



Tenterfield Shire Council
2022 Community Strategic Plan
Community Engagement Report
Integrated Planning & Reporting Documents
Community Consultation
April – May 2022
Attachments 1 - 22

Community Consultation Meetings:

Tuesday 5 April 2022	Jennings – 11 people signed in Sunnyside – 15 people signed in
Wednesday 6 April 2022	Bolivia – 17 people signed in Torrington – 17 people signed in
Thursday 7 April 2022	Tenterfield – 7.30am – 5 people signed in Drake – 12 people signed in
Friday 8 April 2022	Mingoola – 14 people signed in Tenterfield – 4pm – 42 people signed in
Saturday 9 April 2022	Urbenville – 27 people signed in Legume – 16 people signed in Liston – 22 people signed in Total – 198 people signed in

Sign In Sheets: [ALTUS IN22/2B84353C](#)

Sign in sheets were provided however these did not capture all participants from my observation, particularly the PM Tenterfield meeting which only 42 people signed in however I observed that it would have been closer to 100 people not including staff. Also the high number staff to participant rate at the Tenterfield AM meeting was due to a general belief that more than 5 people would turn up.

Community Engagement Consultations dates, places and times were communicated on the TSC website, the “Local News” and flyers were distributed to the following with all dates and topics to be discussed:

- Thomas Rural
- Ten FM Radio
- Tenterfield Star Newspaper
- ABC Radio New England North West
- ABC Radio North Coast
- Killarney Co-op
- Norco Tenterfield
- Wilshire & Company
 - Tenterfield
 - Mingoola
 - Deepwater
 - Stanthorpe
- Facebook – via The Mayor
- All Councillors
- Tenterfield Business Chamber
- Main Street Businesses that take flyers and who were open

- Council’s App – Push alert notification
- TSC website Engagement Hub
- All Progress Associations
 - Drake
 - Legume
 - Liston
 - Urbenville
 - Drake Resource Centre
 - Drake Lunatic Hotel
 - Mingoola
 - Wallangarra/Jennings
 - Steinbrook
- Hall Committees
 - Drake
 - Bolivia
 - Sunnyside
 - Torrington

The Submissions below are what has come directly to Council, this table **DOES NOT** include any submissions received from Councillors which have not been passed on to council for inclusion.

Meeting/General Submission	Comments
General Submissions	
Resident Re: Lighting IN22/57312D50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider installing lighting along footpath between Molesworth St Bridge and Hockeyfields Parklands.
Resident Submission IN22/5D5014EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 1 (2x provided) • April 6 & May 4
Resident Submission: IN22/3ADA563C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 2 • April 26
Resident Submission IN22/3AB6881A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 3 • April 26

<p>OSOCI Submission IN22/3C5A8544</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IN22/3036A757 • IN22/30127969 • IN22/358CC98E • IN22/2ACD8B4D • IN22/2D67DD2C • IN22/2DBB8B9D • IN22/2E948450 • IN22/248EC022 • IN22/2263C9D0 • IN22/2A467614 • IN22/2150CC7C • IN22/19A6AB0 • IN22/2E529CC1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 4 – all submissions in this category are the same OSOCI document verbatim. • As above
<p>Submission IN22/30212DFC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 5 • Feedback on IP&R and Workforce Management Strategy • April 15
<p>Letter OSOCI – hand delivered IN22/7CE4D3A0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 6 • April 13
<p>Submission IN22/72E6D6C5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 7 • Feedback on Asset Management Strategy • April 15
<p>Submission IN22/2438D0A4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 8 • Feedback on Community Strategic Plan & other IP&R Docs • May 2
<p>Submission</p>	

IN22/2585C083	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 9 • May 2
Submission IN22/2AE8E75A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 10 • April 29
Submission IN22/58CD30AC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 11 • April 7
Submission IN22/4F99CB7E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 12 • April 11
Submission IN22/4EA3B46D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 13 • April 11
Submission IN22/421AAA5B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 14 • April 12
Resident, via Portal & Emailed IN22/66CE5FBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 15 • April 12
Submission IN22/19F41D9F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 16 • April 19
Submission: IN22/691AE39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 17 • April 25
Submission IN22/2BE50B78	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 18 • April 29
Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 19

IN22/3729FB03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 28
Submission IN22/1CF3A9B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 20 • April 18
Submission IN22/6C4DCF89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 21 • Dated May 1 • Arrived Council May 16 • Includes a survey created by OSOCI
Meeting Notes	
General Meeting Notes – Councillor IN22/25B3F581	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups generally understood that the State Government has been passing on costs. • The need to more actively push for return of high cost roads to the appropriate body, perceived inactivity on this scenario relative to level of required rate rise. • Sale of ‘Sale Yard’ mentioned. • Participating in future development as a means of increasing revenue. • Looking to use perceived quality of ‘Local Skill Bank’- Professional/Commercial to augment future growth prospects. • Local Air Strip considered as available land for own development agenda or sale. • % of National Parks within our Shire not generating rates, greater lobbying of State Government of off-sets to reflect this loss of income. • The need to properly quantify recognizable cost savings within Shire Non-capital budget. • Development of other revenue sources. • Feeling that Rate Rise is inevitable but question level of rate rise. • Review productivity especially in areas of Compliance. • Usage of ‘Grass Roots resources’ available locally to lobby State Government for change in areas that are impacting costs to rate position, funding scenario. • Believe there is strong group of reasonable locals that are looking for measured cost reductions in areas that don’t generate or have the ability to generate a ROI. Council has to give something back if Community is going to have to bear a rate rise. • Noticed that large sector community does not comprehend the funding requirements relevant to Grant Income and usage of general rates annually.

<p>General Meeting Notes - Councillor IN22/25B3F581</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent message from ratepayers was that they are looking for Councillors and Council to commit to reduced expenditure and increased income (other than rates, fees and charges paid by ratepayers) so as to reduce the magnitude of any SRVs.
<p>Tenterfield AM - Staff Notes IN22/25B3F581</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many TSC staff at the meeting – only 5 attendees who were not TSC employees. • Lack of communication regarding meetings. • Send note out with Meals on Wheels to let elderly/disabled know meetings are being held. • Hold meetings in middle of the day for single mothers – who'd have opportunity to attend with children in care/at school.
<p>Tenterfield PM – Staff Notes IN22/25B3F581</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building projects need to be properly investigated and scoped before starting large construction works. • Need qualified people to arrange projects. • Need to plan major projects better. • Scavenger shed shop needed at the Waste Transfer Station to recover funds from reused waste products. • Bridge maintenance and upgrades were not supported by Council (10-20 years ago), so we need to continue a program of maintenance and renewals. • Council light vehicles need to have identification logos on them. • Need to support business that want to establish such as goat meat enterprises. • Economic development contribution discounts are ending which may impact business proposals. • Need to consider impacts of shortage in available homes for rent and purchasing in the community. • Did not want development of large scale small blocks as the culture around Tenterfield is for more open area, larger blocks. • Residents would like recycling of products to minimize resource use, such as using fly ah products in roads. • Make better use of resources with recycling of building materials where possible. • Tenders should be transparent to the community when projects are issued to external contractors. • Grants need to be spent on tangible assets for the community. • Sale of Council assets should be noted as a short term benefit only with a single financial gain. • Renters and businesses will bear the Rate Increase as landlords will simply increase Rents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of staff numbers and performance needs to be carried out to try and find efficiencies.
Jennings Staff Meeting Notes – IN22/25B3F581	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly residents on pensions can't afford rates rise. • Poor roads/potholes. • Drainage. • Water Mains need upgrading. • High Cost of water.
Drake Staff Meeting Notes – IN22/25B3F581	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mud Flat Road in poor condition. • Review of grading practice along Mud Flat Road was suggested to bring gravel off the sides back onto the road, seek to have equipment work longer hours and grade more often. • Patching truck work on Rocky River Road makes the road surface loose and breaks up again. • Need better drainage and more parking. • Need to fix stormwater drainage around the school • Curb and gutter around the school – Allison Street. School Road. • Public toilets – road into the parking area in very poor condition with big hole. • Drainage – block of land in the village have been turned into swamps by roadworks. • TSC needs to come up with a proper drainage plan and work with RMS to stop road run-off water ending up on village properties. •
Liston Meeting Notes IN22/25B3F581	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads top of priority list. • Tourism funds should be reduced and more funds on roads. • Council produced Tourism brochures are a waste of resources. • Works programs that have a steady expenditure. • Cullendore Rd causeway two sharpbends (1Km back from border should be prioritized for upgrading. • Faggs Rd needs maintenance. • Faggs Rd naming should be reviewed and named Lincoln Hills Road. • Not all residents in Liston area receives "Your Local News" • Liston transfer station not open enough. • Transfer station takes a voucher even for small quantities, could they be used in part for small quantities? • Communications – poor mobile phone services. Need a mobile tower at Sugarloaf. • Better planning needed for next 50 yrs for the upgrading Mt Lindesay Highway.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Lindesay Highway needs to be taken over by State Government. • Need to retain expertise in rural area. • Mingoola Dam? Water for irrigation will bring investment and jobs to Tenterfield. • No proper recognition of the value of Tourism in the TSC documents presented to the meetings. • VIC should not be sold. • Volunteers at Railway Museum don't want the VIC to be moved to the Railway Museum. • VIC volunteers know what to do – to get visitors to stay an extra day to see all the attractions – stay 2 nights. • Council needs to understand/appreciate the importance of the VIC – coach tour companies contact the VIC and ask staff to put together itineraries for groups. • TSC needs to recognize the valuable service that volunteers do at the VIC and Railway Museum. Council and senior staff need to come and see what happens. • Many Tenterfield residents are over 65, retired and many on fixed incomes – pensions and cannot afford rate rise. • Rates are cheaper in Ballina. • Needs to be more/better communication with residents about what TSC is doing. • TSC's public relations efforts are very poor – need to have FB and website running side-by-side with updates about what's happening.
<p>Legume Meeting Notes IN22/25B3F581</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage – blocks of land in the village have been turned into swamps by roadworks. • TSC needs to come up with a proper drainage plan and work with RMS to stop road run-off water ending up on village properties.
<p>Resident Submission IN22/3729FB03</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oppose any rate rise above the CPI increase until council efficiencies are gained.
<p>Sunnyside Meeting Notes IN22/25B3F581</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut unwanted staff/services/sell unwanted assets/raise rates. • Land development to generate income. • Parks and gardens do a great job. • Political pressure on State Government to axe rate-pegging. • Water treatment Plant – separate fund and grant funded.
<p>Torrington</p>	

<p>Meeting Notes - staff IN22/25B3F581</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Community examples and Torrington could be set up as a trial site, i.e. solar, composting. • Use recycling of plastics in Roads. • Excepting of Rate rise but want improvements in roads. • Council needs to promote what is being done to save resources i.e. Stabilizing existing gravel.
<p>Urbenville Progress Assoc IN22/6287CA3C</p>	<p>Who is responsible for mowing nature strips & footpaths outside residential addresses? What are the expectations of TSC?</p>
<p>Urbenville – Staff meeting notes IN22/25B3F581</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beaury Creek Road in poor condition with potholes. • Would like to see TSC workers spend more time on poor roads, less on flower beds. • Recycling practices like the reuse of plastics in roadworks • Roads need maintaining. • Community has been hit by COVID and floods and tourism has gone down the drain. • Lots of pensioners in town can't afford rate rise. • Gravel used on M633 – road to Woodenbong – no good, doesn't have any 'fines' in it and will not compact. • North Coast Health District can't support the level of home care that's needed around Urbenville – services including house cleaning, podiatry, in-home help etc. • Shortage of rental properties for health staff, nurses. • Tourism signs at Woodenbong – there needs to be a sign to Urbenville/Tooloom National Park. • Two large gum trees at 14 Boomi, Urbenville – planted by Greening Australia, now dangerous. • Urban Street footpaths need tidying up. • More public seating is needed around town – at bus stop. • Internet/NBN services are poor. Optus tower as never been connected. • TSC needs FB page – similar to Kyogle Shire which does not allow comments.
<p>Engagement Hub Survey INT22/14FB4A6</p>	<p>Attachment 22 Have your say on our Community Strategic Plan</p>
<p>Resident email: IN22/3659E553</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads • Drainage

[REDACTED]

* WHERE HAS THE MONEY GONE
PRESS RELEASE ON COUNCIL SITE 6 JULY 2011. GRANT MONEY TO FINISH ROAD WHERE HAS THAT GONE

* NO ANSWER FROM C.O. TO MY G/MAIL QUESTIONS

* AMOUNT OF DEFICIT. 3.2, 39, 111 \$ 428.70 PER PERSON INTENT SHIRE.

* MISMANAGEMENT,

* SAVINGS DO NOT HIRE 2 STAFF ADVERTIZED \$131,000.00

* WAY AND HOW CAN WE TRUST YOUR DECISIONS IN THE FUTURE

* 25% REDUCTION IN ROAD MAINTNANCE BUDGET IS A
⊕ BACKWARD STEP. IN THE FUTURE YOU WILL NEED TO CATCH-UP.

⊕ ANY STAFF, COUNCILOR, PEOPLE WHO ADVOCATE A BACKWARD STEP SHOULD FIND ANOTHER AREA WHO WANT TO GO BACKWARDS

* DONT TREAT RATE PAYERS AS YOUR BANK

CONTINUED FROM (1) [REDACTED] (2)

YOUR PROBLEM YOU FIX WITHIN REASONABLE TIME, MONEY.

ADVOCATE TO GOV FOR MORE FUNDS.

DONT FILL CURRENT ADVERT POSITIONS

* TOURISTS. WON'T RECCOMEND BACK ROADS (WORK O MOUTH. BECAUSE OF POOR STATE.

* HOW CAN YOU EXPECT OUR RESPECT, CONFIDENCE, TRUST. IF YOU HAVG OVER SPENT \$3.2 MILLION IN A YEAR.

Submission to Council on Community Strategic Plan

The Plan, in its current form, is rejected.

It is outlandish to imagine that this community could possibly be in favour of a rates increase of over 100% over a period of three years, and potentially a 300% increase over a period of a decade.

Reasons for rejecting the Plan

The Plan puts forward a sudden and unimaginative solution to a problem that could only have been in the making for some time.

It is inconceivable that a reasonable and competent financial manager wouldn't have been able to foresee a looming deficit of between 48%, and possibly as much as 300%, over the coming decade. It is scandalous if it is indeed the case that this deficit was unforeseen.

There has been no indication in the community – as far as members of our (Mingoola) community are concerned – that this enormous deficit was already on the books.

We are told that there is a shortfall of some \$4m - \$5m in the current funding requirements. "The gap between Council's income and the required expenditure to maintain *key assets* (my emphasis) and services at a current service levels (sic) is currently between \$4m and \$5m." [Council's PowerPoint presentation handout sheets p9]. Obvious questions arise from this information:

- This deficit could not have occurred overnight. Why was the community not made aware of this huge financial problem before being presented with the possibility of a sudden, enormous and unexpected rates rise?
- What are the *key assets* and who has decided what assets are key?

The options presented by Council to ratepayers to alleviate this financial problem are fourfold:

1. "Reducing service levels, which will impact the local economy.
2. Sell and/or dispose of assets that will reduce the associated on-going expenses.
3. Increase income raised through rates, user fee and charges, and other sources.
4. A combination of the above options." [Council's PowerPoint presentation handout sheets p 7].

There is no analysis of what effect on services that either option 1 or 2 would have on the ratepayers. Instead of presenting data to allow a ratepayer to make an intelligent response to the four options provided, the Plan immediately launches into a justification as to why option 3 is superior. [

To be able to consider which, if any, of the options are palatable to ratepayers a detailed analysis of the ramifications of each option is essential. Please provide it.

There is also no discernible justification for why the Ratepayer Category of Farmland shoulders the heaviest burden of the proposed rates rises.

It is outlined in the Plan that even with the proposed rates rise (100%+ over three years or up to 300% over a decade) there will be no solution to the funding shortfall into the future. The Plan specifies that both Scenario 2 and Scenario 3 (which outline the exorbitant rates rises) "...do not allow for any capacity to deal with any asset backlog or future cost shifting, ...(they) purely address the current operating deficit." [Long Term Financial Plan p 10].

What is the solution to this problem? There is none present in this Plan. One can only assume, therefore, that to continue with the current level of service into the future enormous rates rises will be regularly required. This is untenable.

Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) p 11: "Should any further shocks come to be known, these plans would need to be reviewed to ensure the full implications could be forecast. Examples of unknown shocks would be:

- if the Government Financial Assistance Grant (FAG) were frozen or reduced or if the rate peg value was significantly lower than the estimate rates and the true inflation rate..."

As well, other risk factors to undermining the budget bottom line are outlined (LTFP p 11):

- "Rates increase being lower than anticipated;
- Construction costs being higher than anticipated;
- Utility expenses being higher than estimated;
- Significant fluctuations in the rate of return for investments, ..." etc.

Is it likely that the rates increase will be lower than anticipated? YES.

Is it likely that constructions costs will rise higher than expected? YES.

Is it likely that utility expenses will be higher than estimated? YES.

Is it likely that there will be significant fluctuations in the rate of return for investments? YES.

These are not Risk Factors, they are certainties. Therefore, the Plan is fundamentally flawed.

Whoever has put this Plan together is not thinking inside the world in which we have come to live. They are thinking inside the world:

- before enormous climate change-caused natural disasters,
- before a pandemic caused worldwide supply chains to unravel;
- before the same pandemic caused the Australian economy to be instable and insecure;
- before a war in Europe caused the shortage of (potentially) products necessary to the farming industry.

This kind of world requires a creative financial response rather than the easy, unacceptable solution of passing on enormous rates increases to ratepayers who are already struggling in this new world in which we all find ourselves.

Some obvious solutions:

Cut back services;

Define what non-essential services are and charge users for those services;

Address the biggest cost item in the budget: staffing costs. Do a cost benefit analysis to determine the minimum number of staff (at all levels) required to run a small operation like Tenterfield Shire Council, and act accordingly.

We suggest that a Committee of Councillors be formed to address these issues and put recommendations to the Senior Staff of Council to go back to the drawing board to more realistically and reasonably address the serious budgetary circumstances in which they find themselves.

