



# **muswellbrook shire council**

## ***EXTRA ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING***

### ***BUSINESS PAPER 7 FEBRUARY, 2017***

**MISSION:**

**"To do what is best for our community through leadership,  
excellent service and encouragement of sustainable development"**

**EXTRA ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING, 7 FEBRUARY 2017**

MUSWELLBROOK SHIRE COUNCIL

P.O Box 122  
MUSWELLBROOK  
3 February, 2017

Councillors,

You are hereby requested to attend the Extra Ordinary Council Meeting to be held in the CHAMBERS, Administration Centre, Muswellbrook on **7 February, 2017** commencing at 6:00.

Steve McDonald  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

# Order of Business

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8.1	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REVIEW - REGIONAL CONVENTION AND PERFORMANCE CENTRE <i>Item 8.1 is classified CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section10A(2)(c) of the local government act 1993, as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business, and Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.</i>	
8.2	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REVIEW - AQUATIC CENTRE UPGRADE AND EXPANSION <i>Item 8.2 is classified CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section10A(2)(c) of the local government act 1993, as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business, and Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.</i>	
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## MUSWELLBROOK SHIRE COUNCIL

# AGENDA

### **1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

### **2 CIVIC PRAYER**

### **3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

### **4 DISCLOSURE OF ANY PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST**

Section 451 of the Local Government Act requires that if a councillor or member of a council or committee has a pecuniary interest in any matter before the council or committee, he/she must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable and must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting, when the matter is being discussed, considered or voted on.

A pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of financial gain or loss (see sections 442 and 443 of the Local Government Act).

A non-pecuniary interest can arise as a result of a private or personal interest which does not involve a financial gain or loss to the councillor or staff member (eg friendship, membership of an association, or involvement or interest in an activity). A councillor must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.

Council's Model Code of Conduct now recognises two forms of non-pecuniary conflict of interests:

- Significant
- Less than significant

A Councillor must make an assessment of the circumstances and determine if the conflict is significant.

If a Councillor determines that a non-pecuniary conflict of interests is less than significant and does not require further action, they must provide an explanation of why it is considered that the conflict does not require further action in the circumstances.

If the Councillor has disclosed the existence of a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interests at a meeting they must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting, when the matter is being discussed, considered or voted on.

### **5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

## 6 CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

### 6.1 DRAFT COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN AND DELIVERY PROGRAM

Attachments:	A. Draft Delivery Program.docx B. Community Strategic Plan C. Long Term Financial Plan V7.2
Responsible Officer:	Fiona Plesman - Acting Director - Planning, Community & Corporate Services
Author:	Amanda King - Senior Enterprise Risk Management Officer
Community Plan Issue:	<i>Progressive leadership</i>
Community Plan Goal:	<i>That Muswellbrook Shire is well led and managed</i>
Community Plan Strategy:	<i>Involve the community in decision making</i>

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to advise Council of the outcomes of public exhibition of the Draft Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 and Draft Delivery Program 2017-2021 and recommend Council to endorse the documents.

Please note that a revised four year Delivery Program budget will be tabled at the extraordinary meeting.

#### OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The Draft Community Strategic Plan be adopted.
2. The Draft Delivery Program be adopted.
3. Councils Long Term Financial Plan be adopted.

Moved: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded: \_\_\_\_\_

#### BACKGROUND

At the Integrated Planning Sunset Committee Meeting of 22 December 2016, the Committee considered reports in relation to the Draft Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 and the Draft Delivery Program 2017-2021 and resolved that:

- a) The Community Strategic Plan be endorsed to be placed on public exhibition from 22 December 2016 to 24 January 2017.
- b) The Draft Delivery Program be endorsed to be placed on public exhibition from 22 December 2016 to 24 January 2017.

Consulting firm Morrison Low were commissioned to assist with development of the Long Term Financial Plan.

#### CONSULTATION

The outcomes from Councils November 2016 Strategic Planning workshop formed the basis of the initial drafts of the Community Strategic Plan and Draft Delivery Program.

Listening posts conducted in early December at Muswellbrook Fair, Muswellbrook Marketplace and Denman main street gathered feedback from a wide range of community members on “what would you like to see in the future for the Muswellbrook shire”.

The Draft Community Strategic Plan and Draft Delivery Program were placed on public exhibition from 22 December 2016 to 24 January 2017. Public notices were placed in the local newspapers (Muswellbrook Chronicle and Hunter Valley News) and on Council's website. The Draft documents were available for inspection at Council's Administration Centre and Muswellbrook and Denman Libraries, and could be viewed and/or downloaded on Council's website.

During the public exhibition period, Council received no submissions from the public relating to the draft documents.

All Council staff were consulted during the drafting of these documents.

## **REPORT**

The Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program are requirements under the NSW Local Government Act and the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

The Community Strategic Plan sits above all other Council plans and policies in the planning hierarchy. The purpose of the Plan is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future, and plan strategies to achieve them. These strategies will take into consideration the issues and pressures that may affect the community and the level of resources that will realistically be available. While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the Local Government Area, it is not wholly responsible for its implementation. Other partners, such as state agencies and community groups, may also be engaged in delivering the long term objectives of the Plan.

The Delivery Program is a statement of commitment to the community from each newly elected Council. In preparing the Delivery Program, the council is accounting for its stewardship of the community's long term goals, outlining what it intends to do towards achieving these goals during its term of office and what its priorities will be. The Delivery Program is designed as the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by the Council during its term of office. All plans, projects, activities and funding allocations must be directly linked to this Program. The Delivery Program also includes the 4 year budget, allocated to delivery on the commitments within the plan. A revised 4 year Delivery Program Budget will be tabled during the extraordinary meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February.

Both documents must be endorsed by 30 June 2017, however due to Council's application for a Special Rate Variation to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) these documents need to be finalised to accompany the application by 13 February 2017.

Please note that both documents are still undergoing final review by Council staff, and updated versions will be tabled at the Council Meeting.

## **CONCLUSION**

The attached Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program are provided for Council's endorsement.

## **SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program need to meet Office of Local Government and Local Government Act requirements.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program need to meet Office of Local Government and Local Government Act requirements.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program need to meet Office of Local Government and Local Government Act requirements.

**STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

The Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program need to meet Office of Local Government and Local Government Act requirements.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

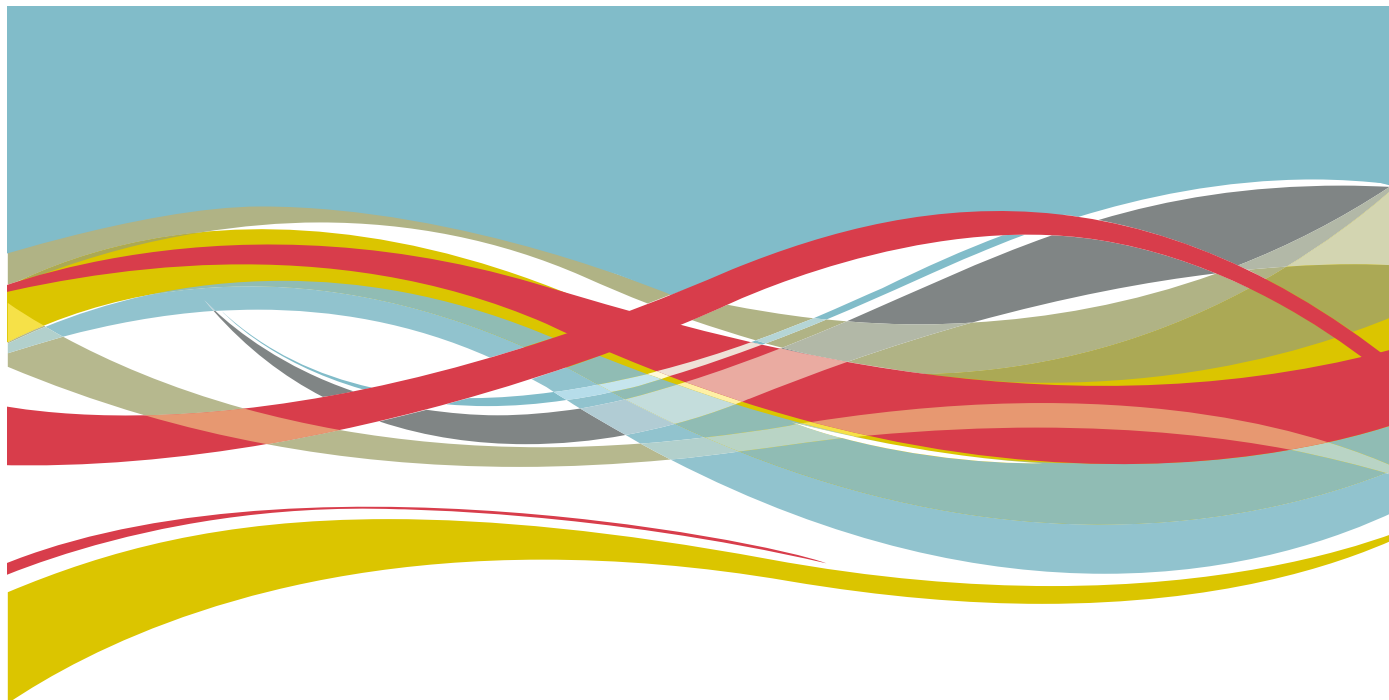
The Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program need to meet Office of Local Government and Local Government Act requirements.

**OPERATIONAL PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

The Operational Plan will be created in support of the Delivery Program.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program need to meet Office of Local Government and Local Government Act requirements.



# Muswellbrook Shire Council Draft Delivery Program 2017-21



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# A Message From the Mayor and General Manager

The Muswellbrook Shire Council Delivery Program 2017-21 is Council's plan for the delivery of community services and infrastructure over the coming four years.

This Delivery Program reflects the broader goals set out in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2017-2027 and outlines how we will deliver against the six priority areas stated, that is, our plan for:

- economic prosperity
- social equity and inclusion
- environmental sustainability
- cultural vitality
- community infrastructure, and
- community leadership.

The Delivery Program 2017 to 2021 has been developed to integrate with our CSP, the NSW Government's Hunter Regional Plan 2036, the Hunter Regional Implementation Program 2016-2018 (both released in October 2016), the Shire Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan, Council's Long Term Financial Plan and the commitments made in Council's Fit for the Future Plan.

## Challenges and opportunities

Council has worked hard over these last few years to implement its Fit for the Future Improvement Plan with improved service delivery while costs have been contained. In July 2016 the community indicated a high level of satisfaction with the quality of the services delivered, with particular appreciation for improved amenity in the Shire's parks, gardens, sporting fields, libraries, pools and the upgrades to the town centres of Muswellbrook, Denman and Sandy Hollow. As set out in the CSP, community feedback has indicated strong concern about job losses associated with the reversal in the long term economic projections for traded thermal coal. Undoubtedly, the recent closure of Drayton Coal in November 2016 and the planned closures of Muswellbrook Coal, Liddell Coal and Mangoola Coal will have a substantial impact on local employment. The community has seen a substantial increase in unemployment from 3.1%-12.4% between December 2012 and December 2015.

Nonetheless, the Shire's largest thermal coal mines, Mt Arthur and Bengalla are relatively new and efficient operations, each operating within the first quartile of cost relative to global competitors, and will enjoy long futures even within a challenging international demand setting. Additionally, the new Mt Pleasant mine is widely regarded as the last high quality thermal coal asset in the Hunter.

The Shire has time in which to transition to a more diverse and sustainability economy – but transition we must.

Some years ago, the Hunter Research Foundation – Trade and Investment Upper Hunter Workforce Plan identified aged care, education, intensive agriculture, innovative and complex manufacturing, tourism and eco-tourism as being areas of focus in the diversification of the Hunter economy. Pleasingly, Council's investments during the previous four year term in education – the Sam Adams residential student college, the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music, the Upper Hunter Tertiary Education Centre – together with private investment in approved and proposed preschool and child care developments, are working towards securing Muswellbrook as a centre of educational excellence to drive the upskilling of local residents and to drive further diversification in the local economy.

In 2016, Council developed a partnership with the University of Newcastle and, along with our existing relationship with Hunter TAFE, Council looks forward to expanding tertiary education opportunity within the Shire.

Aged care development is supported by the commencement of a \$27m aged care and retirement living development, a \$26.5m redevelopment of the Muswellbrook District Hospital together with the continued expansion of the community operated Merton Aged Care Village in Denman. Council will continue in this term to support development and expansion of the visitor economy and the quality of the tourism product.

