



Tenterfield Shire Council

2022 Community Engagement Report

Integrated Planning & Reporting Documents & Proposed Special Rates Variation

First Round - January 2022 (Reported Previously)

Second Round April – May 2022

Third Round August – September 2022

Executive Summary

Tenterfield Shire Council's Community Engagement Strategy provides the framework to **Inform** and **Consult**. Following our Community Engagement Report which outlined the Community engagement to develop the Community Strategic Plan in January, this report outlines the next two rounds this communication and engagement to include Council's Integrated Planning & Reporting Documents (IP&R) and Proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV).

Council has made a commitment to the community to keep it informed with balanced, accurate and relevant information on decisions, plans and strategies, to facilitate two-way communication between Council and the community. At this level, Council sought feedback to identify important community issues and perspectives that can influence and assist decision making. Informing is a prerequisite for consultation.

In the second Round of community consultation we were able to provide information regarding our IP&R documents that were partly informed by the Community Consultation and feedback received in the first round of engagement in January 2022. These documents included;

- TSC Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032
- TSC Delivery Program 2022-2026
- TSC Operational Plan 2022-2023
- TSC Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032
- TSC Statement of Revenue Policy & Fee's & Charges 2022-2023
- TSC Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032
- TSC Workforce Management Strategy 2021-2025
- TSC Community Engagement Strategy

Council also started the conversation around the possibility of Council applying for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years and differing scenarios. The Long Term Financial Plan put forward 3 scenarios, a) Current Model, b) Current Model and SRV implemented over 2 years and c) Current Model and SRV implemented over 3 years.

Initial discussions with the community identified that participants do not want to see service levels reduced and, in some cases, want to see service levels increased. The three scenarios set out in the Long Term Financial Plan were used to drive community discussion to ensure the community fully understood the impacts of SRV values and service level impacts.

In the second round of Community Consultation which took place in April and May 2022. A series of face-to-face sessions were held across the shire to allow residents to communicate directly with Councillors and staff. Following these meetings, Council resolved (Res No. 156/22) to commence further Community Consultation – Special Rate Variation 2023/24 and 2024/25. The third round as per the feedback received from round two, specifically focused on information around the Proposed Special Rate Variation.

Later in this report you can see the methods of direct engagement used as well as detailed submissions from individuals and groups. The bi-annual Customer Satisfaction Survey was also included as Council took the opportunity to have SRV related questions included, and is impacted by the current conversation based on the wider consultation process.

The submissions and engagement generally objected to a Special Rates Variation but also put forward that if there were to be a rate rise that the service level priorities should be;

- Maintenance and improvement of roads and transport infrastructure,
- Strong leadership (good communication, financial management and advocacy),
- Council operations being run transparently, efficiently and sustainably,
- Stormwater and Drainage infrastructure, and
- Waste management

It should be noted that it became apparent that there was a core group of residents that engaged with the consultation process both in the community meetings, and through submissions. Which indicated the above service level priorities, however the analysis of the Tenterfield Community Satisfaction Survey 2022 which was taken across the whole shire, age and gender weighted revealed that the top-rated services/facilities for satisfaction were:

- School of Arts Theatre/Cinema
- School of Arts Museum
- Library Services
- Cemeteries
- Parks and playgrounds
- Livestock saleyards

And the lowest rated:

Overall condition of the road network and planning and development.

This information also came through strongly in the initial community engagement which informed the Community Strategic Plan, and mirrored the desire of the community to have both well maintained roads and infrastructure and services that support social cohesion.

The detailed and extensive information provided to Council for their consideration of the Proposed Special Rate Variation, and will be included in any application made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Methods of Engagement

Tenterfield Shire Council's Community Engagement Strategy matrix was employed to plan and execute its engagement and information communications in the following ways:

Community Consultation Meetings January 2022

Community engagement in January 2022 does not form part of this report as it was previously provided.

Community Consultation Meetings April 2022

Sign In sheets were provided however these did not capture all participants the Tenterfield PM meeting which only has 42 people, was observed to be closer to 100 people excluding staff. The Tenterfield AM breakfast meeting was primarily for business and working people, as had been suggested by the community, the expectation was that the turnout would be higher and therefore the ratio of staff to attendees reflected this expectation.

Promoted through TSC Website, Your Local News, Facebook (via Mayor) Flyers distributed throughout the shire, Council App, All Progress Associations and Hall Committees.