From [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Rates Assessment Number [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

25 April 2022.

17 April 2022

Daryl Buckingham
Chief Executive Officer
Tenterfield Shire Council
PO Box 214
TENTERFIELD NSW 2372

TENTERFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL		
26 APR 2022		
	Action	Info
CE		
CCO		
DI		

Dear Mr Buckingham

Re: Tenterfield Shire Council's *Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032* – Special Rates Variation Increase

I am writing to bring to your attention my concerns related to Tenterfield Shire Council's (the Council) proposal to introduce a Special Rates Variation (SRV) to local ratepayers, under its *Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032*, of either a 43 per cent increase *per year* over two years (i.e., from 2023/24 to 2024/25), or alternatively, a 28 per cent increase *per year* over three years (from 2023/24 to 2025/26). I note under either proposal, there will be a compound effect on rates, raising them permanently by 109 per cent.¹

Background to the proposed SRV increase

The Council has indicated that its general fund is currently in a weak financial position and that it is heavily reliant on New South Wales and Commonwealth Government grants. In particular:

- The Council estimates a \$4 million to \$5 million deficit between income and expenditure to maintain current service levels in the forward years.
- As at 30 June 2021, the Council had a negative cash result.
- The Council does not have sufficient cash reserves to meet asset renewal and maintenance requirements.
- To reduce the funding gap, the Council is proposing (in addition to the proposed increase to the SRV) to potentially reduce service levels, sell or dispose of assets, and/or increasing user fees and charges.²

Key demographic information: Tenterfield

According to 2016 Census statistics,³ the medium age of Tenterfield residents is 53 years of age, while 27.6 per cent of the population were 65 years and over in age. Furthermore, the median weekly personal income for people over the age of 15 is \$454.00.

¹ Tenterfield Shire Council, 'Tenterfield Shire Council: Community Strategic Plan 2022 2032 & Financial Sustainability', *Tenterfield Shire Council* (Community Consultation Document, 23 March 2022) <<https://www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au/content/uploads/2022/04/TSC-Community-Strategic-Plan-Financial-Sustainability-Presentation-to-Community-Consultation-Sessions-April-2022.pdf>>.

² Ibid.

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Tenterfield (A): 2016 Census All persons QuickStats', (Statistics, 2016) <<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2016/LGA17400>>.

Given the number of Tenterfield residents over the age of 65 (around 1,800 people from a total population of 6,628 in 2016), it would be safe to presume that a significant proportion would be in receipt of the aged pension (in addition to other social security payment paid to other demographics). As a result, the inevitable increase to the SRV will have a disproportionate impact on people over 65 and in receipt of the aged pension in Tenterfield. This will mean these residents will be forced to forgo essential expenditure, already difficult on insufficient income, such as life-preserving medications and/or utilities (water and electricity), in order to service increased rates to enable the Council to maintain services that will have little to no impact on these people.

Suggested actions to alleviate financial issues

As should be evident from the above, I am not supportive of this proposed significant increase in rates by way of an SRV. A couple of suggestions could be as follow:

- Assessing the Council's eligibility for a range of regional grants provided by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, and applying.⁴
- Selling Council assets that are non-essential.
- Reducing non-essential (or least-essential) Council services.
- Freezing hiring and promotion decisions within Council.
- Approaching the New South Wales Government to appoint an administrator and/or amalgamate with a neighbouring local council.
- Reducing remuneration for identified positions, noting the salary for three people alone in 2020-21 was \$725,000.00 or around 18 per cent of the \$4 million shortfall.⁵

Thank you again for your consideration of this especially important and serious matter. I would appreciate a direct and prompt response, and, if possible, not a response from your staff members.

Kind Regards,



TENTERFIELD NSW 2372

⁴ Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, 'Regional and Community Programs', *Australian Government* (Webpage, April 2022) <<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/regional-australia/regional-and-community-programs>>.

⁵ Tenterfield Shire Council, 'Annual Report: 2020-21', *Tenterfield Shire Council* (Annual Report, 2021) 50.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Tenterfield Shire Council

CEO / COO / all councillors / council@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au

26. April 2022

OBJECTIONS TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND DOCUMENTS / PLANS

Prepared by and with the input of over 300 TSC ratepayers and submitted on their behalf.

Referenced Documents

1. Community Strategic Plan & Financial Sustainability Presentation to Community Consultation Sessions April 2022
2. Draft Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032
3. Draft Delivery Program 2022-2025 & Operational Plan 2022-2023
4. Draft Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032
5. Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032
6. Draft Revenue Policy 2022-2023
7. Draft Workforce Management Strategy 2021-2025

Objection / Rejection is hereby lodged to the following:

1. Public Consultation Process (failed)
2. Contents provided for information (as above and missing documents)
3. Draft Community Strategic Plan (as above)
4. Draft Delivery Program & Operation Plan (as above)
5. Draft Asset Management Strategy (as above)
6. Draft Long Term Financial Plan (as above)
7. Draft Revenue Policy (as above)
8. Draft Workforce Management Strategy (as above)

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Executive Summary

Considering the recently published financial position, the Tenterfield Shire Council (Council) has put this community in a **near-catastrophic financial situation**. This situation is not acceptable or explainable other than as **a failure of the councillors to fulfil their duties and the CEO and administration team to act in the community's best interest that pays them to do so**.

On the basis that the councillors are responsible for directing and overseeing the Administration / Operation of the Council, **the five remaining councillors participating in creating this situation are to be held accountable**.

These Councillors and the Chief Executive shall face the consequences of their acts and omissions, apologise to the community and step down with immediate effect.

The Councillors have lost control over the Chief Executive and hence the administration. Some examples:

- **The sudden realisation that the community is in unreconcilable debt.**
- **The uncoordinated proposition of a rate rises from 0.7% to 2.5% to 79% to 109% to 200%.**
- **The public comments by the Chief Executive about people having to move away.**
- **Adding personnel and managers under managers in the organisation chart.**
- **Proposing additional spending without a funding source.**
- **The change from a Farming Community to a tourism community via a Mountain Bike stronghold to an Arts and Crafts Centre – without any consultation.**
- **A budget that shows \$6M in further losses over the coming years.**

Why do we need a \$300k PLUS p.a. CEO to help lose \$6,000,000 over the next 3 years???

The newer councillors shall be reminded of their obligations and held responsible every step of the way. Currently the councillors are **BLAMING** reduced State funding for the situation this council is in, which clearly shows their denial of the fact that there is overspending and lack of governance.

The proposed financial plan is **not acceptable at all**. Significant changes must be made immediately. **Under no circumstances are the councillors to approve** the plans without complete overhaul, input from the public and another round of genuine public consultation.

The community does not understand how this Council can keep spending millions of dollars on office upgrades, salaries, bonuses, vehicles and benefits while driving the deficit further and further. **There is NO value for money proposition and no perception of additional value in return for the increased cost to the ratepayers.**

The different Community Plans talk about "the community vision" – this needs to be corrected. At best, this could be called the **Chief Executive's vision** – as there was no community involvement in developing these plans.

Regarding the recent so-called "community consultation", **no reasonable/honest attempt was made** to engage with the community – the information provided was incomplete. No attempt was made to openly inform the community before the consultation sessions (low attendance) about the proposed 200% Rate Rise and catastrophic financial position/management, ongoing overspending and underfunding, \$50 Million proposed future deficit and impacts on ratepayers.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

The community has no to little trust in their Council and withholding the TRUTH does not help.

Despite the Strategic Plans talking about operations being run transparently, efficiently and sustainably, the opposite is true. We see enormous salaries being paid to some public servants – plus a combined effect from past and present councillors lacking qualifications (no relevant business experience) operating today in combination with a council administration that provides selective and non-factual reports. **The CEO and Administration appears to be working against the councillors, driving this Council and community to the brink of bankruptcy with no viable plans how to resolve the situation.**

Multiple honest attempts by competent and concerned local businesspeople/ratepayers and the wider community to obtain active involvement to assist have been ignored or actively rejected. Not using or integrating this available free resource pool goes against every statement of transparency and inclusiveness and good business practices.

As a whole – the plans talk about values, ethics and integrity – while the past and currently experienced actions of the Councillors and Council Administration are the exact opposite.

Difficult questions asked to the Council and councillors remain unanswered which deepens the perception of incompetence, arrogance and ignorance.

They are actively excluding the community as much as possible and propose a financial and asset management strategy that is not viable.

This behaviour and miss management will drive / keep businesses away from Tenterfield Shire and force older / long term residents who have worked and live here for a long time away – without providing an opportunity for younger people to stay or come to the area.

This must end NOW!

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Failed Community Consultation in Detail

February and March 2022 Tenterfield Shire Council Documents discuss a higher than usual (0.7%) Special Rate Variation of 2.5%. Following closed discussion, this was decided to be non-effective. No higher rate increase proposal or forum is on council records.

In late February, the Mayor posted on Facebook that a 79.4% Rate rise had been proposed. An extraordinary council meeting was called – lengthy explanations for why this was necessary were in the post (now removed).

After that, only invitations with no further details were posted on Facebook, the council website (well hidden), and the local paper.

The times for the consultations were set in a way that most people could NOT attend them.

Had the Council openly communicated the significance of the proposed plans to the community, a much higher engagement would have been achieved – see the event organised by www.OSOCI.org on April 9, where, based on the approx. 80% rate rise announcement over 250 members of the community was present and expressed their objection to the process and proposed rate rise and financial plans.

After the community was made aware of the proposed impacts and how Council was implementing the financial and other plans, much more interest and input were generated, informing this response.

For those who attended the "community consultation sessions," no presentation was given that actively informed about the significant items.

TSC Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032 & Financial Sustainability was handed out. This document has not been made available prior – it has been added to the website since. So, participants could not have come to the meetings prepared for the consultation with the well-prepared specialists.

Large numbers of Councillors and Council Staff tried to talk participants into submission via a "hard sell" – pretending it was in their best interest. There were 21 council staff/councillors in one session and 4 NON-Council related participants.

A question raised in that session was "shot down" by a Councillor in an aggressive and intimidating tone intended to stop the question from being answered. This kind of bullying behaviour is what the community experiences in this so-called "consultation" process.

Older residents who have come to retire in Tenterfield need a more collaborative approach. However, for this target group (approx. 40% of residents), the proposed rate and charge rise have catastrophic consequences as pensioners have no opportunity to increase income.

Questions were not answered clearly, and in a way, the community members could understand the significance of the potential outcome of the answer. Questions asked to Council after the event are still unanswered to date.

The TSC 2022 Community Strategic Plan – Community Engagement report (no date) was not presented on the TSC website but as a handout only available at the consultation events.

It contains responses from the community as well as statistics.

Upon investigation, it was noticed that input provided by the community via the process had been filtered out / left out.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

The question was asked WHO decides which content goes into the report. No answer has been received to date.

It shows that only 33 people had responded to the survey.

Out of those, the following feedback was recorded:

Question 6: How supportive re a rate increase.

- 22** answered: not supportive
- 10 answered: willing to consider a reasonable increase
- 1 answered: supportive

Question 7:

- 11** answered: significant reduction in services – minimal increase in rates
- 9** answered: major reduction in services – small to medium increase in rates

So, with 20 out of 33 OPPOSING a rate rise – the Council still proposes a 200% rate increase.

Conclusion:

The community consultation process is flawed and incomplete. To develop community plans and vision, the process must be undertaken again. Eliminating the shortfalls and executing it properly and inviting and including the community to provide their input and identify themselves with the process and outcome.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Draft Community Strategic Plan

Overview

The plan leaves out some of the most significant aspects of the economy and community such as agriculture, tourism, hospitality and health.

There are many grand statements in the plan that have no foundation, actions, or KPIs / benchmarking. Therefore, they are not measurable, which leads to no actionable/achievable outcomes.

As a whole – the plan sounds nice but falls way short in many sectors and as is would only give an administration an opportunity to “do whatever” they want and justify it by pointing back at the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan shall be completely overhauled with the active involvement of all stakeholders and the community in order to produce an executable plan with clear benefits.

Page 6

Claims are made that Agriculture is the largest employer – no source provided.

This is misleading as most farming businesses are not undertaken as a primary source of income. Most people undertaking farming activities do have a second job. A strong move out of farming is noticeable with people trying to establish other businesses as farming is not viable.

Farming businesses are typically mum and dad businesses with NO employees and potentially only registered to obtain a Primary Producer Tax benefit.

Regardless there is no further mention of agriculture in the plan – WHY?

Page 6

The Health Sector is claimed to be the second-largest employer – no source provided.

The health system and services in and around Tenterfield are well below acceptable standards, including the Aged Care / Nursing Home businesses in town.

Mentioned as a key deliverable/vision point, no specific action or benchmark has been provided:

Page 17 - 5.2.2 Work with key stakeholders and the community to lobby for adequate health services in our region and greater accessibility to regional services.

This is not a suitable and executable strategy (plan) for one of the Key Requirements for this community going forward. And there is no further mention of HEALTH in the plan.

Page 6

Retail is named as the 3rd largest employer.

Since the beginning of COVID, the retail sector has been one of the hardest-hit areas in the shire.

Despite this, there is no further mention of retail in the plan – WHY?

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Page 12 - Community

1.1 Tenterfield Shire is a vibrant, inclusive, and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated

The plan fails to mention the demographics of the shire.

The Plus 60 yo group is with over 40% a significant part of the community, and yet there is NO mention of this group and subsequently NO actions/strategies to cater for this group.

The same can be said for Youth as a target group – mentioned once.

This needs to be redone completely.

Page 13 - Economy

2.1 Develop Tenterfield Shire's economic base into a robust and growing economy that supports creating a variety of employment and business opportunities.

2.1.2 Manage Councils Livestock Saleyards in a commercial manner.

The CEO was asked about the sale of the sales yard and swore that it would not be sold. A \$15,000 valuation of the sales yard was ordered the day after.

This section clearly shows that there is NO understanding of business and the economy. Without a healthy economy, there are no jobs, no income, and no quality of life.

Over the past years a significant number of capital projects were undertaken in the region e.g. Bolivia Bypass, Dam Upgrade, WTP, Bypass PFS and FS totalling about \$200M – upcoming the \$100 Tenterfield bypass. None of those projects led to upskilling in the community, job opportunities, training or the like other than incidental spend. None of those projects had a guaranteed LOCAL SPEND – because such benefits were not written into the Stakeholder requirements. Other Town such as Parkes Shire have achieved about %30 local spend in similar situations. Despite numerous attempts by the community to instigate such local spend initiatives, the Council did not only act but actively rejected.

Business is the LIFEBLOOD of the region and the weakest part of the strategic plan.

There are no goals around attracting new industries to town, participation in ongoing opportunities such as the major projects (Water Treatment Plant, Dam, Bypass...) or ongoing training and development of a Centre of Excellence.

- What about supporting existing businesses.
- How do new residents impact the economy?
- What product development?
- Bypass and impact
- Planning for a Town that no one drives through?
- Affordable Housing
- Development

This needs to be redone completely.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Page 14 – Environment

3.2 Provide secure, sustainable and environmentally sound infrastructure and services that underpin Council's service delivery.

These are NOT environmental strategies – the water services are in place or in progress (Water Treatment Plant) with financial impacts of mismanagement already implemented (water cost increase).

The following points are not what this community needs to focus on concerning their environment.

They seem to have made it into the plan as an excuse for the dramatic overspending on assets in water, waste and wastewater management and the associated cost increases.

How many people are connected to Town Water and Sewerage – do we need more of that, or do we have too much of it already?

3.2.1 Deliver a total water cycle management approach, including water conservation and reuse, is implemented and ENSURE it complies with the Biosecurity Act 2015 and standards.

3.2.2 Deliver an affordable waste management solution for the community to manage waste volumes best and take advantage of recycling opportunities.

3.2.3 Deliver an affordable and effective wastewater management solution for the community.

The environmental section shall be completely overhauled, removing ASSET justification from it.

The services provided shall be Affordable and Appropriate for the population and predicted growth, which they are NOT.

Page 15 – Leadership

“Council continues to partner with and support community members and associations through involvement in decision making and by applying principles of fairness, equity, transparency, and probity in all its dealings.”

This entire section sounds nice and would definitely help if achieved.

The current status is the exact opposite - exclusive, secretive, covering up issues, decision making behind closed doors, unprofessional public conduct of councillors.

Goals must include.

- Competent and accountable – Councillors and Council Leaders
- Affordable
- Not self-focussed
- Councillors to have read and understood the council documents.
- Councillors educate themselves about the subject matters
- Councillors consult with the community before making decisions

Lost time injury rate of <4.24% - is way too high. As an indicator of a healthy workplace (mental and physical), the Council is NOT a healthy workplace where people perform and enjoy participating.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Again – a lot of focus on ASSETS

A Lost Time Incident Rate (days lost to injuries/illness) of about 4 also means 4% waste in wages / operational cost, which should and can be reduced.

Target should be below 2%

Page 16 - Transport

Capital Projects

Measure: Delivered on time, Quality and Budget 100%

How about Public Transport Options?

- Reducing Traffic – share rides
- Bypass and impact
- Planning for a Town that no one drives through?

31-March-Draft-Delivery-Program-2022-2025-Operational-Plan-2022-2023

Page 4 – Community's Vision

The mayor talks about the communities Vision. What is that – who wrote that – the community clearly was NOT involved.

Page 6 - Duties of Councillors

We should start reminding them they represent ratepayers and should be automatically including our concerns in each meeting when requested. So far, they all fail.

Page 7 - Our Mission / Vision

Explain who researched and devised the strategy - and what data influenced this.

Page 10

Provide an ORG Chart with contact Phone numbers and email addresses

Pages 31 ff

Must be reworked based on the updated Strategic Plan

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Draft Workforce Management Strategy

There are many grand statements in the strategy paper that have no foundation, actions, or KPIs / benchmarking. Therefore, they are not measurable, which leads to no actionable/achievable outcomes.

As a whole – the strategy sounds nice but falls way short in many sectors and is not tied in with the current financial situation.

The Strategy shall be completely overhauled once the financial situation has been rectified, funding has been secured and the future of this Council has been defined.

Asset Management Strategy

Executive Summary

The **PRIORITY** for rural areas = roads.

Do not include footpaths, cycleways, aerodrome, rail tracks, or kerb and guttering in road transport group dollars to avoid diluted dollars on low priorities.

Remove all aspirational projects - these are someone else's job and make the service level unaffordable. Update the content of the staff report on "what everyone wants" to reflect the reality of the outcome of asking ratepayers how much extra rates are they willing to pay?

Remove all activity and financial commitments outside the Council area and primary funding role.

Stop TSC spending rates and financial assistance grants on behalf of other agencies, entities or individuals.

NO to over 200% rates increase (with 110% in 1st 2/3 years) **AND**

NO to \$50 million deficit over the 10-year long term financial plan

YES to 'service' reductions while councillors get control over TSC spending plans, from now for possibly a year or two.

5,000 TSC ratepayers cannot afford the Chief Executive's recommendations to date.

The Chief Executive says that these documents and recommendations to date **DO NOT** include any additional expenditure for any reason over the next 10 years, so ratepayers need to identify priorities and \$/activity and administrative units to remove now. It will only continue to escalate.

5,000 ratepayers cannot afford 3 executive positions and 12 manager positions within the "approved" TSC structure. The councillors need to remove delegations for staff replacement, etc., until the \$50 million deficit is resolved and loans covering the deficit are repaid.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

5,000 ratepayers can't afford the aspirations contained within the Integrated Planning & Reporting documents now out for public consultation, presumably prepared with input from the 3 executive staff and 12 managers.

Staff have yet to propose how any rate increase will be distributed over all ratepayers. I.e., the Rating Structure. If every ratepayer pays \$1,000 extra, that is \$5 million but only covers 1 year's deficit. Every one of the 5,000 ratepayers would have to pay an extra \$1,000 every year of the 10-year long term financial plan.