This Delivery Program recognises that Council must concentrate its efforts on job creation, economic diversification and encouraging sustainable economic development within the Shire. Council's commitment to continuous improvement and operational efficiency was recognised in 2015 by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory

Tribunal's (IPART) recommendation to the Office of Local Government that Council is Fit For The Future. Council recognises the need to continue to invest in efficiency and capacity within the organisation whilst we invest in significant regional major projects in ongoing consultation with the community. As part of this investment in continuous improvement, Council will implement a new \$3 million Information Systems Strategy, which will be rolled out over the life of this Delivery Program, to upgrade customer service, data management and improve business processes.

This Delivery Program will progress the delivery of the new Muswellbrook and Denman Town Centre Strategies which are designed to improve the liveability of the town centres and facilitate economic development and retail investment. The formulation of new Development Control Plans (DCP) and a new Local Environmental Plan (LEP) for the Muswellbrook Shire will provide the basis, together with the new Hunter Regional Plan to consider future land use that will support sustainable economic growth and support the development of intensive agriculture in the Shire.

By this Delivery Plan, Council will also tackle community concerns for social inclusion – particularly in Muswellbrook South and we will develop and build new partnerships with our neighbouring councils, government and industry to tackle the issues in a more integrated way.

Council is pleased to commend the Delivery Plan to the community.



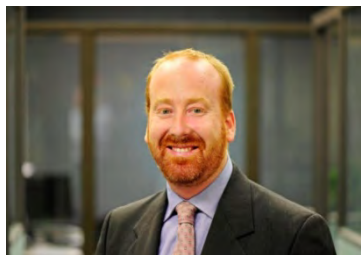
MARTIN RUSH  
Mayor



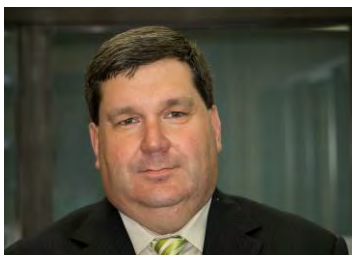
STEVE MCDONALD  
General Manager

## Councillors of Muswellbrook Shire

Councillors were elected on 10 September 2016



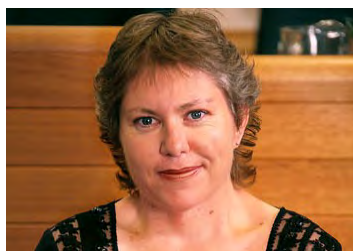
Cr Martin Rush  
Mayor



Cr Scott Bailey



Cr Mark Bowditch



Cr Janelle Eades



Cr Jason Foy



Cr Michelle Green



Cr Jacinta Ledlin



Cr Graeme McNeil



Cr Steve Reynolds



Cr Rod Scholes



Cr Stephen Ward



Cr Brett Woodruff

## Snapshot of the Shire

Muswellbrook Shire is centrally located in the Upper Hunter Valley, approximately 130km north-west of Newcastle. By road, Muswellbrook is approximately three hours from Sydney, two hours from Tamworth and 90 minutes from Newcastle.

The Shire's boundary is delineated by Lake Liddell to the east, Wollemi National Park to the west, Aberdeen to the north and Coricudgy State Forest to the south.

Muswellbrook Shire covers 3,402km<sup>2</sup>, of which 1,455km (43%) is national park.

Approximately 17,209 people live in the Muswellbrook Shire Local Government Area (LGA), up around 4% from 2011. Most of this growth has been concentrated in the town of Muswellbrook. Council anticipates growth to continue in the short to medium term due to affordable housing and educational opportunities.

It is a welcoming community offering all the cultural, recreational, educational and community facilities that you would expect to find in a city.

Muswellbrook and Denman are the largest towns in the Shire along with a number of outlying rural communities including Sandy Hollow, Wybong, Baerami, Martindale, McCullys Gap, Widden and Muscle Creek.

The population of Muswellbrook Shire tends to be a younger community, with the median age of people being 34 years (2011 ABS Census), compared with 38 for NSW, and 37 for Australia.

Of this population 7.9% are aged 0-4 years (pre-school age) compared with NSW at 6.6%, while 22% are aged 5-19 years (school age/dependants) compared with NSW at 19%.

At the 2011 Census, the population was 51.7% male and 48.3% female.

To find out more about Muswellbrook Shire's Community Profile visit:

[www.communityprofile.com.au/muswellbrook](http://www.communityprofile.com.au/muswellbrook)

## Economic Output

The total annual output in the Muswellbrook Shire LGA is estimated at \$6.9 billion. Output data represents the gross revenue generated by businesses/organisations in each of the industry sectors.

## Mining

Coal mining commenced in Muswellbrook Shire in the late 1800s; initially underground mining and then, beginning in 1944, open cut mining.

The oldest mine is Muswellbrook Coal, which celebrated its centenary in 2006. The mining industry has recently experience external economic factors that have resulted in a review of operations, however, the industry remains the biggest employer in the Shire.

There are currently three large mining operations in the Shire, BHP Billiton's Mount Arthur coal mine, New Hope Mining's Bengalla, and Glencore's Mangoola Coal mine are local employers who have also brought many new people and families to the Muswellbrook Shire. MACH Energy has commenced preliminary work on its Mt Pleasant project just north of Muswellbrook township.

## Power Generation

AGL Macquarie is Australia's largest electricity producer; Liddell (which is earmarked to close in 2022) and Bayswater power stations currently employ around 600 people. They generate the equivalent of 40% of the State's base-load electricity.

## Education

Muswellbrook is developing as a centre of educational excellence in the Upper Hunter. It is particularly well positioned for the efficient and effective provision of vocational training for existing and emerging industries.

In 2016 the Upper Hunter Tertiary Education Centre was opened, bringing the University of Newcastle to the Upper Hunter. The Centre houses TAFE and the University of Newcastle, in partnership, contributing to the realisation of our goal for greater diversification over the life of the Community Strategic Plan and new Delivery Program. In addition, the recently opened and now operational Sam Adams College, a joint TAFE, Council and Federal Government initiative, is providing a 63 bed student accommodation facility for the Shire.

Council aims to grow tertiary education further with the implementation of the new Muswellbrook Town Centre Strategy, which will see Muswellbrook become a Regional Centre with high quality community services.

## Thoroughbred Industry

The equine industry origins in the Upper Hunter Valley date back over 150 years. This is a result of the Hunter Valley's unique topography, soil, air, and water availability, making it an ideal location for the horse breeding industry.

Muswellbrook Shire is home to the largest critical mass of thoroughbred rearing in Australia, located in an arc from Widden Valley through Sandy Hollow to Jerry's Plains. The equine industry is a significant employer alongside other agriculture including dairy, beef and cropping.

