:** There being no further business, the Namoi Councils Joint Organisation Meeting concluded at 11.10am

Cr Col Murray, Namoi Councils, Chairperson

4 February 2016

**- ooOOOoo -**

**Item 3 Lane Name Proposal**

**FILE REFERENCE**

**DELIVERY PROGRAM**

**GOAL:** 5. Organisational Management

**OUTCOME:** 5.1 CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

**STRATEGY:** 5.1.3 Administrative functions - GM - internal

**AUTHOR** General Manager

**DATE** 5 February 2016

**STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST** Nil

**IN BRIEF/ SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

This reports recommends that the currently unnamed laneway between Bowen Street and Herbert Street, Bingara, be named Choice Lane

**TABLED ITEMS** Nil

**BACKGROUND**

The Council was requested to consider naming the laneway between Bowen Street and Herbert Street, Bingara, as Choice Lane.

This was considered by the Council at its meeting in December 2015 (copy attached) and advertised for public comment.

Two letters, one signed by multiple signatories, in support were received (copies attached).

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the currently unnamed laneway between Bowen Street and Herbert Street, Bingara, be named Choice Lane

**ATTACHMENTS**

- AT- Previous report
- AT- Supporting letter 1
- AT- Supporting letter 2

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION:  
MINUTE 10/16**

**THAT the currently unnamed laneway between Bowen Street and Herbert Street, Bingara, be named Choice Lane.**

**(Moved Cr Pankhurst, seconded Cr Egan)**

Ordinary Meeting - 17 December 2015

Gwydir Shire  
Council

Item 9 Lane Name Proposal

**FILE REFERENCE**

**DELIVERY PROGRAM**

**GOAL:** 5. Organisational Management

**OUTCOME:** 5.1 CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

**STRATEGY:** 5.1.3 Administrative functions - GM - internal

**AUTHOR** General Manager

**DATE** 10/12/2015

**STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST** Nil

**IN BRIEF/ SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

**TABLED ITEMS** Nil

**BACKGROUND**

A community member has suggested, for consideration, that the unnamed lane between Bowen Street and Herbert Street, Bingara, be named Choice Lane, acknowledging the late Mr Fred Choice and the late Mrs Heather Choice.

Mr and Mrs Choice lived on Gwydir Terrace, with their boundary running on to the lane. Mr Choice's parents also lived in the vicinity on what I believe was known locally as "Choice Corner".

Mr Choice would be remembered by many as a former long term employee of Bingara Shire Council and had a reputation of being a man of great character. He is remembered as having a happy nature and for his wonderful laughter. He was the Clerk of the Course for the Bingara Jockey Club and among other roles, some would describe him as a very handy makeshift vet.

Mr and Mrs Choice raised two children in Bingara - Susanne and Andrew. Sue (Mrs Wayne Galvin) remained in Bingara. Mrs Galvin has been approached by the community member and is in favour of submitting this request to Council.

The submitter believes that it would be well received by the community - and a nice tribute to a fine Bingara couple.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the proposal to name the lane between Bowen and Herbert Streets Choice Lane be advertised for public comment.**



Ordinary Meeting - 17 December 2015

Gwydir Shire  
Council

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**FURTHER if no objections are received that the lane be named  
Choice Lane**

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments for this report.

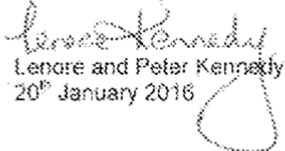
Mr Max Eastcott  
Gwydir Shire Council  
Locked Bag 5  
BINGARA NSW 2404

Dear Max,

Please record our support of the proposed naming of Choice Lane, between Bowen Street and Herbert Street, Bingara.

The naming would be a fitting tribute to the late Mr Fred Choice and the late Mrs Heather Choice.

Yours sincerely

  
Lenore and Peter Kennedy  
20<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Mr Max Eastcott  
Gwydir Shire Council  
Locked Bag 5  
BINGARA NSW 2404



20<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Dear Mr Eastcott,

We would like to support the proposed naming of Choice Lane, between Bowen Street and Herbert Street, Bingara. It would be an appropriate gesture to recognise the Choice Family who lived in the identified area for many decades.

NAME	G.R.H.H.M. WHITTON	SIGNATURE
Wenda Gill		[Signature]
Alf Lather		[Signature]
C PRICE LPST		[Signature]
[Signature]		[Signature]
Rachael Stanger		[Signature]
MARIN PRICE		[Signature]
Gloria Boyd		[Signature]
[Signature]		[Signature]
and Marshall		[Signature]
NONA BOPPING		[Signature]
BILL PRICE		[Signature]