Reductions for one rate category mean big increases for others. I.e., higher than even the 200% presented from p39/43 in the 23/3/22 meeting long term financial plan (which should be the document online for public consultation).

ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY suggested \$ changes.

Practical & Achievable Suggestions:

TO URGENTLY REDUCE:

- \$50 million + estimated deficit.
- Repay loans raised to cover the deficit and cash flow problems:
- To significantly reduce the over 200% rate increase (increasing 110% in the first 2/3 years) to NO MORE than 8-10% in 23/24 and State approved rate peg.
- To restore capacity to responsibly consider new expenditures over the 10-year long term financial plan/s (LTFP)
- ***Please Don't forget: the over 200% rate increase or \$50 million + deficit (LTFP) does NOT allow for any more expenditure for the 10-year long term financial plan, including unexpected weather or other events or more cost-shifting etc. See documents, Chief Executive feedback & meeting recordings.

The Chief Executive has been very clear about NO more expenditure and can't keep using the credit card. Hopefully, the Chief Executive does as he indicated and says NO to any expenditure proposals from all sources. (Unless other expenditure is reduced at that meeting to cover the new apparently more important, necessary, urgent item).

***Please consider that instructions to spend capital budgets asap before year-end and additional expenditure being OK if it reduces future operational expenses must stop as an automatic Chief Executive instruction to staff.

While cash flow has no doubt improved (receipt of untied Financial Assistant Grant), there is a long way to go to improve financial management and TSC's financial stability.

*****5,000 odd ratepayers can't afford the aspirational activity & activity belonging to other entities or individuals, especially considering the very large area and the huge areas of non-rate paying national parks and state forests and crown lands.**

*****Priorities outside Tenterfield township seem to clearly be usable Roads, not 'luxuries' currently redirecting scarce TSC resources.**

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Submission on public exhibition document: Asset Management Strategy 2022 -2032

A: Asset Management Strategy -

Remove all non-mandatory activity in plans/budgets/10-year LTFP: remove all 'service levels' above a reasonable rate increase IMPACT on ratepayers; Remove all activity which is outside the TSC area, or which is the role of another entity.

AND

B: Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032 -

Inconsistent use of TERMS across pages and tables. Page # issue. The majority of AMP assets are excellent, good, moderate/average CONDITION. How much expenditure for these assets is in a 10-year LTFP? SUGGEST REMOVAL

Section A:

1. Remove all non-mandatory activity in Asset Management and other plans/budgets/10-year LTFP. The approximately 5,000 TSC ratepayers cannot afford to take on financial responsibility for activity and expenditure, which are the responsibility of other entities or agencies.

Staff should not be including asset activity or taking responsibility for new assets because they consider TSC will do a better 'job' or manage 'priorities' better.

For ratepayers, the 'better' solution is to remove them altogether from the Long-Term Financial Plans and proposed excessive rate increases.

2. Remove all 'service levels' that rely on an unreasonable rate increase IMPACT on ratepayers, especially non mandatory, whether they reduce future operating expenditure or not. In contrast, the current unreasonable rate increase is minimised, and operational deficits and cash flow issues are brought back under responsible financial management.

TSC ratepayers cannot afford to pay for 'gold plated' service standards.

The attached pie charts clearly show that most assets are in the top 3 condition categories for ALL asset groups.

Please provide the TSC approved policy statement for 'intergenerational equity'.

Please provide the TSC approved policy statement for equity across the TSC area and interest groups.

Please provide the TSC approved policy statement for required/minimum service levels, especially for Road Network (excluding footpaths and cycleways and heritage items that are 'luxury' items).

3. Remove all asset capital and operational activity outside TSC local government area or is the primary role of another entity, including all 'aspirational' wants and needs.

Record the removed budgets/activity in a separate 'advocacy' list without any \$ inclusions in the 10 Year LTFP.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

TSC ratepayers cannot afford to pay for an activity that belongs to another council, entity, or agency more properly. The NSW government's focus on 'regional' activity does not mean every Council interferes or reallocates scarce resources to regional activity over council area activity.

Please provide a detailed summary of any financial benefit arising from existing regional activity.

4. Including 'Footpaths & Cycleways" within TRANSPORT risks use of scarce \$ which must be allocated to ROAD expenditure as a Shire wide priority.

Suggest 'Footpaths & Cycleways" be moved to Community assets and/or Open Space, Sporting, Reserves, and Recreation grouping.

Do not move the related \$ from roads, culverts, bridges, and causeways.

Footpaths (particularly upgrades, expensive heritage renewals or those outside the main population centres are 'luxury' items that ratepayers cannot afford.)

5. As there is a category for Strategic/Investment assets under CORPORATE, which currently includes the industrial subdivision and commercial property, **it would be appropriate to move the Aerodrome, Livestock Saleyards and CBD assets (including School of Arts and RSL hall etc.?) to Strategic/Investment Assets.**

6. **For councillors and ratepayers to understand TSC's success to date in strategic/investment/entrepreneurial assets priority, please provide reports on success to date and planned revenue, expenditure, cash flow in LTFPs**

6.1 **Please provide a report on the TSC Industrial Estate**, showing the total \$ activity to date, including the sale price of every lot, total expenses from reclassification of property, survey, sales activity, property manager expenses etc.

6.2 With the inclusion of identified assets into the strategic/investment category, **it should be possible also to integrate at least 2 manager roles, further reducing TSC expenditure commitments.**

6.3 **Please provide a report on the TSC Industrial Estate, showing the total \$ activity now included in the 10-year long term financial plan**, including relevant Manager expenses, so ratepayers and councillors may identify activity to reduce the budget/s.

6.4 **Please provide similar reports on the Livestock Saleyards, CBD assets, Land 'assets.'**

7 **Quarantine all reductions in net expenditure** (there may be some estimated revenue associated with activity proposed for removal) and use to reduce the estimated operational deficit and the staff recommended, but unaffordable general rates increase over 200% as per the 10 Year long term financial plan (being 110% in the 1st 3 years).

7.1 **Please create a separate group for 'quarantined' expenditure** (which may have been previously approved within 20/21 and future year budgets) to a new group that requires a new council resolution before any further expenditure or commitment.

8 **Please update policies etc, so that any concept of 'sustainability' doesn't just consider TSC position but also clearly considers the 5,000 odd ratepayers.** They are being treated unfairly as the 'balancing item' for the apparent failure of financial risk management to date.

i.e., an estimated \$50 million deficit over the LTFP or an over 200% increase in general rates?!!

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

Section B:

1.1 Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032 - Inconsistent use of general terms across pages and tables.

While reviewing this public exhibition document, the inconsistent use of many terms across pages and tables **makes it very confusing to the reader.**

Also, there seems to be a problem with page numbering, which does not help ease of use for readers.

Q: Can these issues be updated, please (or was something missed)?

1.2 Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032 - **Inconsistent use of ASSET CONDITION** terms across pages and tables

Asset Condition term #3 uses Average = preventative maintenance work required. P16/115

In the individual AMPs, condition #3 shows as 'moderate'. E.g., Transport p22/115

Q: Is the description for #3 consistent = preventative maintenance work required, despite using different terms? E.g., Average and Moderate terms are used on different pages.

Q: Do the individual AMPs (i.e., not the summaries in this document) use consistent terms as per p16.

Q: **Why do components move between different groupings.** E.g., strategic/investment (industrial subdivision, commercial property), culverts & causeways, parking, aerodrome, other road assets, cemeteries, libraries, public amenities, Open Space, Reserves, recreation, streetscaping, VIC, CBD assets(?), corporate or leadership? works depot/workshop, fuel facilities, equipment (depot?) equipment & furniture? Other assets (land, earthworks, etc.??), communications, community buildings,

Q: **Can you please use consistent terms** across the different categorisations used in this & subordinate documents, including how they align with TSC annual report and financial reports and the 10-year long term financial plan/s?

2. Page numbers don't seem to be consistent throughout the document. Very confusing for a complicated document. Please check page numbers and modify where necessary with a new version.

2.1 The Majority of assets in Asset Management Plan summaries show as "excellent, good, moderate/average" condition.

Q: How much expenditure for these assets (with conditions 1-3) is in the 10-year LTFP?

Suggest removal or defer till 24/25 (at least), allowing time to improve TSC financial risk management, reduce the need to consider the staff recommended rates increase of over 200% (110% in the 1st three years) while doing maintenance as per asset condition #4.

2.2 P16/115 asset condition table/s include "Poor Condition" = renewal/replacement due, increasing reactive maintenance:

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

2.3 As the Asset Condition 'pie charts' P17-19/115 also show for all-AMPs the condition predominantly conditions 1-3 (all pie charts showing at least 70% with asset conditions 1-3), this supports #3.1 that any expenditure related to the assets reflected in conditions 1-3 should be removed from expenditure budgets for 21/22, 22/23, 23/24 as a start to reducing the unsatisfactory financial position and the inappropriate staff proposals for over 200% rate increases (with 110% in the first 3 years).

/Ends

TSC

Cc Mayor Petrie, Deputy Mayor Macnish

Feedback on components of the Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) document Workforce Management Strategy 2021 – 2025

1). The Workforce Management Strategy document **should include the Organisation Chart**, with key data;

- *last specific approving resolution #;
- *number of full time equivalent positions (FTEs)
- *\$ budgets by manager unit and in total
- *vacancies
- *for each of the 10 years of the long term financial plan (LTFP)

2). The current Organisational Chart (online version dated 16.3.22 – *TSC>your council>about council>council structure*) showing **3 executive positions with >\$200,000 remuneration** (TSC annual reports) and **12 manager positions on 'heading line'** with another 1-2 Manager positions reporting to another manager seems excessive for a small rural council with approximately 5,000 ratepayers.

Q: How many manager positions are currently represented? 12, 13, or 14 or ??

Q: Why are there managers reporting to managers or perhaps inconsistent uses of terms in the organisation chart and the staff position declarations (also appropriately online)?

3). There should be **specific motions presented for councillor consideration** which refer to the approved organisational structure, FTEs, \$ remuneration budgets by manager unit and in total, not Generic draft motions/resolutions/minutes which may approve all IP&R documents as one consolidated approval. Explicit resolutions (such as happens for the rates by category) represent improved corporate governance for councillors , ratepayers and residents.

4). Reference should be included for the **Delegations Register and Position Descriptions** as these are key components of any Workforce Management Strategy.

This reference should include the specific resolution/minute/approval numbers for each component and version control.

Q: could the Chief Executive please advise when the Delegations Register will be available on line and that ratepayers, residents and councillors can access it at the office in the meantime, including requesting a copy (electronic or paper)?

The Local Government Act **requires review of the Delegations Register within the 1st 12 months of each term.**

Q: Could councillors please ask the chief Executive to **provide the resolution number for the last term/s review**

Q: could councillors please ask the Chief Executive to **provide a report for a review of the Delegations Register** prior to finalisation of the IP&R documents as delegations are a key component of Council (councillors) controls and often directly affect position classifications.

5). While the Chief Executive (CE) is responsible for all staff, information on the **award classifications and the position descriptions (PD) should be available online** (to reduce disturbing the staff with enquiries) as these improve transparency for all.

The PD including the position/contract classification and delegations from the CE are not confidential as it is good corporate governance for all positions and contracts to be advertised on TSC website as well as elsewhere.

6). The Workforce Management Strategy 2021 – 2025 **needs to include:**

- *specific reference to **ratepayers and residents being the ultimate client group** for the whole workforce,

- *being responsible to ratepayers & residents for a **consistently reasonable impact of any rates increase.**

- *a particular focus on **'efficient & effective financial management' with a focus on:**

- # TSC physical area and primary responsibilities only

- # staying not only 'within approved budgets' but looking to reduce expenditure

- # being aware of the current financial position and need to reduce expenditure

- * **'relevant skill, experience & education'** for a more practical focus than current content

- *a focus on **'must do'** not **'want to do'** or **'would like to do'**.

- *Operational Plan documents & monthly reports include specific responsibilities for every position:

- # eg **"4.3.6.6 Manage the Organisational Leadership Service of Council in a financially responsible manner in line with budget allocations".**

^ The 'catch' or 'out' here is **'in line with budget allocations**.

^With the current financial issues, a **stretch performance focus would be "at reduced budget allocations"**.

In the current financial situation the **2 phrases could be seen as contradictory**.

^ in my experience a documented staff focus on **'spending the approved budget'** never ends well financially.

#eg **"4.3.3.2 Develop, manage & deliver the Workforce Management Strategy.**

The March update shows "all vacancies are now being reviewed by the CE and currently on hold unless extenuating circumstances."

^BUT: 2 positions currently advertised online

^ 2 positions with significant Operational Plan expenditure have apparently been 'recently' appointed

7). All IP&R documents, including the Workforce Management Strategy 2021-2025 should ensure the whole workforce has a **focus on the following IPART requirements**, especially where a special rate variation is proposed:

- *proposed special rate variation has a **REASONABLE IMPACT** on **RATEPAYERS**

- ***RATEPAYER ACCEPTANCE** of the **RATING STRUCTURE**

- ***CONSULTATION COMMENSURATE** with **IMPACT** on **RATEPAYERS**

NOTE: "commensurate" -especially when the staff proposed rate increase is in excess of 200% over 10 years.

NOTE: it is TSC ratepayers, not adjoining councils' ratepayers.

See TSC annual report & Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data for population income, mortgage, ages etc.

While 'Ratepayer' includes staff, councillor & contractor ratepayers, there may be a perceived 'conflicted' status with respect to staff proposed and councillor possible approval of special rate

variations and the focus needs to be on the 'other' ratepayers and how best to communicate & consult with ALL ratepayers.

Eg Possibly via a councillor approved consultation survey direct to the ratepayer nominated contact address (for rates notices).

8). Include the principle of **'no surprises' 'courtesy' and 'provision of timely, relevant information' not only for senior staff but also for councillors, ratepayers and residents** – with ratepayers being those bearing the currently significant proposed financial consequences of the administration activity to date and who only very recently elected a new council (without being aware of a potential staff recommendation for a staff proposed over 200% special rate variation within 2 months of the finalisation of the election/s).

Eg of the principle above:

Q: exactly which staff members and councillors were aware in 2021 of the potential size of the 2022 staff proposed special rate variations from 48%, 58%, 79.56% at & February 2022 meeting to over 200% increases over the 10 year long term financial plan (LTFP), with 110 % being due in the 1st 2/4 years.

Q: How do the Workforce Management Plan 2021-2025 performance review & career progression activities for individual positions reflect this apparent significant knowledge being kept 'in house' – initially presumably by staff, but possibly also by the previous term Mayor & possibly councillors?

Q: Which of the three recent Chief Executives were aware of the quantum of the special rate variation prior to the recent council election? Reports of 'a SRV may be needed' or "a SRV will be needed" doesn't cover the issue, especially considering the 'effusive' public news comments on how well TSC was performing.

Q: Can the Chief Executive provide a report on why this significant data was apparently kept 'in house'?

Q: Can the Chief Executive or the previous Mayor provide advice on how the lack of this information may have affected the potential councillor candidates and the election results for the recent 2021/22 council election?

Q: Why did the 7 February 2022 agenda report include **specific details for councillors & ratepayers** on the then staff proposals for 48%, 58%, 79.56% rate increases but the 23 March 2022 agenda, which increased the staff proposed special rate variation by 120% (over the 10 years) **only included information relating to the over 200% increase in the heading of p 39-43 of the long term financial plan document?**

Q: Can the Chief Executive please demonstrate how councillors, ratepayers & residents **can have confidence in an 'open & accountable' administration** when between 7 February 2022 & 23 March 2022, the staff proposed special rate variation not only increased by 120% but the agenda report also indicated the alternative was a \$50 million deficit (p9/43 LTFP). Other communications since also making it clear there is NO additional expenditure possible than what is currently included in the IP&R documents?

9). **Remove 'expansive' terms** from within all IP&R documents, including the Workforce Management Strategy 2021- 2025, including the following currently unaffordable 'aspirational' inclusions:

* *'employer of choice'* – this is a small rural council with approx. 5,000 ratepayers. Can't afford this.

* *'empower'* – likely to encourage focus to expand the PD role, Delegation is only *'empower'*.

* *'flexible balance between work & life'* – currently unaffordable & priority must be the role for TSC

* *'competitive remuneration'* – every organisation can't afford *'competitive'* remuneration, & TSC can't.

* *'service levels our communities would like to see delivered'* – *'aspirational'* & unaffordable

* *'& service levels that Councils would like to be in a position to deliver'* – why plural? Remove

* a focus on ratepayer privacy – eg NO suggestions on reducing private expenditure to pay big rate increase

* a focus on ratepayer privacy re request for time to pay as a staff solution to huge proposed rate increases

Q: what is the estimated cost of the Actions included for 22/23, 23/24, 24/25.

I would have thought many of these documents (being the likely output of the actions) would already be directly available via the NSW government agencies and some seem to duplicate one another?.

Q: Why does TSC need a Manager role to undertake these actions?

Q: Are these *'aspirational'* & unaffordable especially if they create unaffordable expectations when reports are prepared and presented?

Q: Are there any positions over the past 3 years where the role, delegations, titles been amended to achieve a higher award/contract classification or potential for over award payment or higher starting payment point?

Q: If so, what was the increased remuneration budget?

10). REPORTING: All reporting related to the Workforce Management Strategy 2021-2025 should be reported to Council, via a non confidential agenda report at least quarterly, but more frequently when the reports are being prepared. Components of any report which fits the *'confidential'* categories could be excluded as required.

Reporting to the Audit committee isn't sufficient as little detail comes from this committee reports to council.

