



MEDIA RELEASE

16 February 2018

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION PROPOSAL DEFERRED

On the 8th of February 2018, Council held an extraordinary meeting to discuss the special rate variation proposal and determine its position following the extensive round of community consultation sessions. The results and comments from the community survey were presented to Council along with several detailed submissions in relation to the proposal.

Council received 325 surveys and the majority of survey participants selected the baseline scenario, totalling to 48 percent of participants. 31 percent did not select an option provided and 15 percent of participants selected scenario 2 and 2a.

Although Council received mixed results in the community survey process, Mayor Woodcock said "it was vital to continue to seek feedback from the community, both good and bad...feedback from community is always appreciated".

Council resolved to defer any special rate variation application to Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to fund the upgrade of the strategic rural road network until such time as there is majority support for such a proposal.

Council will continue working with the community to achieve a greater level of understanding of the cost and level of services and facilities Council provides and in doing so will be investigating the re-establishment of precinct committees.

Council is also committed to lobbying the relevant state agencies to address an adequate level of maintenance of the road infrastructure network on the opal fields as well as lobbying the State Government to open opal prospecting area four (OPA 4).

The resolution also provided for an independent community satisfaction survey to be undertaken within the next six months and a proactive approach being taken to providing a consistently high quality water supply to all towns within the Shire.

SCENARIOS

- *Baseline Scenario – No SRV (2.3% general rate pegging increase)*
- *Scenario 1 - 5% increase in General Rates above the allowable maximum*
- *Scenario 2 & 2a - 10.9% increase in General Rates above the allowable maximum & 10.9% increase in General Rates above the allowable maximum, matched with a contribution from the Fixing Country Roads State Grant program*
- *Scenario 3 – 21.8 % increase in General Rates above the allowable maximum*