## Viticulture Industry

The Upper Hunter viticulture industry is small but internationally renowned for the quality and quantity of wine production and processing, and as a wine tourism destination.

The earliest evidence of grape growing in the Upper Hunter dates back to 1860 when vines were planted at the meeting of Wybong Creek and the Goulburn River. The wine from these grapes gained international recognition and acclaim and established a tradition and consumer expectation of quality that continues today.

## Government Services

A number of State Government Departments and Agencies have offices located in Muswellbrook Shire and have based regional and sub-regional operations to service the Upper Hunter; these including, Corrective Services, Juvenile Justice, Department of Human Services and the Area Command for NSW Police.

Muswellbrook District Hospital recently completed a significantly larger and more suitable emergency department and planning is currently nearing completion for stage two of development on the site.

Centrally located between the New England and Lower Hunter, Muswellbrook Shire holds an excellent geographical advantage in servicing the surrounding areas through these government agencies.

To find out more about Muswellbrook Shire's Economic Profile visit:

[www.economicprofile.com.au/muswellbrook](http://www.economicprofile.com.au/muswellbrook)



# Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework was established in 2009 by the New South Wales state government. This legislation requires all Councils to have the following plans developed in consultation with the community:

## Community Strategic Plan (10 years)

The Community Strategic Plan is an overview document that identifies the community's main priorities and goals for the future. It aims to describe what the community wants to see and feel in and around their area. It is based on community consultation undertaken by Council and covers at least 10 years.

## Delivery Program (4 years)

The Delivery Program is the point of reference for all activities undertaken by the Council during its term of office. The Program details the goals Council prioritises to undertake over a four year period, working towards achieving certain strategies in the Community Strategic Plan.

## Operational Plan (Annual)

The Operational Plan directly addresses the goals outlined in the Delivery Program. It identifies the actions, programs and activities Council will undertake within the current financial year. The Operational Plan also allocates responsibility for each action, or set of actions, and identifies suitable performance measures for determining the effectiveness of the activities.

## Resourcing Strategy

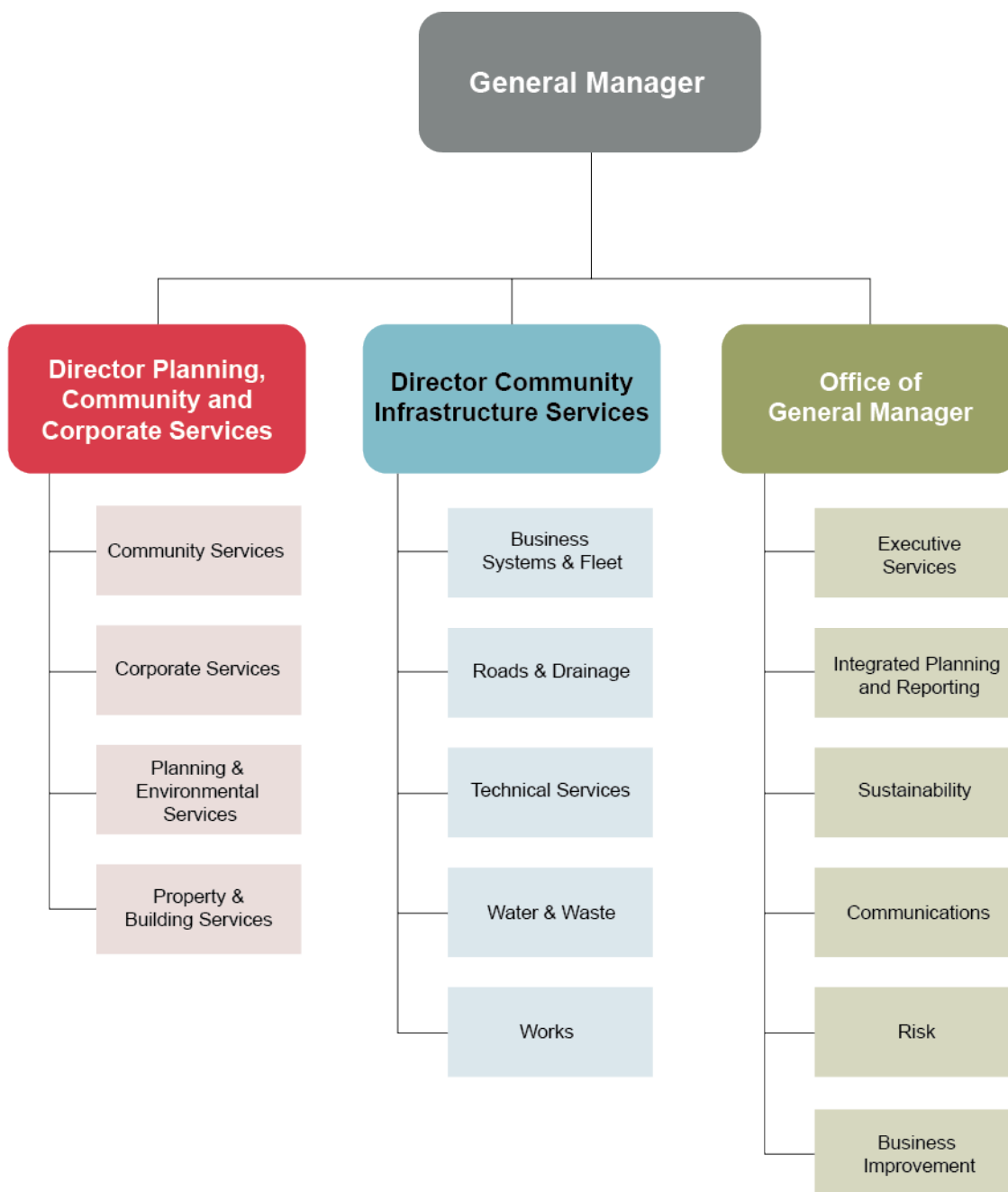
The Resourcing Strategy demonstrates how Council will resource achievement of the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program. Council does not have full responsibility for implementing or resourcing all the community aspirations, State agencies, non-government organisations, community groups and individuals also have a role to play in delivering these outcomes. Council's Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plan and Workforce Management Plan have been developed to outline how Council intends to resource the actions identified in the Delivery Plan and objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.



# Muswellbrook Shire Council Organisational Chart

Council's leadership team comprises the General Manager, the Director Planning, Community and Corporate Services, the Director Community Infrastructure Services and Executive Manager of Water & Waste.