11). Administrative Feedback:

- (I) All IP&R documents should include **version control** including the last approving resolution #
- (II) All IP&R documents should include the **total \$ consequences**
- (III) All IP&R documents should include **consistent terminology & position titles**
- (IV) Add another of the *'many known & unknown challenges'* being
 - i. An aging population
 - ii. Low mean income
 - iii. Economic impacts on ratepayers & residents which require reasonable rates.
- (V) **Amend Objective sentence** to include *"within rate increases with a reasonable RATEPAYER impact"*

- (VI) **Amend** 'accountability' value to 'accepting responsibility for providing quality, essential, affordable services & timely information for ratepayers and councillors.
- (VII) Amend the 'excellence' value to include "and reasonable rate increases'
- (VIII) Include somewhere
 - i. that 'the ratepayers will not be considered as the balancing item' and
 - ii. 'records of community consultation will identify #s of staff, councillors & others attending
 - iii. all consultations will include the question of 'how much extra rates will you pay"
 - iv. that sufficient data (which is agreed by non staff, non councillor attendees) is kept to identify which groups or areas have the majority of their ratepayers supporting particular services, as an option to apply any rates increase just to that group/area not all TSC.
 - v. that consultations involving more than 8-10% proposed rate increases for one year will include direct communication with a properly constructed survey (approved by councillors) delivered to every ratepayers nominated mailing address & provision is made in the budget.
- (IX) Documents structure
 - a. Please stop using block colour backgrounds and extensive use of colour in these documents
 - i. *most of the time the document readability is significantly compromised.
 - ii. The cost of printing full page or half page colour or colour photos is more than b/w
 - 1. \$1 per page was mentioned by a staff member recently as if this was OK?
 - 2. Perhaps every document should show the cost of manhours etc to produce & the cost to print (paper, copying, collating, distributing)
 - b. Consider the necessary size of tables & charts to significantly reduce the number of pages
 - c. Include a relevant summary of the attachment content in the covering agenda report, recognising the HUGE numbers of pages the councillors, other staff & ratepayers etc are being asked to read

Fyi as an attempt to potentially reduce the current financial issues to a level where the rates are reasonable and affordable for ratepayers – ie no more than 8-10% for one year while all activity is more closely reviewed.

 please text if no answer)

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

13 April 2022

Daryl Buckingham

CEO

Tenterfield Shire Council

Hand Delivered and by email

Ref: Collaborative Approach to protect the financial future of the Tenterfield Shire

Mr Buckingham,

As indicated by our public meeting attended by hundreds of concerned residents on 9 April, a rapidly growing group of concerned Tenterfield ratepayers and residents disapprove of the current direction, plans and operational activities of the Tenterfield Shire Council. This includes the output from the Administration team and Councillors representing ratepayers. This group do not believe the Council is focused on protecting the financial and social future of the Tenterfield Shire. We reject the proposed 109% rate rise. The community wants these concerns urgently addressed to potentially avoid economic outcomes that detrimentally impact the Tenterfield Shire ratepayers and residents in the future.

Those ratepayers and residents are now collaborating to represent these concerns to influence the existing Tenterfield Shire Council plans and actions positively. The objective is to avoid the Tenterfield Shire Council's currently projected (budgeted) financial deficit and instead build a plan to remediate the debt. The goal is to work together with the Tenterfield Shire Council to ensure a stronger financial future and beneficial outcome for all involved.

RFI Request

The plans provided by the Tenterfield Shire Council are under review by our subject matter experts, and a consolidated response will follow shortly. Please provide your updates from last weeks round of meetings so our comments are based on all information available.

The potential budget presented is of the biggest concern. We believe it gives grounds for the Request for Information outlined below. Further, we think it also requires immediate corrective action by the administration team to accurately reflect the wishes of this community – including individual and commercial ratepayers and residents.

Our Plan for Best Outcomes

Our Management Team has also been made aware by a concerned ratepayer that they HAVE written to the NSW Premier and Minister of Local Government and requested an administrator be appointed immediately.

Our initiative does not see this option as the best outcome. We hope that further consideration of the economic options available to the Tenterfield Shire Council will enable further discussion and respect for the community's wishes.

Therefore, we continue to reach out to you as the Chief Executive hoping that the Tenterfield Shire Council Administration, which serves the community, will see the benefits of and agree to this collaborative process.

Next Steps

This next step ahead for all of us is crucial and potentially our best and last opportunity to avoid administration and subsequent amalgamation.

Our Shire Our Council Initiative

We have a chance for growth. We have members on this new team who have experienced similar challenges in other shires and worked with respective councils to steer administration through an economic transformation and positive future. We believe we can transition Tenterfield in the same way.

Our Core Team (plus Focus Groups) consists of a highly credentialed number of Subject Matter Experts (SME) in a wide range of areas such as (but not limited to): Finance, Accounting, LG Operation, Health, Engineering, Mining, Legal, Tourism, Capital Projects, Business Process Optimisation... to name a few.

This talent pool is available right here. Treated as a valuable resource and used in the right way, it can help make a difference for the benefit of this community—a top-shelf consulting team FOR FREE.

We trust you see the upside of this proposition and the enormous opportunity.

Urgent Actions

In preparation for a constructive collaboration, we cordially request the following information and response be prepared and submitted by your team as a matter of urgency:

- Confirmation of new financial modelling (including age demographic forecasts) and the corresponding budget outlining an immediate 15% reduction in Tenterfield Shire Council expenditure – particularly in non-core business to achieve profitability.
- Confirmation of hiring freeze and immediate review of non-core roles, including contractors and casual staff.
- Explanation of how the Tenterfield Shire Council will be reviewing and immediately reducing unnecessary expenses that do not benefit ratepayers.
- Planning a shared services approach within Council for more efficient use of available staff and financial resources.
- Guarantee all capital projects underway are solvent (self funded – not cross funded). If not, works to stop, and financial modelling is undertaken to ensure budget forecasts are met.
- Confirmation that NO council assets are being sold off without community consultation.
- Open and transparent dealings without violating commercial in confidence when required.
- Outline a fiscal plan to better manage rates being paid and recovered (rather than written off) and reduce existing rate arrears.

We expect and are looking forward to a timely response.

Respectfully submitted

Our Shire Our Council initiative

CC:

- Premier Dominic Perrottet
- Deputy Prime Minister of Australia Barnaby Joyce Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Member for New England
- Minister for Local Government, Wendy Tuckerman
- Janelle Saffin MP, Member for Lismore

This letter will be published to the OSOCI database and available on our website and social media in our pledge for open and transparent dealings.

TENTERFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL		14 APR 2022	
	Action	Info	
CE			
CCO			
DI			

Daryl Buckingham

TSC CEO

hand delivered

Tenterfield

POSTCODE

2372

Council
Manager Asset Management
Mayor Petrie, Deputy Mayor Macnish

Submission on public exhibition document: Asset Management Strategy 2022 -2032

A: Asset Management Strategy -

Remove all non-mandatory activity in plans/budgets/10 year LTFP: remove all 'service levels' above a reasonable rate increase IMPACT on ratepayers; Remove all activity which is outside TSC area or is the role of another entity. AND

B: Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032 -

Inconsistent use of TERMS across pages and tables. Page # issue. Majority of AMP assets are excellent, good, moderate/average CONDITION, How much expenditure for these assets is in 10 year LTFP? SUGGEST REMOVAL

Section A:

#1 Remove all non-mandatory activity in Asset Management and other plans/budgets/10 year LTFP. The approximately 5,000 TSC ratepayers cannot afford to take on financial responsibility for activity and expenditure which are the responsibility of other entities or agencies.

Staff should not be including asset activity or taking responsibility for new assets because they consider TSC will do a better 'job' or manage 'priorities' better.

For ratepayers the 'better' solution is to remove them altogether from the Long Term Financial Plans and proposed excessive rate increases.

#2 remove all 'service levels' which rely on an unreasonable rate increase IMPACT on ratepayers, especially those which are non-mandatory, whether they reduce future operating expenditure or not, while the current unreasonable rate increase is minimised and operational deficits and cash flow issues are brought back under responsible financial management.

TSC ratepayers cannot afford to pay for 'gold plated' service standards.

The attached pie charts show clearly that for ALL asset groups the majority of assets are in the top 3 condition categories.

Please provide the TSC approved policy statement for 'intergenerational equity'.

Please provide the TSC approved policy statement for equity across TSC area and interest groups.

Please provide the TSC approved policy statement for required/minimum service levels especially for Road Network (excluding footpaths and cycleways and heritage items which are 'luxury' items).

#3 Remove all asset capital and operational activity which is outside TSC local government area or is the primary role of another entity, including all 'aspirational' wants and needs.

Record the removed budgets/activity in a separate 'advocacy' list without any \$ inclusions in the 10 Year LTFP.

TSC ratepayers cannot afford to pay for activity which more properly belong to another council or entity or agency. The NSW government focus on 'regional' activity does not mean every council interferes or reallocates scarce resources to regional activity over council area activity.

Please provide a detailed summary of any financial benefit arising from any existing regional activity.

#4 Including 'Footpaths & Cycleways' within TRANSPORT risks use of scarce \$ which must be allocated to ROAD expenditure as a Shire wide priority.

Suggest 'Footpaths & Cycleways' be moved to Community assets and/or Open Space, Sporting, Reserves, Recreation grouping.

Do not move the related \$ from Road, culverts, bridges, causeways.

Footpaths (particularly upgrades, expensive heritage renewals or those outside the main population centres are 'luxury' items which ratepayers cannot afford.)

#5 As it appears there is a category for **Strategic/Investment assets** under CORPORATE, which currently includes the industrial subdivision and commercial property, **it would be appropriate to move the Aerodrome, Livestock Saleyards and CBD assets (including School of Arts and RSL hall etc?) to Strategic/Investment Assets.**

#6. in order for councillors and ratepayers to understand TSC success to date in strategic/investment/entrepreneurial assets priority, please provide reports on success to date and planned revenue, expenditure, cash flow in LTFPs

#6.1 please provide a report on the TSC Industrial Estate, showing the total \$ activity to date, including sale price of every lot, total expenses from reclassification of property, survey, sales activity, property manager expenses etc.

#6.2 With the inclusion of identified assets into the strategic/investment category it should be possible to also integrate at least 2 manager roles, further reducing TSC expenditure commitments.

#6.3 Please provide a report on the TSC industrial Estate, showing the total \$ activity now included in the 10 year long term financial plan, including relevant Manager expenses, so ratepayers and councillors may identify activity to reduce the budget/s.

#6.4 Please provide similar reports on the Livestock Saleyards, CBD assets, Land 'assets'

#7 Quarantine all reductions in net expenditure (there may be some estimated revenue associated with activity proposed for removal) and use to reduce the estimated operational deficit and the staff recommended but unaffordable general rates increase over 200% as per the 10 Year long term financial plan (being 110% in the 1st 3 years).

#7.1 Please create a separate group for 'quarantined' expenditure (which may have been previously approved within 20/21 an future year budgets) **to a new group which requires a new council resolution prior to any further expenditure or commitment.**

#8 Please update policies etc so that any concept of 'sustainability' doesn't just consider TSC position but also clearly considers the 5,000 odd ratepayers who are being treated unfairly as the 'balancing item' for the apparent failure of financial risk management to date.
i.e. an estimated \$50 million deficit over the LTFP or an over 200% increase in general rates?!!

B:

#1.1 Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032 - Inconsistent use of general terms across pages and tables.

While reviewing this public exhibition document, the inconsistent use of many terms across pages and tables makes it very confusing to the reader.

Also there seems to be a problem with page numbering, not helping ease of use for readers.

Q: Can these issues be updated please (or have I missed something)?

#1.2 Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032 - Inconsistent use of ASSET CONDITION terms across pages and tables

Asset Condition term #3 uses **Average** = *preventative maintenance work required*. P16/115
In the individual AMPs condition #3 shows as **'moderate'**. E.g. Transport p22/115

Q: Is the description for #3 consistent = preventative maintenance work required, despite different terms being used? E.g Average and Moderate terms used in different pages.

Q: Do the individual AMPs (ie not the summaries in this document) use consistent terms as per p16.

Q: why do *components* move between different groupings. Eg strategic/investment (industrial subdivision, commercial property), culverts & causeways, parking, aerodrome, other road assets, cemeteries, libraries, public amenities, Open Space, Reserves, recreation, street scaping, VIC, CBD assets(?), corporate or leadership?, works depot/workshop, fuel facilities, equipment (depot?) equipment & furniture?, Other assets (land, earthworks, etc??), communications, community buildings,

Q: Can you please use consistent terms across the different categorisations used in this & subordinate documents including how they align with TSC annual report and financial reports and the 10 year long term financial plan/s?

#2 – page numbers don't seem to be consistent throughout the document. Very confusing for a complicated document. Please check page numbers and modify where necessary with a new version #.


#3.1 The Majority of assets in Asset Management Plan summaries show as "excellent, good, moderate/average" condition.

Q: How much expenditure for these assets (with conditions 1-3) is in the 10 year LTFP? Suggest removal or defer till 24/25 (at least) allowing time to improve TSC financial risk management, reduce the need to consider the staff recommended rates increase of over 200% (110% in the 1st three years), while doing maintenance as per asset condition #4.

#3.2 P16/115 asset condition table/s include "Poor Condition" = renewal/replacement due, increasing reactive maintenance:

#3.3 As the Asset Condition 'pie charts' P17-19/115 also show for all AMPs the condition is predominantly conditions 1-3 (all pie charts showing at least 70% with asset conditions 1-3), this supports #3.1 that any expenditure related to the assets reflected in conditions 1-3 should be removed from expenditure budgets for 21/22, 22/23, 23/24 as a start to reducing the unsatisfactory financial position and the inappropriate staff proposals for over 200% rate increases (with 110% in the first 3 years).

FYI, with respect

 Please use text if no answer)

Council
CC Mayor Petrie, Deputy Mayor Macnish,

NOTE: ratepayers are likely to think the huge rate increase won't happen when they receive their 22/23 rate notices.

SUGGEST: an information sheet (agreed by councillors) is included with all rate notices for 22/23 re any special rate increase still included in the IP&R documents, in particular the long term financial plan.

Summary Feedback on Community Strategic Plan Tenterfield 2032:

- 1) Change heading to clarify it is TSC not Tenterfield Town.
Out of Town ratepayers already think there is too much expenditure in the town area at the expense of rural roads. Many in TSC rarely go to Tenterfield Town at all, so don't use many if any of the town facilities.
- 2) **Primary focus of ALL IP&R documents needs to be on RATEPAYERS** who ultimately pay the increased mandatory rates and mandatory charges and **IPART requirements need to be front & centre** whenever there is a proposed special rate variation in the 10 year \$ plan.
- 3) **Remove 'aspirational' & low priority** (to ratepayers) expenditure activity outside TSC area & TSC direct primary role. Remove definite words; will, ensure, has, enhanced, other entity activity.
- 4) Remove *'we would like our community to progress over the next 10 years'*
Unaffordable and unreasonable for Ratepayers, especially for 2022 -2032.
- 5) **Explicit evidence** needed from community meetings & selected participant surveys; numbers asking for what; who, where, ratepayer? Ensure key information is provided prior to consultation.
- 6) Clarity needed for 'motherhood' statements, to separate 'aspirational' & not TSC direct financial role to an appendix, do not include in the main part of any IP&R document. Nil in expenditure. **Don't use terms which create 'expectations' which are beyond TSC financial capability.**
All expenditure inclusions MUST be affordable & reasonable for RATEPAYERS & the 'commensurate' consultation MUST include direct contact with all ratepayers (with key data & a properly constructed survey').
This is Still not happening. Ratepayers have to rely on grapevine.
Most Ratepayers would still be unaware of possible unaffordable rate increase.
- 7) Why is the focus still on *'build on ...original plan'*?
Apparently the 'original plan' results in a \$50 mill deficit or an unaffordable unreasonable rate increase/s of 48%, 58%, 79.56%, over 200% - with NO provision for more/new/extended expenditure over the 10 year \$ plan? Exclude from all expenditure & content. I don't consider anything over 8-10% for ONE year is reasonable.

Prior budget approvals must be reviewed again and remove 'aspirational', unaffordable service levels, 'gold plated taps', etc. eg fishing platform, youth hub, non-profitable business activity etc. Across ALL TSC not just rates.
- 8) **Why did January 2022 online survey results apparently get ignored?**
Result included: NO rate increases & YES to service reductions.
How do ratepayers know about these surveys & possible rate increases?
How many other surveys to selected groups, committees, sport groups etc have been issued and

the feedback included in IP&R documents at RATEPAYERS expense & NO RATEPAYER KNOWLEDGE of survey, questions, evidenced results? URGENT CHANGE NEEDED.

9) **Administrative suggestions include:** version control; specific Resolution #s; reduce all IP&R documents size, duplication & colouring in; SIGNIFICANTLY improve the community consultation with a focus on RATEPAYER inclusion; remove all 'aspiration' & use of 'definite' words which create unaffordable expectations, including work for other entities, which usually expands TSC workforce unnecessarily & complicates senior office focus on TSC ratepayer priorities; remove unnecessary expenditure.

TSC administration MUST not develop I&R documents which are beyond RATEPAYERS capacity to pay.

See ABS data on TSC council area and townships etc for Capacity to pay & affordability for ratepayers.

More detailed feedback, questions, examples, see continuing email.

1). **Suggest heading page (& title) is clearly "Tenterfield Shire Council",** not Tenterfield Township, Region. "Tenterfield" is too vague a term to use. Use of 'Tenterfield' alone could be perceived as a continuing focus on the township above the whole shire.

The correct term is suggested as **"Tenterfield Shire Council"** and the whole emphasis needs to be on **primary role of TSC within its area and the impact of any proposed rate increases on Ratepayers arising from all expenditure possibilities contained within the huge multiple IP&R documents.**

2). **Q: Where is the primary focus on "RATEPAYERS" in all the IP&R documents, especially this primary document?**

It is essential to include RATEPAYERS as the primary client group, which pays mandatory rates and charges.

Where there is any staff recommended Special Rate Variation in the IP&R documents, including the 10 year long term financial plan, **the IPART focus should be explicitly followed.**

The IPART requirements are more extensive than what is required for the IP&R documents apparently.

The approximately 5,000 RATEPAYERS are the only community members who will be affected by the impact, the reasonableness or capacity to pay the special rate variation.

NOT the grey nomads passing through. Not various sporting groups who want to visit.

NOT the Stanthorpe located tourism business or residents who may benefit from TSC tourism activity.

While working with other entities can be a good idea, it shouldn't be their aspirations as the priority.

3. 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 council's Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan should:

- clearly show the impact of any rate rises upon the community,
- demonstrate 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.

In assessing the impact, IPART may also consider:

⁵ <https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local-Government/For-Councils/Apply-for-a-special-variation-or-minimum-rate-increase>

3). Tenterfield Shire Council (TSC) is a small rural council at the top edge of NSW. I suggest 'quality' is too aspirational, especially when ratepayers are being asked to pay over 48%, 58%, 79.56% and recently 200% increase in rates, with the majority (110% in the first few years) Perhaps just use key terms: **Nature; Heritage; Rural Lifestyle** or "living naturally with our environment, heritage and community" or ?? **TSC and their approx. 5,000 ratepayers can't afford 'quality' anything.**

These 'aspirations' and 'quality' and 'ensure' type inclusions need to be removed to an attachment at the end which clearly identifies these themes, goals, priorities will be left to other entities, agencies and individuals. (as anticipated by the State)

Q: Why did the staff recommended rate increase grow by 120% between 7 February and 23 March 2022? (less than TWO MONTHS). Eg Exactly what additional expenditure was included or what additional 'provisions' were made?

Q: what confidence can councillors and Ratepayers (other than staff & councillor ratepayers who may be perceived as 'conflicted') have that the current over 200% unreasonable and unaffordable (to ratepayers) staff proposed rate increase is now correct, especially when content in the IP&R and agenda documents and staff comments **clearly indicate that no additional expenditure is possible over the 10 year \$ plan than what is already included?**

4). "how we would like our community to progress over the next ten years"

IP&R documents need to focus more on ratepayers and the affordability of staff recommended rates increases.