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

Community Information Sessions September 2022

Using feedback gained by the previous round of community meetings Council asked the community to submit their questions to be answered first then the forum was opened for supplementary questions and two-way information. This allowed for everyone to ask their questions and for no single view to dominate.

Promoted through Facebook, Your Local News, Website, TSC App, Media Releases, Community Noticeboards, Digital Display, Newspaper advertising and Radio.

Date	Place	Signed In
Saturday 3 Sept	Tenterfield RSL	102
Saturday 24 Sept *	Urbenville Community Hall	13
Saturday 24 Sept	Legume Community Hall	3

Monday 26 Sept	Mingoola Community Hall	19
Saturday 1 Oct	Urbenville Community Hall	26
		Total 163 people signed in

It is noted that people with an interest attended multiple sessions and although every effort was made to engage with the 7000 residents of the shire, feedback needs to be measured against the level of participation. Care should be taken that the feedback may not be representative of the majority of residents who chose not to participate.

[Tenterfield Shire Council Website](#)

Frequently Asked Questions page on website including a Rates Calculator and weekly Mayoral video, and promoted through Facebook, TSC App, Media Releases, Community Noticeboards, Digital Display, Newspaper advertising and Radio.

Media	Views to 12 October 2022
Website SRV & Frequently Asked Questions	486
Website SRV Rates Calculator	607
Mayoral Videos - Website	189
Facebook SRV posts	2859

[Your Local News \(proposed Special Rates Variation edition\)](#)

Information and FAQ's distributed to 4000 households throughout the shire.

[Community Briefings & Appointments](#)

30 – 90min Appointments with the Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff to have one on one meetings with members of the community and small groups over an eight week period between 1 August and 30 September. Appointments were promoted through Facebook, TSC Website, TSC App, Media Releases, Community Noticeboards, Digital Display, Newspaper advertising and Radio.

17 Appointments were conducted.

[Biannual Community Satisfaction Survey](#)

Included questions related to the SRV. 300 people surveyed by Taverner Research Group.

SRV questions:

Council is considering an application to the New South Wales Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a Special Rate Variation of 43% in 2023/24, including rate peg, and a further 43% in 2024/25, again including rate peg. This represents a cumulative increase of 104.49%, to increase general rates income for the payment of roads and building maintenance costs from financial year 2023/24.

I now have a series of questions about this proposed increase.

- Council has kept me informed this year of the probable need for a Special Rate Variation?
- Council has explained that the money raised from a Special Rate Variation will be used for renewal of roads, buildings and other assets?
- I have been able to get information from Council about the possible impact of a Special Rate Variation on my property rates?

- I understand if Council isn't able to raise money through a Special Rates Variation then some services will be reduced or stopped?
- I support Council's application for a 104.49% Special Rate Variation to help it deliver existing services?

Feedback from the Engagement

Overwhelmingly the people who engaged with Council either through Community Engagement or Information Sessions or through submission were against a Special Rate Variation as the scenarios given. The feedback related to how Council were in a position of having to consider a SRV and concerns around the communities' capacity to pay, particularly pensioners.

Many agreed that the road and infrastructure network needs greater maintenance and renewal, however as demonstrated in the Customer Satisfaction Survey the community regards 'soft services' such as the Cinema, Museum, Library, Park, Playgrounds and Cemeteries very highly and do not want a reduction in these services.

Many cite the council's administration costs and would like to reduce staff further than the current 25% reduction, but do not want to see people out of work or leaving town for employment elsewhere, nor do the community fully understand the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework that Council must adhere to or other reporting regimes in place. Because of this disconnect, Council in the third series of engagement employed Information Sessions, and other Information channels as discussed to bridge the education gap. Current requests for services are still occurring at normal levels, however despite responding to this, complaints are increasing and any further staff reductions will impact further on service delivery and reporting as service delivery and staff are mutually dependent.

It is also worthy of mention that an organised group of residents and ratepayers incorporated under the name Our Shire Our Council Initiative (OSOCI). OSOCI delivered systematic and targeted statistics seeking to support their view, without context in many cases, via public forums, radio and newspaper interviews and their own social media platforms. This prolonged and sustained campaign forced Council to spend much of its focus on countering this narrative which diluted and distracted the broader issues under discussion.



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/diabled 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.
<p>Jennings Staff Meeting Notes – IN22/25B3F581</p>	<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.
<p>Drake Staff Meeting Notes – IN22/25B3F581</p>	<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. •
<p>Liston Meeting Notes IN22/25B3F581</p>	<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