The chart below shows the current organisational structure:





## Delivery Program Structure

The following sections of the Delivery Program provide details of each objective that Council will undertake in the next four years. It shows the link to the CSP and includes expected targets.

The CSP and Delivery Program were framed within the following model of community wellbeing and integrate with quadruple bottom line reporting and the IP&R Framework. Council's Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program respond to the six global megatrends identified by the CSIRO in 2010 to prepare Australia future challenges and assist with planning. The six megatrends address: 1) resource depletion (More from less); 2) reduced biodiversity and extinction (Going, going, gone?); 3) growth of the middle class in developing nations (The silk highway); 4) growing ageing populations in OECD countries (Forever young); 5) increasing connectivity and digital disruption (Virtually here); 6) growing demand for personalised services (Great expectations).



As noted above, Council's priorities focus on:

1. Economic Prosperity
2. Social Equity and Inclusion
3. Environmental Sustainability
4. Cultural Vitality

Added to this are:

5. Community Infrastructure
6. Community Leadership

Informing and underpinning these priorities and goals are Council's:

- Community Engagement Strategy
- Asset Management and Asset Renewal Program
- Financial information, including budget and revenue
- Special rate initiatives

# 1. Our Plan for Economic Prosperity

Our plan for local economic prosperity is to continue our focus on supporting local jobs in the short term whilst facilitating the growth and development of innovative, sustainable and high value-add industries into the future.

We need to prepare our local economy for transition. In recent years, there has been a reversal in the long term projections for traded thermal coal and any many associated local job losses. The closure of Drayton Coal in November 2016, and the planned closures of a number of other mining operations, will have a substantial impact on local employment.

Nonetheless, the Shire's largest thermal coal mines, Mt Arthur and Bengalla are relatively new and efficient operations, each operating within the first quartile of cost relative to global competitors, and will enjoy long futures even within a challenging international demand setting. Additionally, the new Mt Pleasant mine is widely regarded as the last high quality thermal coal asset in the Hunter.

For that reason, the Shire has time in which to transition to a more diverse and sustainable economy but it is important that we work towards that transition now. The volatility of the Shire's thermal coal industry is not without very human consequences in terms of job losses and unemployment as well as housing affordability and investment certainty.

In arriving at this Delivery Program, Council has carefully considered the various local economic prosperity issues, along with global mega-trends as outlined in the following table:

Local <b>economic prosperity</b> issues
Structural decline or uncertainty in the thermal coal industry, associated job losses, and the need to diversify the Shire's economic base
A rising middle class – particularly in south east Asia, and an associated growing demand for agricultural product
The growth of the knowledge, creativity, and digital economy and a reshaping labour market
The continued growth of the services sector and the concentration of services in Regional centres
A growing visitor economy
The movement from a linear to a circular economy ★

★A **circular economy** is an alternative to a traditional linear **economy** (make, use, dispose) in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life.



# Economic Prosperity

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	DELIVERY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE	TARGET
<b>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSW Government</li> <li>Federal Government</li> <li>Hunter Development Corporation</li> <li>Upper Hunter Shire Council</li> <li>Hunter Councils</li> <li>Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li> <li>Denman Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Trade Unions</li> <li>University of Newcastle</li> <li>Hunter TAFE</li> <li>Mining sector</li> <li>Agriculture sector</li> <li>AGL Macquarie</li> </ul>		
<b>GOAL ONE</b> Support job growth	<b>1.1</b> Facilitate the expansion of and establishment of new industries and business	New growth achieved
<b>GOAL TWO</b> Diversify the economy, facilitate the development of intensive agriculture and other growth industries, make the shire a more attractive place to invest and do business.	<b>2.1</b> Facilitate the diversification of the Shire's economy and support growth of existing industry and business enterprise	Facilitation leads to the establishment of new industries and business enterprise which diversify our economic base and create employment opportunities.
	<b>2.2</b> Work with the University of Newcastle on research and innovation in areas where the Upper Hunter has a competitive or comparative advantage	Research and innovation leads to the establishment of new industries.
	<b>2.3</b> Review the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan to improve investment certainty for industry	New planning instruments lead to greater industry investment in the Shire.
	<b>2.4</b> Implement the Muswellbrook, Denman town centre masterplans and the Sandy Hollow Village Masterplan	Implement the first stage of the Muswellbrook town centre masterplan (Regional Convention and Performance Centre) and the Denman town revitalisation project, subject to Special Rate Variation.
	<b>2.5</b> Develop agricultural industry opportunities in the Shire	Develop agricultural industry masterplan.
<b>GOAL THREE</b> Facilitate greater access to higher education and participation in the knowledge and creativity economy	<b>3.1</b> Through the Future Fund invest in additional education infrastructure, in partnership with Hunter TAFE, the University of Newcastle and other providers	Additional education and creativity infrastructure constructed to support improved access to higher education and participation in the knowledge and creativity economy

<b>GOAL FOUR</b> Develop Muswellbrook as a Regional Centre	<b>4.1</b> Construct and maintain regionally significant infrastructure that facilitates regional service provision.	Increase in provision of regional service delivery.
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## How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES IN ACTION: Creating Jobs; improving education results.

STATE PRIORITIES: Strong budget and economy; encourage business investment; boosting apprenticeships; Improving Aboriginal education outcomes.

HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036: to be the leading regional economy in Australia; enhance inter-regional linkages to support economic growth; transform the productivity of the Upper Hunter; greater housing choice and jobs; protect the economic functions of employment land; strengthen the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities; develop advanced manufacturing, defence and aerospace hubs; promote innovative small business and growth in the service sectors; grow tourism in the industry; protect and enhance agricultural productivity; manage the ongoing use of natural resources; diversify and grow the energy sector.

## 2. Our Plan for Social Equity & Inclusion

Our plan for social equity and inclusion is to focus on supporting policies which promote social inclusion, participation in a range of employment and community events and activities, and better liveability services and facilities to help support families in work and older residents in retirement.

Most Shire residents are engaged, feel a sense of pride in their communities and feel safe and secure in their homes. However, there are still a number of indicators where the community is seeking more. Youth services, facilities and services for older people along with a desire for support for local communities are areas of priority.

Residents from across the Shire have access to a wide range of community and government agency services appropriate for their age and needs. Council works with health, welfare and educational organisations from the government and non-government sectors with the aim of improving outcomes for individuals and our community. This occurs through liaison, advisory support, assistance with premises and provision of opportunities for networking.