Ratepayers & residents are TSC primary 'client' groups with Ratepayers being the group which directly provides the rates and mandatory charges income.

Ratepayers who have rental/lease properties may not be able to pass on the rates increases.

5). **All consultation meeting reports need to provide explicit attendance numbers** (staff; councillors; others) and who supports/proposes what and **how much extra they are prepared to pay** in rates & charges, to avoid the current unreasonable and unaffordable expectations.

6). **SUGGEST: Further clarity is needed for these included statements:**

"Council is not able to deliver the community's vision on its own and needs to work together with many groups to achieve the desired outcomes."

This must include ALL ratepayers. Ratepayers must have visibility of all groups TSC is working with.

"the plan also outlines the valuable & critical partnerships that can assist us in achieving the visions contained in the plan."

All 'visions' must be affordable for RATEPAYERS" Ratepayers must have visibility of these partnerships.

"the goals of this plan will not be possible without working together with the NSW State Government agencies, community groups, non-government organisations, businesses & members of the community."

Full TSC cost of each goal must 1st go to Council prior to activity"

SUGGEST: there needs to be a **TSC policy documenting just how this works** as current practice appears to keep the ratepayers 'in the dark' for many consultation & other planning activity, sometimes until far too late to ensure the staff recommended rate increases remain a reasonable and affordable impact on ratepayers.

Eg: NO easily accessible information to community for 23 March 2022 staff recommended rate increase.

While the 7 February 2022 agenda **did include reference to the % staff recommended rate increase**, the **23 March 2022 agenda papers were silent about the 120% further increase** – except for a heading line in a financial table on p39/43 onwards (Long Term Financial Plan).

Eg: recent emailed consultation survey with tourism and business, which was invisible to most ratepayers, which apparently included individuals and business entities outside TSC area & responsibility, had no media release, no council resolution etc All Business should pay directly not via TSC rates and mandatory charges.

RATEPAYERS are missing from the information once again?

We don't know how many were emailed or the source for this or other staff initiated email surveys?.

Q: Why does the administration seem to consider ratepayers primary source of essential information will be the grapevine?

Eg. Recent community consultation meetings around the Shire where there was **NO direct contact with the ratepayers**, other than a list of meeting dates/locations on the website and eventually a media release (which still isn't on TSC website, with its distribution list, as has been the norm for media releases).

Eg even when an **additional document was provided at the community meetings**, the papers were left in the centre of the table and the 3 year rate increase of 110% **wasn't automatically raised**.

Nor was the 10 year proposed rate increase in excess of 200% raised, although this is a component of the IP&R documents via the 10 year long term financial plan. **WHY?**

Q: **Why was an email consultation/survey undertaken for tourism & business (although still NO reference to the key issue of the 2022 over 48% - 200% taff proposed rate increase, with 110% in 1st few years) but NO direct email at a minimum contact for, ratepayers. (using all emails held by TSC – ie given to TSC for various TSC business matters)?**

TSC does have a primary contact for all ratepayers – in order to issue rate notices.
what is an additional \$10,000 when we are considering a \$50 million deficit?

7). Q: WHY is there a continuing staff/document focus on 'build upon the long-term planning that commenced with the original plan' when apparently the **previous versions have apparently resulted in a staff estimate of a \$50 million deficit or staff recommended unreasonable and unsustainable (for ratepayers) rate increases** of 48%, 58%, 79.56%, over 200% over the 10 year \$ plan, with 110% in the 1st 2/4 years?

NOTE: In my opinion (which includes feedback from many ratepayers), a permanent rate increase over 8-10% for 1 year ONLY is the most which could be considered, while the very new Council gets full information and implements improved corporate governance and financial management controls.

Q: exactly which staff members (including all 3 Chief Executives within the 2020/2022 financial years) and which councillors knew of the possible size of the 2022 recommended rate increases, during 2021?
le prior to the recent election.

Q: exactly **which person decided to keep this information 'in house'** and what effect did this have on councillor nominations and the election result?

Q: is keeping information of this significance 'in house' an act which is or could be seen to be 'ultra vires' under the electoral legislation and policy?

8). Q: WHY did the January 2022 **online survey seemingly get ignored**, particularly with the NO to rate increases and YES to service reductions?

NOTE: many ratepayers outside Tenterfield township seem to have difficulty thinking about what services they are happy to reduce – NOT because they want to keep all of the existing 'services' TSC administration have included in the documents, BUT because they can't think of any 'services' they have requested and received, other than wanting to have safe, usable rural roads and their local transfer station.

NOTE: where 'services' have been requested in the rural areas and a 'service' has been delivered, it is apparently often very different and usually much more expensive than what was requested (increased or unnecessary service/standard, having to redo the work).

NOTE: ask any ratepayer and you will have multiple, very different examples of \$ waste.

Q: what is proposed for the significant expenditure for the villages water supply?

Q: exactly what is currently included in these IP&R documents for Village Concept Plans?

Q: Where are the Village Concept plan @ today available on line?

Suggest: the relevant ratepayers need to be directly consulted as to whether the content is a continuing priority.

Q: What % of 21/22 & 22/23 & 23/24 expenditure is WITHIN Tenterfield township?

Q: What size population is the proposed new Tenterfield water treatment expenditure able to cover and what year does the administration think the actual population will reach these numbers?

Q: Has the size of the Tenterfield Water treatment plan been established to support lower priority recreational activities on the dam?

If so, I suggest this is aspirational and urgent review of the past decisions needs to be undertaken as recreation must be low down the priority list over essential expenditure

WATER, SEWERAGE, WASTE mandatory charges ARE part of the rate NOTICE consequences!

Note: based on feedback I have personally received and the **ABS statistics on Tenterfield township**, the ratepayers will be severely impacted by the cumulative charges (water, sewerage, waste and massive general rate increases currently being considered).

While the administration may be focussed on reminding attendees that the proposed rate increases don't relate to water, sewerage or waste, these additional mandatory charges directly extend the unreasonable, unsustainable rate NOTICE increases for ratepayers across the shire.

Ultimately it is the total increase in the rate notice which compromises the RATEPAYERS financial viability, even when it is the 2022 staff proposed general rate increase which may be the most significant at this point.

Reduction of 'aspirational', 'other entity primary responsibility', etc needs review for all aspects of TSC expenditure and cash flow.

The full expenditure consequences over the 10 year \$ plan must be considered prior to any new, proposed or continuing project and councillors must be consulted prior to any commencement, in order to avoid a continuation of these unreasonable and unaffordable rate and mandatory charges increases.

SUGGEST: A council report needs to be provided for all project/service expenditure showing the original and the final budgets/actuals with explanations for why this happened and where the CE identified available source of funds came from.

9). Administrative suggestions:

- a. These significant documents need to **always include a version control segment, with the Council's specific resolution reference.**
- b. These **documents should include some mechanism showing what changes have occurred especially since the previous term versions**, particularly where there are changes in the 'unreadable' maps in the Revenue Policy as well as other key content likely to affect the impact and affordability of rates on TSC ratepayers.
For some documents the majority is new, for others 'track changes' would be simplest, for the remainder **at least a summary of changes is required in an appendix.**
- c. The **size of these IP&R documents needs to be significantly reduced.**
I doubt many of the senior staff or councillors have read and understood all the huge documents presented for review and ultimately Council approval.
The huge size, repeated content, pictures, unnecessary content, block background colours and 'prettiness' is a waste of administrative staff time and printing costs for all.
These are not marketing documents – I doubt anyone would be attracted to an over 200% rate increase.
- d. The **community consultation methods need urgent and significant change.**

- i. **Multiple tables with all talking does not work in the halls**, which have high reverberation designed for 'one' conversation from the stage or parties
- ii. The **separation of attendees into separate tables**, with apparently a 'single script' and no end of session summary by the scribe/s at each table, for the table and for the hall, does not demonstrate real consultation and listening to the community
NOTE: our previous experience of the summary of what the community wants and what gets delivered has not been good. Eg Request modified by the administration and often the cost significantly escalates?
NOTE: To my knowledge we have never been given the **#s per table/hall of staff**, contractors, councillors and others apparently requesting services to not only continue but to increase. How many Ratepayers for each item?
- iii. The continuing practice of **asking what the attendees want**, especially for the 2022 meetings seems to be 'inappropriate', when since at least 7 February 2022 Extraordinary Council Meeting, the **staff and councillors were aware of the significant 10 year, \$50 million deficit or staff recommended** special rate variations of 48%, 58%, 79.,56%, 110% (for 1st few years) and ultimately **at least 200% unreasonable and unsustainable potential mandatory rates increases.**
- iv. **Where are the Ratepayers in this 'community consultation'?**
(in particular other than the staff & councillor ratepayers who can be perceived to have a 'conflicted' position and would be in the minority for the approx. 5,000 TSC ratepayers).
i.e. If there is no provision for further expenditure than what is already included in the IP&R documents for the 10 year long term financial plan, why isn't the **focus on reducing expenditure and services or service levels?**
- v. **Q:** WHY are **staff leading the table discussions with what do the attendees want**, when TSC is giving options of a \$50 mill deficit or over 200% rates increase over 10 years with 110% in the 1st few years?
NOTE: ratepayers are likely to think the huge rate increase won't happen when they receive their 22/23 rate notices.
SUGGEST: an information sheet (agreed by councillors) is included with all rate notices for 22/23 re any special rate increase included in the IP&R documents, in particular the long term financial plan.
- vi. **Q:** WHY aren't staff asking **who is a ratepayer and how much extra in rates will they be willing to pay and what are the ratepayer primary priorities to remain in the documents etc.**

NOTE: this relates to **ratepayers, other than staff and councillors** who may be perceived as 'conflicted', and although the councillor/staff/contractor ratepayers may not represent the majority of the 5,000 ratepayers they may often be the majority at a hall or other meeting.
- vii. **Q:** Why is **there no table and hall summary by each TSC scribe** from each table, so attendees can have some confidence in the summaries of wants etc when finally added?
- viii. The **TSC advisory committees, hall and progress associations DO NOT represent all the ratepayers**, they are individual nominations who may reflect their wider community or interest groups.

The same issues as above apply to these committees also.

The minutes from advisory committees should not be treated as more important than any other individual or entity suggestion from TSC community members – especially Ratepayers.

FYI, in the hope of reducing unnecessary and unaffordable TSC expenditure and its direct unreasonable and unaffordable impact on TSC ratepayers, including those ratepayers who still have no idea of the potential huge rate increases still proposed by TSC administration for 23/24 and future years.

I suggest, the TSC administration needs to stay within its financial capacity, not treat ratepayers as a balancing item for aspirational or non priority TSC activity.

[REDACTED]

(please text if no response)

Good afternoon,

It has come to my attention that Tenterfield Shire Council are considering a rate increase of 28% per year for three years in a row. As you are aware, this is more than ten times the rate increase limit set by IPART, which should indicate to you how unreasonable and untenable such an increase is for residents of your shire, in particular Urbenville village, where I reside.

I've been made aware that Tenterfield Shire Council is in financial difficulty, even approaching insolvency with the increased costs of living that are beginning to impact all of us. I do not think that increasing rates by approximately 100% over three years is a sustainable financial plan for Tenterfield Shire Council. If it went ahead I believe it would be the end of Urbenville. There simply aren't enough services or things happening in the community to keep affluent people here long-term. A large part of its attraction is its affordability. The people who are here in the village are mostly pensioners like myself who won't be able to absorb the increase. It has been suggested to me by council that remote workers could move to town to replace us pensioners if we were squeezed out by the rate rise, however that is a big gamble to take when businesses are beginning to clamp down on remote workers and while Urbenville remains isolated due to being surrounded by National Parks.

There are other ways for Council to generate income other than rate increases and I would implore Council to exhaust those options entirely before initiating a rate rise. Then, when the inevitable rate rise does occur after all other income generating avenues are explored, it should be inline with IPART, commensurate with the services provided and inline with the current community's capacity to pay.


I would also like to make mention of the fact that I've had significant difficulty accessing information about the rate rises as a housebound person with a disability, including cognitive processing disability. For such important matters as rate increases council is required by law to provide information in a format that is readily accessible to disabled people, such as a plain English version of the proposed changes and what they will mean to individuals. I also had no idea of any town meetings about rates increases and wonder where they were advertised and how much effort was given to including your disabled constituents.

In closing, I do not support a rate increase of 28% for three years in a row and implore council to explore other revenue and come back to the community with a revised and greatly reduced rate rise proposal.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission to the Community Strategic Plan.

Kind regards,





Mr Daryl Buckingham
CEO
Tenterfield Shire Council
Tenterfield NSW 2372

Cr Bronwyn Petrie
Mayor
Tenterfield Shire Council
Tenterfield NSW 2372

All Councillors

29 April 2022

Submission to the 10-year strategic plan

Having followed the recent public discussions and somewhat disappointing commentary around council's proposed 10-year strategic plan, I would like to proffer the following suggestions for consideration.

The proposed strategic plan is simply a re-write of the old, and apart from removing a few, less than strategic operations such as the management of the public library service, School of Arts and Visitor Information Centre, provides no significant savings and lacks evidence that any new management principles or solutions have been investigated or where tangible savings are going to be made. This strategic plan, like the last, will continue to drive our council into a spiral of do less with more resources and return council's reliance on Special Rate Variation (SRV) funding at the end of this council's term. This plan continues to stifle any real prospect of future building for our community. The plan does not build resilience and does not instil confidence that council can meet the challenges of the future including the transition to a more environmentally and technology driven sustainable future. To improve this debate, I offer the following suggestions for council consideration so the next plan can offer the community a way forward that is both affordable and sustainable.

1) Investigate and implement a commercialisation process outsourcing the following services

- ✓ Road construction and road maintenance
- ✓ Waste and recycling services
- ✓ Gardening and Public facilities maintenance (*fiddling around the edge of parks and gardens maintenance in the short term may reduce some costs but will impact greatly on these assets requiring significant funds to reinstate at a later point*)
- ✓ Review the Tenterfield Sale Yards operations to establish its medium to long term development plans to ensure they adequately support our agriculture industry into the future.



Outcome

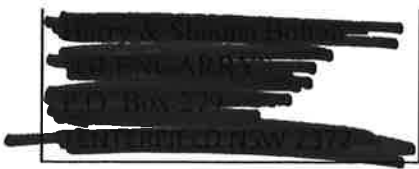
- Removal of considerable fleet liability
 - Creation of new employment opportunities with private contractors
 - Reduction in staff costs and overheads
 - Reduction in administration staff
 - Streamline community maintenance for gardens, parks, and public facilities.
- 2) *Abolish the ward system – The current system does not encourage or provide reasonable opportunity for professional or businesspeople to nominate for council*
- ✓ Reduce the number of councillors from 10 to 7 or even 5 (10 is too many and does not allow for quality of debate or reflect current business practices)
 - ✓ Will allow for greater focus on community and council business
 - ✓ Improve knowledge and understanding of councillors' responsibilities within council

Outcome

- Improved representation
 - Improve quality of council debate
 - Streamline the reporting system to council allowing focus on issues of importance rather than the day-to-day operation of council
 - Proactive and holistic approach to governance
 - Reduce the problem of not having nominations to fill wards
 - Reduced election fees for elections and bi elections etc.
- 3) *Review the need for non-core functions.*
- ✓ *Remove the unrealistic view that council can have a major impact on community issues without suitable or sustainable funding*
 - ✓ *Empower existing community groups – Tenterfield Chamber of Commerce, Local Land Service, Dept of Primary Industries, Tenterfield HUB, Tenterfield Social Development Group, Tenterfield Benevolent Society, Tenterfield Care Committee, Tenterfield Artist Collective, Tenterfield TAFE to coordinate, advocate and lobby on behalf of community*

Outcome

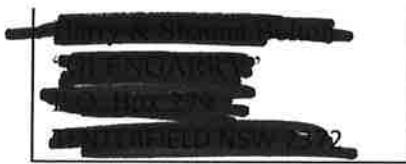
- Reduced staffing levels
- Allows council to directly support community through the provision of funds created through savings
- Empowers community to take control of their own destiny and network directly with Local Government, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), State and Federal Government bodies.



- 4) Review the Visitor Information Centre and Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts operations.
- ✓ Ascertain from the community the importance of the Visitor Information Centre and how this function should operate into the future.
 - ✓ In conjunction with the Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts Board of Management – review the School of Arts operation to ensure that its focus is in lockstep with the community and National Trust of Australia (NSW)
 - ✓ That staff understand and can deliver pertinent information relating to the Tenterfield Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts role in the development of Australia's political and social history.
 - ✓ That staff can engage with tour groups and School excursions and deliver educational material relevant to these groups

Outcome

- Improved delivery of Visitor information
 - Greater emphasis on the importance of the visitor economy to Tenterfield and District
 - Possible expanded use of a community facility (VIC)
 - Improved customer focus and visitor welcoming atmosphere (VIC & SoA)
 - Increased volunteer involvement (VIC & SoA)
 - Improved volunteer focus and training across both facilities (in conjunction with TAFE NSW, Volunteering NSW and Tourism NSW)
- 5) Review the employment and administration of council staff. For many years council has had difficulty attracting and retaining quality staff across its operations. Seven General Manager/CE plus 2 interim managers in 21 years is excessive, numerous engineers, environmental officers and more recently the loss of quality council officers has been alarming and suggests that council does not value or respect their staff. Many community comments suggest confusion over the role of the CE as the role now appears more about having visions, inspirations, and aspirations versus the role of managing operations.
- ✓ Return the title of Chief Executive (CE) to General Manager (GM) – this provides more clarity for the community and council and takes away any expectation that the head of council operations is in someway responsible for community wellbeing rather than the operations of council.
 - ✓ Implement staff exit interview for all staff leaving council employment
 - ✓ Review how staff are managed to ensure their work/life balance is in step with community expectations. Nursing mothers and young staff members starting a family need flexibility to maintain a productive work environment that provides the caring and nurturing environment that parents and carers need for their child's development. Council needs to be leaders in this space if they are to encourage young families to stay and work in Tenterfield.
 - ✓ Demonstrates leadership toward other employer groups within our community.



- ✓ COVID-19 has proved that many functions can be undertaken from home and while having face to face contact is still desirable, flexibility is the key if council wish to retain quality staff members

Outcome

- Provides more clarity for the community as to the role of the CE/GM and other senior members of the council leadership team (Chief Corporate Officer return to Director of.. etc)
 - Improved workplace environment for young families
 - Improved productivity wellbeing with staff taking less sick leave and other leave to provide care to their children.
 - Demonstrates that council is proactive in this space and lives up to the mantra of being an Employer of Choice.
- 6) Investigate and open discussions with Community Hall committees to better manage these assets and reduce council liability.
- ✓ Establish a fund (community grant fund) that will assist with maintaining facilities on an annual basis
 - ✓ Reduce or remove any rate charges from those halls that the community takes greater responsibility for
 - ✓ Provide administration support to assist with grant applications for funding rounds for community hall maintenance

Outcome

- May provide greater engagement/ownership of the facility by the community allowing greater flexibility when doing upgrades and facility maintenance
 - Will engage community members and encourage them to be more involved in their local community and community events.
- 7) Greater representation and advocacy by council, business, and community to the State Government for the removal of the Bruxner Way and Mt Lindsay Rd from council's road infrastructure
- ✓ Increase funds availability for local roads maintenance
 - ✓ Reduce maintenance and road construction liability

Outcome

- Reduction to council's road infrastructure liability
- Reduction in construction equipment
- Reduction in road maintenance and construction staff
- Redirection of maintenance and construction budget to local roads



Summary

While these measures may appear harsh, they are strategies that would possibly be in line with community expectations and consideration of council. The current model is ineffective and is designed to bring council back to the table at the end of each 4-year term, asking for more money from the ratepayer to continue providing services at an ever-increasing cost. A review of other councils within our band all point to the same failure and outcome, so it is logical to think that if council continues to do the same thing without addressing the big-ticket items, then the outcome will be the same. Tenterfield Shire Council, in the past, has shown that they can be inspirational, focused and through agility were able to navigate away from amalgamation.

Today, we have members of our community thinking that amalgamation or the implementation of an administrator are our only option! Both measures may be solutions but ultimately will disenfranchise the community, and would be a disaster, as it would very much place Tenterfield at the far end of the funding barrel, making us the very poor relation in any amalgamation process or discussion with all levels of government.

It is imperative that our community begin to build for the future, can effect change in our health and education facilities, to increase our population at a sustainable rate and support our major industries including Agriculture, Retail, Health, Hospitality, Tourism, Manufacturing and Engineering. Encourage young families to live, work and play and ensure our community can grow old with respect while maintaining a good quality of life in their homes or aged care facilities through to their end of life. These are the aspirations of this community.

These changes would not happen quickly, and any agreed implementation would be over the life of a 10-year plan. I would suggest that to achieve serious change, council need to begin discussions that engage Community Leaders, Business Leaders, Youth Leaders, and local Professionals (Business, Finance, Health, Education, Aged Care and Law Enforcement) now and not leave it to the end of a 4-year term before engaging with community to look for strategies to overcome these issues.

The decisions council make now will determine what our community will look like in 30 to 50 years' time. This is the opportunity where council can make a difference and create a sustainable organisation for the future. Otherwise, we will continue to follow like lemmings and become increasingly reliant on grant funding to maintain our operations and be at the mercy of state governments forever.

Finally. A public review of a strategic plan should always begin with celebrating and acknowledging the success and failures of the previous plan. Unfortunately, these things were not discussed at any of the community engagement sessions I attended and I found it disappointing that the outcomes of the previous delivery plan, delivered through drought, bushfire and Covid, were not highlighted at any stage, as there were many. This process would have provided much needed background and clarity for those people who were clearly seeking guidance as to the types of projects, activities, and events that they needed to be discussing. I found the initial community engagement process to be disrespectful of those who attended, and that the facilitator appeared incapable of answering simple questions put by the audience. It was also apparent that no significant preparation had been made to ensure

[REDACTED]

those attending could be part of a quality facilitated discussion group. This was the first community engagement session that I have attended where people were leaving 15 minutes into the presentation and continued to leave throughout the presentation.

Sincerely yours

[REDACTED]
Harry J Bolton

Hey Kylie

As discussed this morning I would like to know **WHO** is making the decision of WHAT input from the Strategic Planning Sessions is put into the report?

While Liston, Legume and Torrington are extremely well represented with “minor issues” such as a BBQ or a shade sail (yes important to them but not big picture).

Input that I know has been provided by Tenterfield members is NOT represented? Including my own.

The below was provided via the portal to council direct, then to the chamber of commerce and a number of councillors as I was unable to participate in person due to work related travel.

As reiterated today, I think the Council (and Councillors) are missing nearly every opportunity to engage with a highly disillusioned and frustrated community – and this is another example why. If you keep focussing on little things for micro minorities i.e. 20 people in Torrington and don't talk about the big issues with the 1000nds that your work affects, how do you see a way out of this mess?

I found today's session with you very positive for a number of reasons (apart from the fact that the SRV is actually 109% not 80)

It was the first time anyone has bothered to listen

It made clear where the deficits are and that trying to fix it on the same level you have the problem created is never going to work – see the numbers.

Your business and business model is broken and you expect those you ignore most to pay for it so you can keep digging the whole deeper.

Can I please have the responses from today's session regarding RSL Hall refurbishment and Council Refurbishment as well as the 20/21 and 21/21 numbers in comparison and the budget taking SRV into account. This will give me the opportunity to represent the facts rather than question marks ????? when asked on Saturday.

See you on Saturday.

Kind Regards



Topics for Town wellness and financial stability / sustainability I would like to put on record include:

1. Upgrade airfield so that RFDS can land 24/7 – which is a key to some half decent medial transportability / support for town. This was put into the TOP 10 during last years workshops run by NSW Government here in town – never got to see any outcomes of those workshops. This is NOT important for private flying – only for medical transport. Mind you – making the airfield more attractive would bring visitors to town as well.

2. Ensure that local businesses and involvement is written into the Scope Documents for the upcoming major infrastructure projects such as

- a. Mole River Dam
- b. Town Water Treatment Plant
- c. Bypass
- d. Pool

Only when there is a contractual requirement to put some money back into the community – that will happen to more than the accidental 2-3%

With this come a lot of training, upskilling, tooling and other Job opportunities.

This was previously explained in some detail to Bronwin Petrie, Kristen Lovel and Peter Hay.

Too much money is being spent outside of Town with people and businesses who have no ties or interest in this community and give NOTHING back.

3. Create a Joint Task Force of local businesses to co-ordinate availability and attractive offerings for TOURISM. Once Town is ready for visitors again (currently it is not) – run advertisements as done in 2020 – they were very successful. A few people have bought businesses in Town and moved here. Now they need to generate turnover in order to stay viable – the more interesting businesses we have, the more people we attract, which gives more to everyone in town.
4. Develop Town and Region further towards a major Mountainbike Destination – lots to do and usually great folk those Mountainbikers from the city.
5. **Make sure that rate paying citizens are not treated as if they were IDIOTS by the council administration** – and that the administration team actually takes the time to respond to friendly and well meant requests. Unfortunately I haven't been so lucky to receive responses regarding WHS matters that I raised with Council Admin Team.
6. Ensure more involvement of the community and transparency in regards to significant matters which affect all citizens. In the past council has far too often held "closed" meetings and avoided transparency to push through an agenda which was not in the best interest of the community. And one can't even obtain documents from those meetings. I have tried.

As always - **I would be happy to be part of some serious and well structured BD activities to support Tenterfield and the Region** and am looking forward to hearing about the steps the newly formed council is going to take to secure sensible growth, job security and sustainability.

Warmest

Kind Regards

Christian Uhrig

True German Food Experiences

<http://www.rosenhof.com.au>

17 Naas Street – Tenterfield – NSW 2372

phone: 02 5776 1614 – mobile: 0439 640 512

The Chief Executive;

As an aged pensioner and Rate Payer.

The proposed 80+% rise in general rates is far beyond our capability to meet.

With the cost of living, fuel and power reaching unheard of increases.

Such a rise will force up the price of rental properties not just for accommodation but also for business. Which is already struggling you only have to look at the number of empty shops.

Yours Faithfully

[REDACTED]

Chief Executive,
Mayor Petrie, Deputy Mayor Macnish

Q: Can you please provide the summaries of the April 22 community consultation meetings, showing the key issues by table /meeting as this will help attendees to review the details listed for their future consideration.? Ie whether IMPACT of the rates increase scenarios (& related long term financial plan etc content) is reasonable for them as ratepayers.

It would also be helpful if each table/meeting summary could show # attendees, (#councillors, # non staff, #staff) again, to help ratepayers to consider which item has greater "priority for them.

Q: based on your knowledge of TSC "must do" activity and the primary role of TSC, can the summaries of the meetings also show which requests are 'aspirational", which are "advocacy"?

Q: How will the results of the "conversations" be provided to ratepayers? Eg the April OG meeting or put into one of the TSC online pages?

Q: If the new "conversation" summaries are to be integrated with the January 2022 summaries, can these earlier summary pages can also show numbers and types of attendees?

Q: Could you advise please whether the January 22 community consultation "results" are already in or out of the 23/3/2022 staff prepared public consultation documents, particularly the 10 year long term financial plan (LTFFP) "scenarios" showing either an estimated \$50 million deficit or two versions accumulating to over 200% rates increase, with approx 120% rates increase in the first 2/3 years?

Q: Do you intend to directly contact all TSC ratepayers with a summary of the staff prepared "scenarios", the likely impact on ratepayers and the opportunity to provide comment and complete the online survey?

Your response would be appreciated,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] please text if no answer

From: [REDACTED]
 Sent: Monday, 11 April 2022 12:25 PM
 To: Daryl Buckingham <d.buckingham@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>
 Cc: Bronwyn Petrie <b.petrie@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; John Macnish <j.macnish@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Peter Petty <p.petty@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Tim Bonner <t.bonner@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Tom Peters <t.peters@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Peter Murphy <p.murphy@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Kim Rhodes <k.rhodes@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Giana Saccon <g.saccon@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Greg Sauer <g.sauer@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Geoffery Nye <g.nye@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; Kylie Smith <k.smith@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]@rail.com; [REDACTED]@facebook.com; lismore@parliament.nsw.gov.au; goulburn@parliament.nsw.gov.au
 Subject: Response to Community Meeting regarding 110% rate rise

Good Morning Daryl,

Firstly, I wish to thank you and your staff for holding the consultation meeting at Legume on Saturday. I also thank you for your candour on this issue. It was very interesting and daunting to hear from you the choices that ratepayers are faced with.

I am writing to outline some points of discussion held within our small discussion group so that I can express these to all councillors and interested ratepayers.

- It was made clear to us that ratepayers are facing a substantial increase in rates with the 110% increase looking like the figure that is going to be put to IPART. This blanket increase will obviously affect individual ratepayers in very different ways. The average ratepayer in the township will have their \$650 rates doubled to around \$1300. Property owners in rural areas will have far larger increases to absorb, with many being forced to finance rate increases in the tens of thousands of dollars. There was much talk in the meeting about us all being in this together. That is not how this is playing out. My feeling is that there is an archaic attitude in place where people think that rural properties are a license to print money and can absorb this inequitable burden with ease. Those days unfortunately ended in the 1950's and any thought that we are unable to sleep at night because of all the money under our beds needs to be firmly put to rest. We are coming out of the biggest drought on record, the worst bushfires on record and some of the worst floods. Cattle are only worth a fortune because none of us have any. We are like Council, we have no reserves and many repairs to contend with. I find it offensive that Council have put a plan to us that feels that it is OK to ask me to contribute 12 schooners a week to its operation (using the patronising examples in the Financial Sustainability document) while a couple of teachers in a house in town pulling in \$200000 are only expected to contribute 2 schooners. Let me be as direct as possible, if anyone tells you that an average farming family has received a net income of anything like \$200000 during the drought, fires and floods 'tell em their dreamin'.
- One idea put by our group is to burden everyone equally with the same rate rise of \$1000.
- Another idea may be to access ATO records and charge everyone according to their asset base. As you know this would be screamed down by everyone, yet it is exactly what you are doing to farmers.
- It was made clear to us that along with this very substantial rate hike there would be an accompanying drop in services. This apparently is largely focussing on road maintenance. You made it clear to a direct question from me that D-class road servicing would reduce

from every two years only last year to every four years. It seems that not only are rural producers expected to absorb the greatest individual increases of rates (by a huge margin), we are also expected to handle the greatest decrease in service provision, as I take it that there are very few if any D-class roads in the township. In this decision, it must be understood that Council is setting in place a road maintenance structure that will grade (or perhaps patch grade) a D-class road every 1460 days. In our case we live along a steep coarse-granite road. On average we receive 4000 millimetres of rain over this timeframe. To say a four-yearly grade under these circumstances will even come close to providing a safe and usable public access road is completely false. It was worrying in the extreme to be told during the meeting that Council only has a legal obligation to maintain roads 'within budget'. It seems that the planned changes to road maintenance shows that Council is willing to use this legal caveat to renege on their social obligation to maintain a safe and usable road system.

- The Community Strategic Plan 2022-32 and Financial Sustainability Document that staff spoke to on Saturday was discussed by our small group. The first issue raised was the comparison table of rates. This document presented a false picture of rural rates within our shire. It compared the average rates paid by rural ratepayers in Tenterfield, as compared to Uralla, Glen Innes and Gwyder. There was no covering explanation of this table, so here it is. Tenterfield has many small landowners along the eastern fall on low-value, low productive land. In comparison Glen Innes and Gwyder have larger more valuable properties, capable of producing far greater incomes. This table actually accentuates the need to shield rural producers in our shire from unsustainable rate rises. Without this explanation this table seemed to indicate that rural producers in Tenterfield were not pulling their weight. Nothing could be further from the truth. The people in our shire who aren't pulling their weight are the National Parks and State Forests that take up a considerable part of our shire and pay nothing. It would be interesting to look at the gross income from rural producers in the various shires and compare that to the land mass taken by these enterprises (more smaller producers as opposed to less bigger producers). As I stated in the meeting we need to be extraordinarily careful of 'lies, bloody lies and statistics'.
- The document trumpeted the goals of the Community Strategic Plan. It talked about inclusivity, equitably distributed facilities, building a robust and growing economy, providing secure and sustainable services, being a high-performance organisation delivering valued services to the community and providing a safe and efficient transport network. Outside the township all of this relies on properly maintained roads. It feels to us as if you are promising all of these goals while you are doubling our rates and casting rural areas adrift.

I am happy to work with Council on a long-term fix. If the core of this issue is an inequitable and broken government system for ensuring our fair share of GST revenue ends up with our local council, then lets all work together on that. A quick perusal of the NSW auditor-general's report into the Stronger Communities Fund gives some indication of the game that is being played. However, this fight will be long and protracted with little chance of success. In the meantime, it must be made clear that we will not sit on our hands and let TSC implement solutions to this crisis that will destroy elements of our community while others move on basically unscathed. If your response is going to be a doubling of our rates combined with a very severe decrease in services, mostly directed inequitably at the rural areas, then that is the first fight that our community faces.

Stuart Bell

Tenterfield Shire Council covers a large area. So we can understand the requests for the different areas of our region please let us know which part of the Shire you live in

Urbenville

(Max Character Limit : 500)

Q.2

**What do you see as most important to be maintained in the Tenterfield Shire? *
Council has a difficult task in maintaining its asset base with limited financial resources. This question is asking you to nominate the Council assets and services that you believe are most important to be maintained.**

Storm water drainage in Urbenville and the subsequent building damage.

Q.3

What are three things you would like to see change in the Tenterfield region? *

Curb, guttering and drainage in Urbenville; 2) Council notifications by post (including being actually notified of important consultations and events); 3) No rate increases for Urbenville where there are no services and a population of pensioners.

Q.4

What facility or service would you most like to see improved or added to the Tenterfield region? *

Adequate town planning, flood management and drainage for Urbenville village to prevent further damage to existing residences.

Q.5

On average, are you satisfied with the services currently delivered by Council? *

Generally Not Satisfied

Because of the damage to my home caused by the storm water run off. It's been like that for 35 years and I'm exhorbetant rates without the seeing the benefit of basic services.

Q.6

Council has to deliver the community's vision in a financially responsible manner to ensure Council is sustainable into the future. Tenterfield Shire Council's rates are, on average, cheaper than other similar Councils (e.g. Uralla, Glen Innes, Gwydir and Kyogle).

**How supportive would you be to an increase in rates to allow Council to deliver the community's vision?

Supportive data for this question can be seen at <https://www.yourcouncil.nsw.gov.au/council-data/tenterfield/2019/finances/>

Not supportive

Q.7

Council has to operate in a financially responsible manner to ensure it is sustainable into the future. Council manages a large asset base (e.g. roads, bridges, community buildings, parks etc.) and delivers a large number of services (e.g. Planning, Library, Community services etc.) without the funds to maintain these at current service levels. Noting this, Council is constantly balancing between increasing revenue and reducing service levels (e.g. fixing roads slower),

Tenterfield Shire Council's rates are, on average, cheaper than other similar Councils (e.g. Uralla, Glen Innes, Gwydir and Kyogle). To help us manage this balancing act better, using the sliding scale below, please let us know if you would prefer to see reduced service levels, are supportive of an increase to rates or a compromise of the two options.

Please note a rates increase applies to the general rate only and does not apply to fees and charges such as water and sewer charges. Any increases to fees and charges are managed separately.

This field is required.

NO reduction in the already sparse service levels for Urbenville and NO rate increase in a village populated by pensioners who simply can not afford an increase and will be pushed out of Urbenville.

(Max Character Limit : 500)

COUNCIL FUNDING 2022 – Issues / Proposed Rate Rises and funding cuts

The vast majority of **Tenterfield Shire** relies entirely on **GOOD ROAD ACCESS**, whether bitumen or gravel.

Therefore, **NUMBER ONE PRIORITY** for Council focus and funding should be on ensuring we have the best **ROADS, BRIDGES**, etc (including road verges – eg: mowing and weed reduction) possible. **EVERYTHING ELSE IS SECONDARY TO THIS.**

This is necessary for:-

ACCESS for RESIDENTS and VISITORS

- For emergency services = ambulance, RFS, SES, police
- To medical and other services
- To supplies to/from residences and properties, towns and villages
- For mail and school buses, electricity, gas and telecommunications, etc
- For livelihoods of residents and tradespeople and contractors
- For rubbish removal, and access to transfer stations and tips
- To tourist attractions and recreation
- To Education

SAFETY for RESIDENTS and VISITORS

- Human and animal (domestic and native)
- For vehicles
- For properties

PRODUCTIVENESS and **SUSTAINABILITY** for RESIDENTS and VISITORS and **COUNCIL**

- For business
- For tourism
- For primary industry
- For communication
- For employment opportunities
- For shire growth
- For health and well-being

Roads, bridges etc should **NOT** be part of any cost-cutting! In fact, there should be increased funding for this. They are essential to ensure a vibrant future for the Shire.

EVERYTHING ELSE IS SECONDARY.

Cost cutting needs to be found in other areas.

We need a high-functioning shire. One that provides **good infrastructure** to support residents and businesses. We need **good administration** to achieve this. Given the current situation, it would appear that an administration review could be the first place, other than an exorbitant rate rise, to provide cost-cutting material. How has Council found itself in this situation? It certainly wasn't caused by rate-payers.

I'm sure rate-payers could tolerate a **fair and reasonable** rate rise if they could see that the council had their best interests at heart, were **operating efficiently and effectively**, and were **providing essential, necessary, good quality infrastructure and services**.

Council really needs to reassess why they exist and what their priorities should be **FOR THE COMMUNITY.**

~~Christina Fletcher~~
~~[Redacted]~~

~~Christina Fletcher~~
~~1/12/2020~~

Hullo Hayley,

Lovely to meet you at the Community consultation afternoon meeting held at the RSL Pavilion. As you indicated you are seeing all submissions I am taking up your invitation to send my comments (see below) that I sent last week to the Ratepayers Association.