Council will continue to support the Aboriginal community and work in partnership with the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council to further the reconciliation process with local Aboriginal people.

In arriving at this Delivery Program, Council has carefully considered the various local social equity and inclusion issues, along with the external mega-trends outlined in the following table:

Local <b>social equity and inclusion</b> issues
An aging population and changing retirement patterns
Social disadvantage and social exclusion – particularly in Muswellbrook South
Early childhood education and social advantage indicia
Improving local liveability and amenity
Easily accessible venues to appreciate and participate in social activities

# Social Equity & Inclusion

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	DELIVERY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE	TARGET
<b>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSW Government</li> <li>Federal Government</li> <li>Upper Hunter Community Services</li> <li>Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>University of Newcastle</li> <li>Hunter TAFE</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools</li> <li>Childcare providers</li> <li>Shire Sports Clubs and User Groups</li> <li>Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li> <li>Denman Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Social and community housing providers</li> </ul>		
<b>GOAL FIVE</b> Continue to improve the affordability, liveability and amenity of the Shire's communities	<b>5.1</b> Implement the outcomes of the Recreation Needs Study	The recommendations from the Recreation Needs Study are implemented
	<b>5.2</b> Continue town centre revitalisation projects.	Revitalisation projects completed
	<b>5.3</b> Facilitate investment in entertainment opportunities, particularly for young people.	New entertainment opportunities provided.
	<b>5.4</b> Improve access to waterways	Greater appreciation and interaction by the community with our local rivers and creeks.
	<b>5.5</b> Promote and facilitate increased participation in active and passive recreation activities	Increased participation in recreation activities
	<b>5.6</b> Consider and deliver social inclusion principals across Council functions.	People with disability are continually included in improving the provision of accessible options across the Shire.
	<b>5.7</b> Facilitate the provision of Affordable Housing opportunities through development application process as encouraged through the Affordable Rental Housing SEPP 2009	New Affordable Housing opportunities provided
<b>GOAL SIX</b> Stabilise the tenancy turnover in the Shire's social housing	<b>6.1</b> Continue partnership with Government and community housing services to reduce the turnover of tenants in the Shire's social housing	Reduction in the turnover of tenants residing in social housing

<b>GOAL SEVEN</b> Build social inclusion and improve the delivery of social services	<b>7.1</b> Facilitate discussions with other levels of government to enhance the delivery of services to improve and promote social inclusion services	Improved social indicators across the Shire
	<b>7.2</b> Facilitate and implement improved disability access and inclusion across the Shire	Disability access and inclusion improved to targeted facilities.
<b>GOAL EIGHT</b> Retention and expansion of quality and affordable child care services.	<b>8.1</b> Facilitate investment in child care services across the Shire	Increased childcare, early childhood education and pre-school options.
<b>GOAL NINE</b> Facilitate opportunities to expand seniors living.	<b>9.1</b> Facilitate investment in new seniors living facilities	Improved opportunities for seniors living within the Shire.
	<b>9.2</b> Facilitate discussions with other levels of government to enhance the delivery of services to support older people to live in the Muswellbrook Shire	Improved services for older residents.
<b>GOAL TEN</b> Further the process of reconciliation in the Shire	<b>10.1</b> Collaborate with local Aboriginal people on projects which enhance an appreciation for, and which develop the vitality of, Aboriginal culture.	Improved understanding and appreciation of the importance of the Aboriginal Community and their traditions and culture.
	<b>10.2</b> Raise awareness of the local Aboriginal Community and an appreciation of their long traditions and culture.	Improved understanding and appreciation of the importance of the Aboriginal Community and their traditions and culture.

## How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:

**PREMIER'S PRIORITIES IN ACTION:** Reducing domestic violence; tackling childhood obesity; improving education results; protecting our kids; reduce youth homelessness; improving government services; creating jobs; building infrastructure; improving service levels in hospitals.

**STATE PRIORITIES:** Increasing housing supply; creating sustainable social housing; increasing cultural participation; improving Aboriginal education outcomes; reducing violent crime.

**HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036:** Thriving Communities; create healthy built environments through good design; enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces; revitalise existing communities; greater housing choice and jobs: promote housing diversity; deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities.

### 3. Our Plan for Environmental Sustainability

Our plan for environmental sustainability is to focus on the regeneration of mined land and urban riparian areas, increase our use of renewable energy and to monitor and manage our use of natural resources.

Muswellbrook Shire Council is committed to improve its environmental performance and to demonstrate good environmental practice. We are working towards a number of goals to reduce water and energy usage, improve waste management and promote awareness of environmental issues throughout the community.

Our sustainability goals are to:

- comply with the requirements of government legislation and regulations as applies to environmental sustainability
- reduce consumption of energy, water and consumables
- reduce waste to landfill and enhance our recycling system
- record energy usage and provide an annual estimate of carbon emissions
- incorporate sustainability measures into relevant business decisions
- promote environmental sustainability goals to staff, community and key stakeholders.

Council supports the Principles of Environmentally Sustainable Development as defined in the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991* (NSW):

- **The precautionary principle** - public and private decisions should be guided by careful evaluation to avoid serious or irreversible damage to the environment wherever practicable, and an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options.
- **Inter-generational equity** - the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment are maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations,
- **Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity** - conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in environmental planning and decision-making processes.
- **Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms** - environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services for example, the polluter pays – those who generate pollution and waste should bear the cost of containment, avoidance or abatement.

These principles are implemented at the State level through a number of decision-making processes, including the regulation of pollution, and development assessment and approval regimes.