Demographics is the key, the ABS will release data from the most recent census in June. The population in 2020 was approximately 6,470. In the meantime local real estate agents may be able to provide general characteristics of new comers to the shire – number and age. Census information will reveal the age groups that require support and funding now and in the future. It would appear Tenterfield Shire still has a high proportion of people aged over 65, median age is 55, and the majority of residents are from a lower socio economic background. As ratepayers their needs must take precedence in planning and funding.

This area has experienced significant environmental damage in recent years (drought, fire and flood) and the ramifications are ongoing, yet to be fully revealed and understood. The State of the Environment report is an important resource. Covid 19 continues and is costly – agriculture, tourism, building industry, infrastructure etc.

TSC must consider very carefully the implications of the past Council's decisions, some of which appear to be unrealistic in the current economic situation – locally and globally.

TSC should seek information from other councils serving similar populations and areas re: staff numbers and positions, in order to gauge the viability of this organisation.

A Grants Officer position appears necessary considering the reliance upon funding from the other levels of government, and the skills necessary to undertake such work.

Communications between residents/ratepayers and Council requires well publicised specific procedures that are easily understood with quick acknowledgment and action.

If emails to councillors are the main channel there needs to be a formal receipt and response/follow up process to confirm action.

If a resident requires an issue to go on the Council meeting agenda what is the procedure?

Clean air, open spaces, four seasons, heritage and history, small population, minimal development are the main attractions of this area. Maintaining these is the challenge in a socially and financially responsible manner for the future generations.

In addition to the above I would like the following concerns noted please:

The proposed relocation of the Old Band Hall does not make sense (see my submission of objection sent last year).

The Youth Precinct and any pool funding allocations must be reassessed considering the current financial situation plus census statistics.

Tenterfield Park is a unique setting for bird watching and bush walking and requires ongoing maintenance (removal of weeds and dead trees, fire hazard reduction). Allocation of funding for this park would be worthy considering its quiet tourist attraction and proximity to residences.

The proposal (if it is still on the agenda) for a roundabout at the intersection of Old Ballandean, Mt Lindsay and Old Racecourse Roads is not appropriate financially. STOP signs, reduced speed signs, rumble strips etc would be adequate.

Energy and water conservation measures – research other LGAs achievements and NSW State Government goals. Promotion of harvesting rain water (tanks), light coloured rooves, storm water drainage to potential wetland areas are worthy of investigation amongst many others.

Careful supervision and assessment of development proposals, including the work of staff involved, the true financial costs and the proper information supplied to councillors and the community.

[REDACTED]

I am a resident of Tenterfield living in D ward and a rate payer and am writing this to say that any rate rise other than the rate peg is unacceptable

The mismanagement of rate payer money has to stop. It appears to me that the answer to the council living beyond its means is to ask the rate payers for more. Where does the Council think we are going to get the extra money from -- obviously it does not care.

We had a SRV a few years ago which was supposed to be the be all and end all of rate rises. But NO the council has kept on spending beyond its means and now it expects us to pay.

Then to threaten us with "we will have to cut back on services" we would have to ask what services ?? The roads are in a terrible state, the drainage system is non existing, the creek looks like something from a 3rd world country just to name a few. This used to be a well kept well maintained town but it has gone downhill in the last 10 years.

Once again I reiterate NO RATE RISE

We totally appose any rate rise above the level of the CPI increase until the council improves their efficiency. To throw money at an inefficient organisation only feeds the inefficiency and does not result in any productivity gains. It is obvious to most rate payers that the Tenterfield council is very inefficient.

Tenterfield is a very low socio economic area and can't afford a substantial rate rise. Although Tenterfield has low rates, the rates + charges combined are extremely high. Tenterfield's average ordinary rate + typical water, sewerage & domestic waste charges, (\$2903), is 2nd highest. \$17 lower than Kyogle (\$2920) and \$491 more than Gwydir (\$2412), \$533 more than Uralla (\$2370), \$571 more than Glen Innes (\$2332). That is \$480 above the average or 19%. (public consultation hand out "Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032 & Financial Sustainability") Tenterfield is a very expensive place to live!!!

We have never before seen the rate payers of the shire so angry over this totally unaffordable, ridiculous proposal. The anger arises in some part from the deceitful, unethical and arrogant way the so called public consultation process was carried out. Their feelings are so strong that if their concerns are not addressed, it is possible there will be a move to have the council dismissed.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2022 6:33:58 PM
Cc: Kim Rhodes <k.rhodes@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Rate rises appeal

Kim- I appealing to you as a ratepayer and a pensioner in your wardD - regarding the 100.9% rate rise - I've been here in Tenterfield for over 21 years and never have I've seen a mess the council ratepayers funds are been swallowed up in a disgusting manner. I feel that all past councillors should be held accountable for the loss & overspending mostly ratepayers money. I left the Gold Coast as councillors in my elect never seemed to care too much on how funds were spent- but if the rates rise here they will meet the standards of Gold Coast rates annually. To me is not only pathetic but appalling to say the least . How will pensioners be able to meet this damaged increase

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

1 MAY, 2022

A21

[REDACTED]
PROPERTY NAME [REDACTED] EAST LINDA
[REDACTED] RIVERVIEW ROAD, LISTON

TENTERFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL		
16 MAY 2022		
	Action	Info
CE		
CCO		
DI		

RE: ATTACHED QUESTIONNAIRE.

AFTER EXPERIENCING SOME SEVERE HEALTH ISSUES IN 2010, I DECIDED TO MOVE TO LISTON BECAUSE IT IS A SMALL, QUIET COMMUNITY, PRIVATE, NOT GIVEN OVER TO LARGE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS AND DEVELOPER DRIVEN DESTRUCTION SO PREVALENT IN AUSTRALIA'S LARGE CITY AREAS, AND TO ESCAPE THE EVER INCREASING COSTS.

I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES SHOULD PROVIDE CORE SERVICES ONLY, IE ROADS, REFUSE MANAGEMENT AND, IN TOWN SITUATIONS, WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES. SERVICES, HOWEVER, PROVIDED WITHIN THE BUDGET OF REASONABLE RATES.

ALL OTHER SERVICES, SUCH AS ARTS, MUSIC FESTIVALS, TOURISM-RELATED EVENTS SHOULD BE LEFT TO COMMUNITY GROUPS OR BUSINESSES THAT PROFIT FROM SUCH THINGS, AND INCLUDE PROMOTIONS OF SUCH.

RATE INCREASES SHOULD BE KEPT AT MINIMAL LEVELS AND IF THAT MEANS REDUCING INTERNAL COUNCIL STAFF LEVELS OR REMUNERATION, THEN SO BE IT.

[REDACTED]

To help us manage this balancing act better, using the sliding scale below, please let us know if you would prefer to see reduced service levels, are supportive of any of the following increases to rates or to a compromise of the 2 options to remove the estimated operating deficit of \$50 million over 10 years? CJJ has Defined: in options below based on 2022 TSC staff proposed rate increases (to date).

- (i) Increase service levels (Very significant increase in rates) eg 300% over 10 years
- (ii) No service levels reduction (Significant increase in rates) eg 200% over 10 years
- (iii) Minor reduction in service levels (Large increase in rates) eg 48, 58, 80% over 10 years
- (iv) Major service levels reduction (small to medium increase in rates) eg 20%
- (v) Significant service levels reduction (minimal increase in rates) eg 5-10%
- (vi) Other - please specify

REFER TO Q3! MINIMAL RATES INCREASE, AND PARE DOWN ALL SERVICES/WISH LIST ITEMS TO ESSENTIALS.

Questions need to relate to Tenterfield Shire COUNCIL area services. Not Tenterfield REGION. NOT Tenterfield Shire

Questions need to be focused on RATEPAYER IMPACT, RATEPAYER AFFORDABILITY & RATEPAYER acceptance of Rate Structure as required for an IPART NSW submission for approval of any special rate variation (eg over 200% in draft LTFP).

The Rate Structure is how the staff propose to allocate the proposed rate increase over rate categories. If one category pays less than an equal share of the increase, then others will have to pay the 'shortfall'.

Staff have made it clear the over 200% proposed rate increase only covers expenditure which is already included in the budget/plan documents being considered at the moment.

No new, extended expenditure for cost shifting, weather events, new initiatives, grant support etc.

I suggest you either complete this, send other written feedback, complete the online survey or text your councillors, so there is a written record of your feedback, if you don't want mandatory staff recommended rate increases of 48%, 58%, 79.56%, 110%, over 200% or even possibly over 300% (depending on the eventual staff proposed rate structure).

Please provide your rate #, address, name so staff don't think one person has completed multiple surveys.

Based on the consultation meetings, no one has to identify if they are a ratepayer, resident, community member or passer-by.

ASAP
Please return to TSC by 31 March 2022 to:

council@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au

TSC po Box 214, Tenterfield NSW 2372

Tenterfield Council office counter.

there are other options on TSC website, including contact #s for council and all the councillors.

If you need a hand, please phone council, the councillors or if you prefer OK to phone me

Cheryl Jaques, Liston 0409153939 (please text if no answer).

Which staff members or councillors knew of this potential size of rate increase before the last election?

Updated version of TSC Jan20 22 online survey. Updated by CU.

VERY clear Jan 2022 results = NO rates increase, YES reduce services. Important feedback is:

- (i) 'how much extra are you prepared to pay for same or more services
- (ii) what services do you suggest be reduced to avoid a \$50 Million 10 year deficit or over 200% rates increase?

Question 1: Which part of the Tentaclefield Shire Council (TSC) area are you from?

WILSON

Question 2: what do you see as the most important TSC activity to be maintained?

ROADS

Question 3: what are 3 activities you would like to see changed, removed or reduced by TSC?

ANY THAT ADD TO COUNCIL'S COSTS UNNECESSARILY. STICK TO CORE ACTIVITIES ONLY, NO FRILLS, UNTIL BUDGET IS BACK IN BLACK

Question 4: what 3 facilities or services would you most like to see improved or added to TSC budget?

ROADS

- (i) How much extra in rates (or separate) charges will you pay to cover this extra expenditure year by year over the 10 year \$ plan? 0

Question 5: on average, are you satisfied with the 'services' or activities currently delivered by TSC?

- (i) Not satisfied
- (ii) General not satisfied
- (iii) Satisfied
- (iv) Satisfied most of the time
- (v) Very satisfied

Question 6: council has to deliver community's 'vision' in a financially responsible manner to ensure council is sustainable into the future. TSC rates are on average cheaper than the following councils (Uralla, Glen Innes, Gwydir and Kyogle.) (NOTE: vision often includes 'aspirations' or is provided by passers by not ratepayers) How supportive would you be to an increase in rates to allow council to deliver the community's vision?

How supportive would you be to an REASONABLE increase in rates to allow council to deliver RATEPAYERS required services. Defined: A reasonable rate increase being <10%

- (i) Supportive (of a reasonable rates increase)
- (ii) Willing to consider a reasonable (rates) increase
- (iii) Not supportive (of reasonable rates increase)
- (iv) What rate increase do you think is reasonable? <10%

Question 7: council has to operate in a financially responsible manner to ensure it is sustainable into the future. Council manages a large asset base (e.g roads, bridges, community buildings, parks etc) and delivers a large number of services (eg planning, library, community services etc) without the funds to maintain these at current service levels. Noting this, council is constantly balancing between increasing revenue and reducing service levels (eg fixing roads slower). TSC rates are on average cheaper than the following councils (Uralla, Glen Innes, Gwydir and Kyogle.)



Project Name : Have your say on our Community Strategic Plan

Powered By : Engagement Hub

Reporting Period: 01 March 2022 - 23 May 2022

Content

- Project Overview
- Project Snapshot
- Project Performance
 - Project Level of Engagement
 - Project Activity
- Informative Activities
 - Number of Informative Items Posted
- Engagement Activities

Report generated on 23 May 2022 by Hayley Ritchie On Engagement Hub

- Number of Engagement Items Posted
- Event Tool Activity
- Community Chat Tool Activity
- Survey Tool Activity
- Quick Poll Tool Activity
- Submissions Form Tool Activity
- Mapping Tool Activity
- Ideas Wall Tool Activity
- Extended Ideas Wall Tool Activity
- Interactive Image/Pdf Tool Activity
- Interactive Gis Mapping
- Budget Stimulator
- Interactive Media
- Key Topics
- Newsletters Sent
- Registered User Demographic and Activity
 - Registered Users Demographics
 - Gender and Household Composition
 - Registered Users by Suburb

Report generated on 23 May 2022 by Hayley Ritchie On Engagement Hub

- Users – Additional Information
- Notes
- Top Active Users
- Top Influences

Project Overview



WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR OUR FUTURE?

Many things have changed over the last five years and it's time to once again take stock of our community priorities. Council is reviewing its 10-year Community Strategic Plan for our future and would like to invite you to share your vision.

The Community Strategic Plan sets the overarching direction for all of Council's services and programs and will be used to drive the delivery program for this term of Council. The plan also allows Council to work towards achieving the long term vision of the Community.

We're listening and together we can ensure we continue working towards a shared long-term vision for Tenterfield Shire Council.

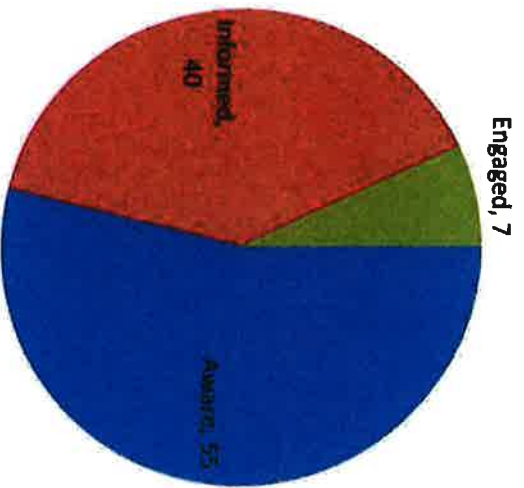
Project Snapshot

 388 Total Page Views	 156 Total Unique Visitors in Portal	 79 Total Registered Users
 55 Total Aware Stakeholders	 40 Total Informed Stakeholders	 7 Total Engaged Stakeholders

Report generated on 23 May 2022 by Hayley Ritchie On Engagement Hub

Project Performance

Project Level of Engagement



Terminology

- **Aware:** Number of unique visitors who have viewed the project page, minus any visitors who have undertaken any activity eg: downloaded a document, viewed a video, completed a survey etc.
- **Informed:** Any unique visitor who has viewed a latest news item, viewed a document, viewed a video, viewed a FAQ minus any user that has engaged eg: done a poll, survey, ideas wall, interactive mapping, interactive document, forum.
- **Engaged:** Any unique visitor who has done a poll, survey, ideas wall, interactive mapping, interactive document, forum

Project Activity

Total Page Views	Total Video Views	Number Of Event Attendees	Total Document Download	Total Survey Taken	Total Poll Taken
388	0	0	25	Total : 8 Submitted : 8 Saved to draft : 0	Total Poll Vote: 0
Total Ideas Posted	Total Extended Ideas Posted	Total Map Comment	Total Forum Comment	Total Interactive Document Comment	Total Comment On Budget Stimulator
0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Activity On Interactive Media					
0					

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Informative Activities

Number of Informative Items Posted

Latest News	Key Document	Photo Gallery	Video Gallery	Who's Listening	FAQS
0	8	0	0	0	0











Informative Widget Tools		Unique Visitors	View / Downloads
Latest News Tool (when clicking 'Read More')		28	75
Help us set the future for Tenterfield		155	264
Registered		5	9
Anonymous		150	255
Video Tool		0	0
Photo / Image Gallery Tool		0	0
FAQ Tool		18	37
What is the Community Strategic Plan?		30	37
Registered		4	6
Anonymous		26	31
Why are we reviewing the Community Strategic Plan?		18	19

Registered	3	4	
Anonymous	15	15	
How much input will the community have in the final document?	28	28	
Registered	4	4	
Anonymous	24	24	
Does the Community Strategic Plan outline Councils program of works?	19	20	
Registered	2	2	
Anonymous	17	18	
How do I have my say	39	49	
Registered	6	7	
Anonymous	33	42	
Key Documents Tool	10	25	
DRAFT Workforce Management Strategy 2021-2025	1	1	

Registered	1	1
Anonymous	0	0
Delivery Program 2017-2021 & Operational Plan 2021-2022	141	235
Registered	0	0
Anonymous	141	235
End of Term Report 2016-2021	7	12
Registered	0	0
Anonymous	7	12

Engagement Activities

Number of Engagement Items Activity

 Events	 Community Chat	 Surveys	 Quick Polls	 Submissions
0	0	Total : 8 / Submitted : 8 Saved to draft : 0	Total Poll Vote: 0	1
 Mapping	 Ideas Wall	 Extended Ideas Wall	 Interactive Image / PDF	 Budget Stimulator
0	0	0	0	0



Engagement Widget Tool

Participants

Event Registration Tool	0
Community Chat Tool	0
Survey Tool	8
Tenterfield Community Strategic Plan - Have Your Say	8
Submitted	8
Main Widget Quick Polls Tool	0
Whilst Council delivers many services, which is the most important theme of interest to your Community?	0
The Mt Lindsay Road upgrade is high on the Council priority list. Will this upgrade improve your	0

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transport experience?	
Whilst Council delivers many services, which theme is of the most interest to you as an individual?	0
Recently the township of Tenterfield has undergone a redevelopment of the main street. Do you think this has improved the amenity for locals and visitors to the town?	0
Cycle ways have been introduced around Tenterfield Township. Do you or your family use the paths?	0
Over the past 4 years Council has been working with the State Government to secure funding for a Heavy Vehicle Bypass. This issue was a key project identified in the last Community Plan. Is this still a priority for our community?	0
Would you recommend the Tenterfield Shire as a tourism destination to your family and friends?	0
Would you recommend the Tenterfield Shire as a tourism destination to your family and friends? If yes Why?	0
Sidebar Quick Polls Tool	0
Mapping Tool	0

Ideas Wall Tool

0

Extended Ideas Wall Tool

0

Interactive Image Tool

0

Advanced Mapping

0

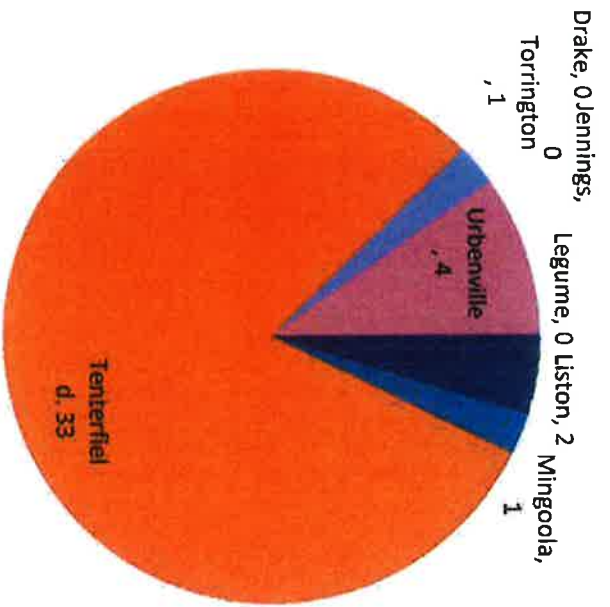
Survey Tool Activity

Survey Title : Tenterfield Community Strategic Plan - Have Your Say

Question : Tenterfield Shire Council covers a large area. So we can understand the requests for the different areas of our region please let us know which part of the Shire you live in

Answered : 41

Skipped : 0



Question : What do you see as most important to be maintained in the Tenterfield Shire?