In arriving at this Delivery Program Council has carefully considered the various local environmental sustainability issues, along with the external mega-trends, as outlined in the following table:

Local environmental sustainability issues
Climate change
Loss/re-establishment/rehabilitation of native vegetation and vegetation connectivity
Poor riparian environments and poor public access to waterways



# Environmental Sustainability

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	DELIVERY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE	TARGET
<b>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Government</li> <li>• Federal Government</li> <li>• Hunter Councils</li> <li>• Upper Hunter Shire Council</li> <li>• Singleton Council</li> <li>• Upper Hunter Weeds Authority</li> <li>• Mining Industry</li> <li>• AGL Macquarie</li> <li>• University of Newcastle</li> <li>• Landcare groups</li> <li>• Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li> <li>• Denman Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>		
<b>GOAL ELEVEN</b> Higher quality final landforms with shallower voids and more emphasis on progressive rehabilitation with local workforce participation	<b>11.1</b> Work in partnership with industry and other levels of government to achieve improved rehabilitation outcomes for disused mining lands and ongoing employment for the local workforce.	Improvements in final landforms and void depths.
<b>GOAL TWELVE</b> Enhance native vegetation connectivity across the Upper Hunter	<b>12.1</b> Support Landcare initiatives and programs to enhance native vegetation connectivity across the Upper Hunter.	Enhanced native vegetation connectivity across the Upper Hunter.
<b>GOAL THIRTEEN</b> Our local rivers and creeks are enhanced, utilised and valued	<b>13.1</b> Adopt an Urban Riparian Masterplan and implement actions.	Healthier waterways and greater recreational use by the community.
<b>GOAL FOURTEEN</b> Support initiatives which reduce the community's impact on the environment and require new development to have minor environmental impact	<b>14.1</b> Carry out actions under the Sustainability Plan as it relates to air quality, waste reuse and minimisation, electricity minimisation, Council's Renewable Energy Target and food waste minimisation.	Actions carried out.
	<b>14.2</b> Require all development proposals to avoid and mitigate against potential environmental impacts and facilitate improved environmental outcomes where possible	Development application process includes review of potential environmental impacts and mitigation requirements included in conditions.

<b>GOAL FIFTEEN</b> Support federal and state initiatives to reduce the human impact on climate change	<b>15.1</b> Increase the proportion of the energy used by Council from renewable sources.	Council to meet a Renewable Energy Target of 40% by 2020.
	<b>15.2</b> Increase the take up of energy used by the wider community from renewable sources.	The community to meet Renewable Energy Target commensurate with the NSW Government Renewable Energy Target.

## How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES IN ACTION: Keeping our environment clean.

HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036: A biodiversity-rich natural environment; protect and connect natural areas; sustain water quality and security; increase resilience to hazards and climate change.

NSW DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE FUND STRATEGIC PLAN: NSW Aspirational objectives: achieve net-zero emissions of 2050; NSW is more resilient to a changing climate; lead by example to reduce emissions in government operations.

## 4. Our Plan for Cultural Vitality

***Our plan for cultural vitality is to increase the variety, availability and access to the arts and cultural experiences.***

Muswellbrook Shire aims to be a culturally rich and diverse Shire with communities that have strong identities and a shared sense of place. The communities of the Shire support and value the culture and traditions of local Aboriginal people and acknowledge their profound contribution to the land and communities of the Shire.

Council also places importance on the value of the arts and creative industries in all their forms as part of our everyday lives. Council recognises the value the arts provide to enrich our lived experience and supports:

- Providing opportunities for cultural participation across multiple dimensions;
- Systems and mechanisms that support and encourage cultural participation; and
- Opportunities for inclusive arts and cultural expression.

Council looks forward to encouraging growth in non-profit, public, and commercial arts-related organisations, retail arts venues (bookshops, cinemas, craft and art suppliers), venues with arts and cultural programming (parks, libraries, multicultural associations, societies, and centres), festivals and parades, arts-focused media outlets (print and electronic, including web-based venues) and art schools.

In arriving at this Delivery Program Council has carefully considered the various local cultural vitality issues, along with the external mega-trends, as outlined in the following table:

Local <b>cultural vitality</b> issues
A variety of opportunities for cultural participation
Opportunity to experience high quality national and international arts and culture

# Cultural Vitality

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	DELIVERY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE	TARGET
<b>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Government</li> <li>• Federal Government</li> <li>• Arts Upper Hunter</li> <li>• Mining industry members</li> <li>• Creative industries sector</li> <li>• Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li> <li>• Denman Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>		
<b>GOAL SIXTEEN</b> Conserve the cultural and environmental Heritage and History of the Shire	<b>16.1</b> Support the conservation and restoration of the Shire's heritage items.	New investment in heritage conservation and restoration made.
	<b>16.2</b> Ensure sites or artifacts of aboriginal significance are protected where new development proposals are considered.	Development assessment includes assessment of the potential impact on aboriginal sites and artefacts and appropriate mitigation is applied as required.
	<b>16.3</b> New investment in heritage conservation and restoration made.	Funding allocation for heritage conservation and restoration is available.
<b>GOAL SEVENTEEN</b> Facilitate options to improve cultural activities in the Shire.	<b>17.1</b> Construct a Regional convention and performance space subject to a Special Rate Variation.	Construction completed.
<b>GOAL EIGHTEEN</b> Facilitate cultural activities and events which engage the community and visitors, and which create a 'sense of place' and identity.	<b>18.1</b> Increase funding to the Blue Heeler Film Festival and the Bottoms Up beer and music festival with a view to engaging more locals and visitors.	Increased attendance and participation at a variety of festivals and events.
	<b>18.2</b> Continue the provision of arts appreciated through the Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre	A minimum of five exhibitions each year and the artist in residency completed.
	<b>18.3</b> Continue the Public Art Program in the localities identified by Council	One piece of public art is placed each financial year for five years (commencing 16/17)
	<b>18.4</b> Support Arts Upper Hunter as the peak organisation of Artist endeavour	Financial support is provided each year.

## **How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:**

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES IN ACTION: Creating jobs; building infrastructure.

STATE PRIORITIES: Improving Aboriginal education outcomes; increasing cultural participation.

HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036: Transform the productivity of the Upper Hunter; grow tourism in the region; create healthy built environments through good design; enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces; revitalise existing communities; deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities; strengthen the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities.

## 5. Our Plan for Community Infrastructure

Council has made significant investments in community infrastructure in recent years and plans to continue to do so over the next four years of this Delivery Program. The value of community infrastructure for which Council is responsible is \$740million.

The cost of operating, maintaining and renewing these assets, accounting for their depreciation and building new assets to meet the growing needs and aspirations of our community makes up around 85% of Council's budget.

Council maintains 690.8 kilometres of roadway (596.6kms of which is sealed), 42.5km of footpaths, approximately 73 kms of stormwater drainage and over 1000 rural culverts, 45 carparks, 169kms of kerb and gutter and approximately \$12.4 million worth of traffic safety and control devices.