Answered : 41

Skipped : 0

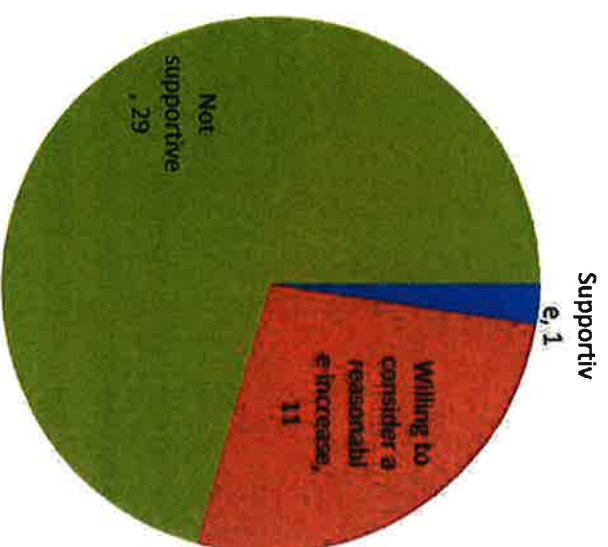
Name	Screen Name	User Type	Email	Submitted On
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Report generated on 23 May 2022 by Hayley Ritchie On Engagement Hub

Question : Council has to deliver the community's vision in a financially responsible manner to ensure Council is sustainable into the future. Tenterfield Shire Council's rates are, on average, cheaper than other similar Councils (e.g. Uralla, Glen Innes, Gwydir and Kyogle). How supportive would you be to an increase in rates to allow Council to deliver the community's vision?

Answered : 41

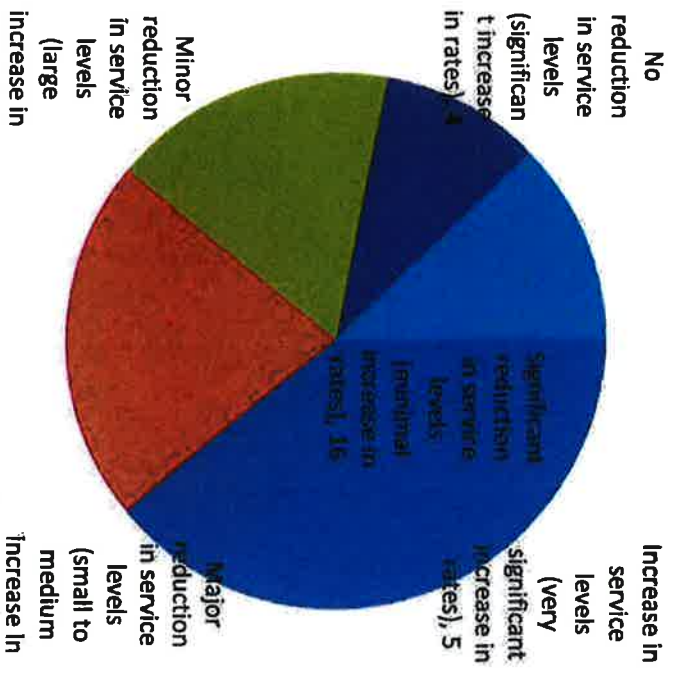
Skipped : 0



Question : Council has to operate in a financially responsible manner to ensure it is sustainable into the future. Council manages a large asset base (e.g. roads, bridges, community buildings, parks etc.) and delivers a large number of services (e.g. Planning, Library, Community services etc.) without the funds to maintain these at current service levels. Noting this, Council is constantly balancing between increasing revenue and reducing service levels (e.g. fixing roads slower), Tenterfield Shire Council's rates are, on average, cheaper than other similar Councils (e.g. Uralla, Glen Innes, Gwydir and Kyogle). To help us manage this balancing act better, using the sliding scale below, please let us know if you would prefer to see reduced service levels, are supportive of an increase to rates or a compromise of the two options.

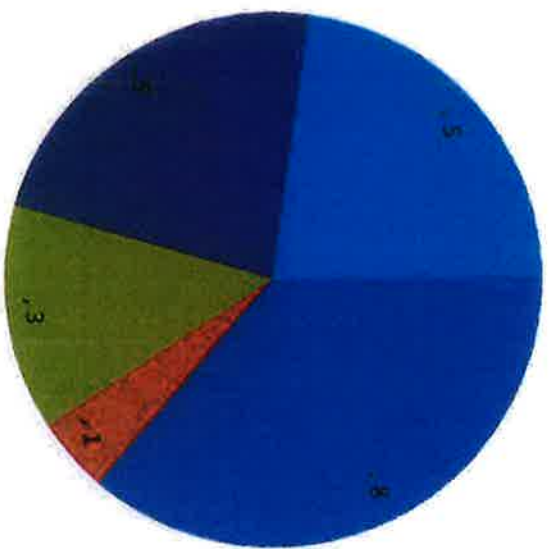
Answered : 41

Skipped : 0

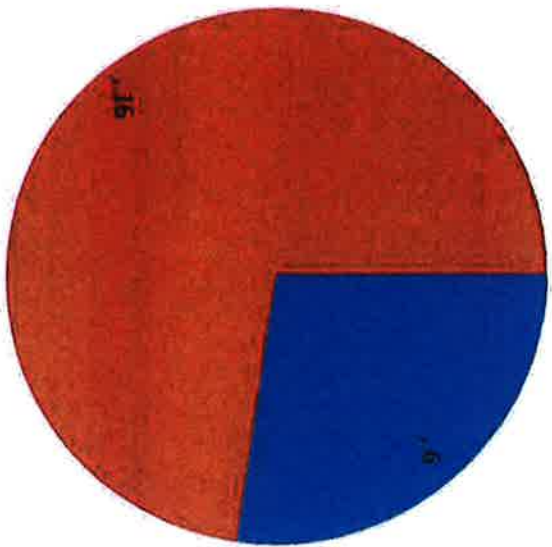


Quick Poll Activity : Main Widget Quick Poll

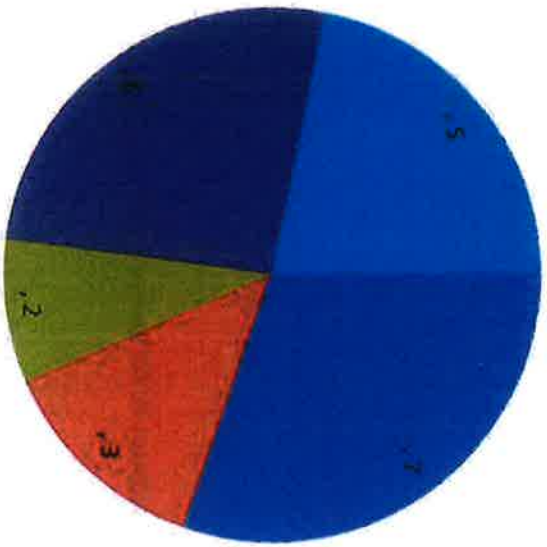
Question : Whilst Council delivers many services, which is the most important theme of Interest to your Community?



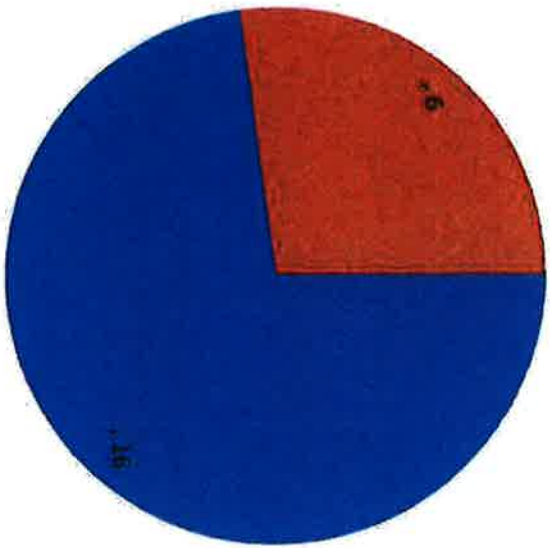
Question : The Mt Lindesay Road upgrade is high on the Council priority list. Will this upgrade improve your transport experience?



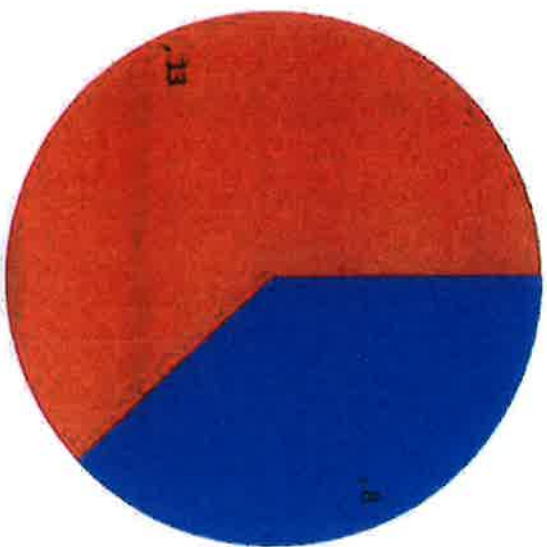
Question : Whilst Council delivers many services, which theme is of the most interest to you as an individual?



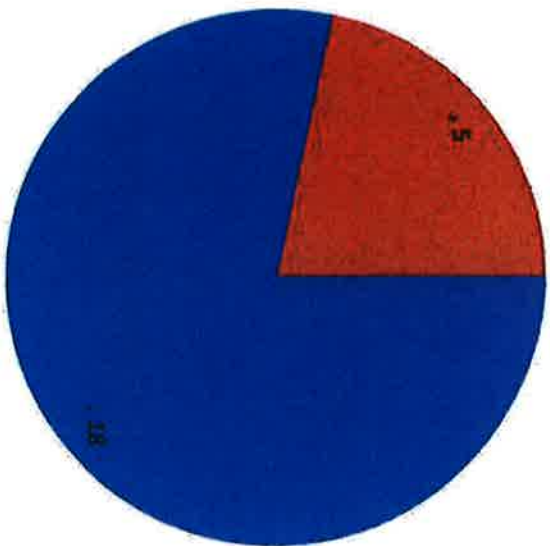
Question : Recently the township of Tenterfield has undergone a redevelopment of the main street. Do you think this has improved the amenity for locals and visitors to the town?



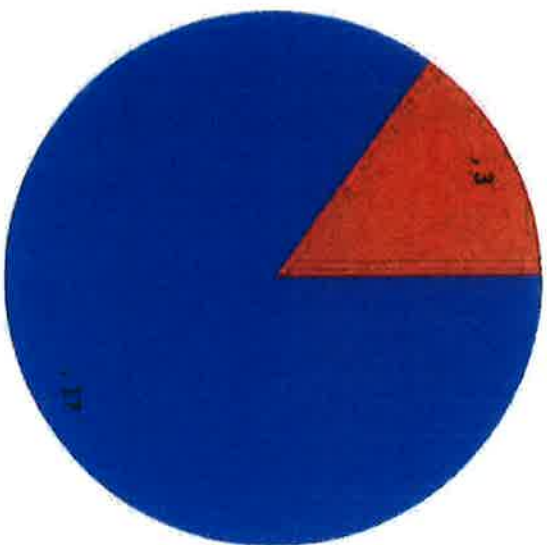
Question : Cycle ways have been introduced around Tenterfield Township. Do you or your family use the paths?



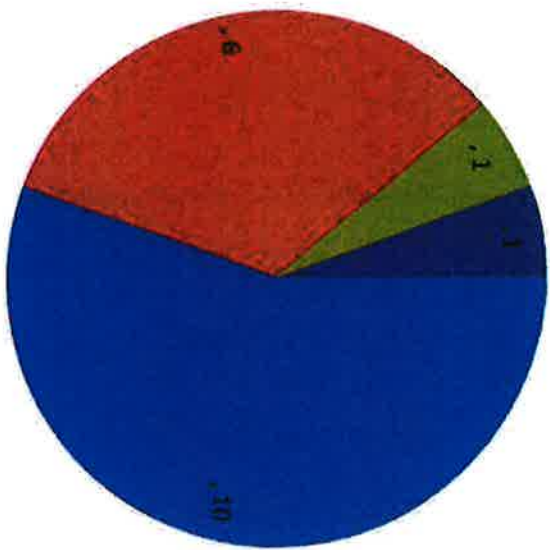
Question : Over the past 4 years Council has been working with the State Government to secure funding for a Heavy Vehicle Bypass. This issue was a key project identified in the last Community Plan. Is this still a priority for our community?



Question : Would you recommend the Tennerfield Shire as a tourism destination to your family and friends?



Question : Would you recommend the Tenterfield Shire as a tourism destination to you - family and friends? If yes Why?



Ideas Wall Tool Activity

Ideas Wall Title :

Do you have a great idea? Upload your image to the Ideas Wall!

Feedback :



Short Answer : Help the forgotten community

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes : Some care and attention to basic infrastructure like roads within this community will go a long way to changing attitudes to their fellow citizens.

Delivery Project :

1 

0 



Short Answer : Move into the 21st Century

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes : Using electronic communications will reach more people more often at less cost.

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Delivery Project : Council staff

2  0 



Short Answer : Jennings Park Idea

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes :

Delivery Project :

0  0 



Short Answer : Jennings Park Idea

Estimated Costs :

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Perceived Outcomes :

Delivery Project :

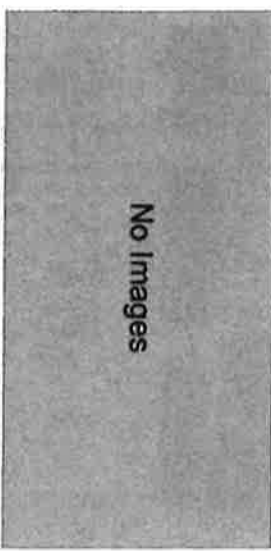


Short Answer : Water Storage Dam at the Mole River

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes :

Delivery Project : Tenterfield Shire Council



Short Answer : National War Graves Cemetery

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Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes :

Delivery Project : Tenterfield Shire Council

0  1 




Short Answer : Jennings Park Ideas

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes :

Delivery Project : Tenterfield Shire Council

0  0 



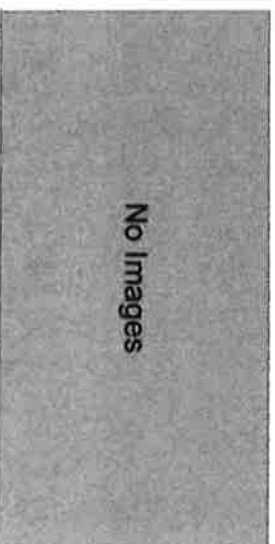
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Short Answer : Consult with appropriate consultants to identify which industries/businesses could relocate profitably from Sydney and attract suitable workers.

Estimated Costs : 50,000

Perceived Outcomes : Employment for young people, less reliance on senior citizen facilities, diverse outlets for social and sporting activity, a more reliable revenue stream for Council, a more far-sighted and demanding planning challenge for Council, great achievement.

Delivery Project : Council with shared cost.



Short Answer : Household rubbish collection on Billrimba rd, Steinbrook Are once a fortnight

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes : Helps to enable those who are elderly, have health issues or are too busy working/ running businesses to have time to go to local refuse station. Some pay extra at tip as have more rubbish than vouchers cover so this money we could redirect to rates.

Delivery Project : Tenterfield Shire Council





Short Answer : Not to downgrade roads once DAs have been approved and buildings built along them

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes : Downgrading road status does not fit well with town progressing, indicates opposite. In our case people from our area go to use the road but say it is too bad to use. It bypasses going town via Logan street and runs from well used road to highway.

Delivery Project : Tenterfield Shire Council

1  0 



Short Answer : Reduce Council fees for Subdivisions

Estimated Costs :

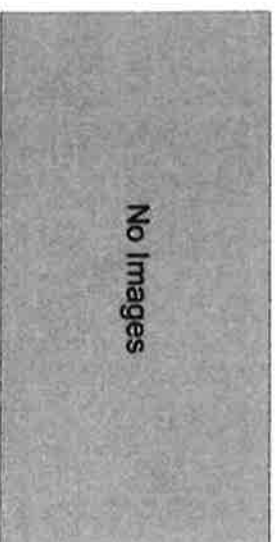
Perceived Outcomes : More residents subdividing blocks in town. Rather than satellite suburbs being built. Increased building and builders and related employers employing more staff that live locally.

Report generated on 23 May 2022 by Hayley Ritchie On Engagement Hub

Delivery Project : Tenterfield Shire Council

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Short Answer : Community garden

Estimated Costs : 100

Perceived Outcomes : Food security for low income families, community engagement, fresh seasonal produce for good health and wellbeing.

Community level education. Young people will have something fulfilling and worthwhile to do that doesn't involve drugs or crime.

Delivery Project : I am putting my hand up for this.

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Short Answer : Upgrade to skatepark

Report generated on 23 May 2022 by Hayley Ritchie On Engagement Hub

Estimated Costs : 500

Perceived Outcomes : Lower crime rates among young people, less teenage binge drinking, help build respect for the community among young people, lower crime rates encourage business and tourism which is also great for the community.

Delivery Project : Council



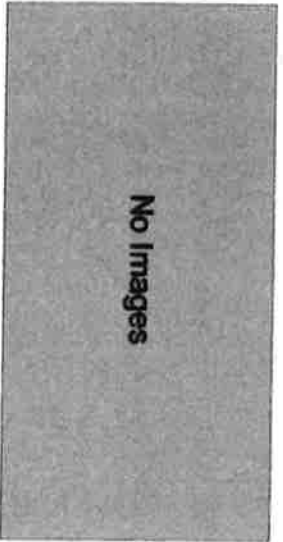
Short Answer : Facilitate tourism to Mt Mackenzie

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes : Easier access for tourists to one of our promoted destinations. Positive word of mouth promotion.

Delivery Project : Council/State Gov't





Short Answer : Tourism Promotion Signage on roads

Estimated Costs :

Perceived Outcomes : Potential to encourage more travelers to stop and hopefully spend money in town.

Delivery Project : Council

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Budget Stimulator	User Response Count
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Interactive Media Activity

Gender and Household Composition