Council as the local water utility provides water treatment and reticulated drinking water supply services to the urban areas of Muswellbrook, Denman and Sandy Hollow and sewerage reticulation and treatment to the urban areas of Muswellbrook and Denman. The fully regulated Hunter River provides a highly reliable source for Muswellbrook and Denman. Sandy Hollow relies for its water supply on the Goulburn River. Council provides domestic waste services for the townships and some limited rural roads along the truck travel routes. Council operates a three bin system; weekly mixed waste, fortnightly recycling and green waste services and operates a waste management centre in Muswellbrook and a transfer station in Denman.

Managing assets responsibly is critical to Councils financial sustainability. Councils focus is on the provision of best value, in terms of:

- performance - quality, functionality and capacity of assets
- sustainability - minimising the costs of providing assets over their life cycle
- risk (managed at an acceptable level) and resilience - ability to withstand shocks

Our plan for community infrastructure is to expand on the infrastructure required for Muswellbrook to realise Regional Centre status, improve community facilities and improve accessibility to community facilities.

In arriving at this Delivery Program Council has carefully considered the various local community infrastructure issues, along with the external mega-trends, as outlined in the following table:

Local <b>community infrastructure</b> issues
Integrated footpath and cycle ways
Improved accessibility to Council's facilities
Maintain and expand infrastructure to support Muswellbrook achieve Regional Centre status
Ageing Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

# Community Infrastructure

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	DELIVERY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE	TARGET
<b>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Government</li> <li>• Hunter Development Corporation</li> <li>• Federal Government</li> <li>• Upper Hunter Water Alliance</li> <li>• Mining sector</li> <li>• Agriculture sector</li> </ul>		
<b>GOAL NINETEEN</b> Our community's infrastructure is planned well, is safe and reliable, and provides required levels of service.	<b>19.1</b> Improve and maintain civic precincts	Civic precincts and traffic safety devices and networks are well maintained and safe
	<b>19.2</b> Maintain and continually improve asset management	Implement Councils asset management strategy.
	<b>19.3</b> Facilitate investment in high quality community infrastructure necessary to a regional centre	High quality infrastructure is provided to support Muswellbrook as a regional centre.
	<b>19.4</b> Maintain and continually improve community infrastructure across the Shire	Roads, footpath and cycleway networks, stormwater devices and kerb and guttering are well maintained, safe and meet relevant standards and the community's service expectations.
<b>GOAL TWENTY</b> Operate and maintain water, sewerage and waste services to agreed standards, to minimise impacts on the environment and community to ensure public health.	<b>20.1</b> Provide safe, secure, efficient and effective water, sewerage and waste services in compliance with regulatory requirements.	Council renews, upgrades and maintains Councils water and waste utilities and facilities to agreed standards and within regulatory requirements.
<b>GOAL TWENTY ONE</b> The road, footpath and cycleway networks are integrated and allow for the safe movement of residents around the Shire.	<b>21.1</b> Maintain and continually improve the Shire's footpath and cycleway networks to improve connectivity.	The Shire's footpath cycleway, carpark and are well planned, maintained, safe, assist community connectivity and meet the community's service expectations.

## How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES IN ACTION: Building infrastructure.

STATE PRIORITIES: Improving road travel reliability.

HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036: Thriving communities: enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces; Greater housing choice and jobs: deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities; A biodiversity-rich natural environment: sustain water quality and security.

## 6. Our Plan for Community Leadership

***Our plan for community leadership is to improve the community's participation in decision making and implement business improvement initiatives to improve service delivery.***

### The Governing Body

The Governing Body of the Council consists of 12 councillors elected for four years. The Chair of Muswellbrook Shire Council (the Mayor of Muswellbrook) and the Deputy Chair are elected by all councillors every two years.

### The Mayor and Councillors

The Mayor holds a number of Council delegations and some statutory responsibilities to make determinations on behalf of the Governing Body of the Council between Council meetings. The Mayor is responsible to the Governing Body for the determinations he or she makes. The Governing Body has also provided certain delegations to Councillor Spokespersons for Council's principal activities to speak on behalf of Council and make policy determinations between Council meetings with respect to those specific principal activities.

### Council's Business Improvement Strategy

Local governments across the state (and around the world) have recognised the need to improve service delivery and the way assets are managed to ensure they are financial sustainable, particularly as large portfolios of long-lived assets deteriorate with age and need renewal. Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan, aligns with the Long Term Financial Plan and business improvement plans. Over this Delivery Program, Council will implement a new Information Services Strategic and Business Improvement Plan.

Key actions that will be undertaken across Council to improve delivery of all services over the next few years includes:

- *introduction of a new Information Services Strategy:* Council has applied technology in a number of areas, but the functionality of some systems is limited and most do not integrate (this is a barrier to improving management and planning, it also makes it difficult to keep data updated)
- *knowledge and data:* while Council has reasonable information on most asset classes (condition, expected service life, cost of renewal) there is a need to continue to refine this to improve confidence in reporting and to facilitate future planning
- *lifecycle management strategies:* the way assets are operated, maintained and renewed improves performance and resilience and reduces cost and risk (strategies are in place, but these need to be refined / optimised as well as modelled long term)
- *processes and documentation:* asset management can be technical and complex, but it must be simpler and clearer to facilitate community engagement, inform Council decision making and encourage active participation by relevant staff.

Council is also focused on ensuring the information it reports on its assets is auditable as auditing by the NSW Auditor General is due to commence in 2017.

In arriving at this Delivery Program Council has carefully considered the various local community leadership issues, along with global mega-trends, as outlined in the following table:

Local <b>community leadership</b> issues
Community consultation and participation in council planning
Workforce and asset management
Business Improvement



# Community Leadership

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	DELIVERY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE	TARGET
<b>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Government</li> <li>• Federal Government</li> <li>• Hunter Councils</li> <li>• Trade unions</li> </ul>		
<b>GOAL TWENTY TWO</b> Collaborative and responsive community leadership that meets the expectations and anticipates the needs of the community.	<b>22.1</b> Enhanced collaboration with Council's community and stakeholders to ensure Council and its elected arm is best place to make decisions in the best interests of the community.	Heightened levels of community satisfaction with Council's decision making processes and the maintenance of high standards of transparency and accountability.
<b>GOAL TWENTY THREE</b> Genuine and well informed community participation in decision making.	<b>23.1</b> Utilise best practice models of community engagement to ensure decision making is meeting the expectations of the community.	Increased participation of residents and other key stakeholders in consultation and decision making processes.
	<b>23.2</b> Enhance Council's consultation and communication with the community to build awareness and understanding of Council's activities and Community needs.	Greater awareness in the community of Council's activities.
<b>GOAL TWENTY FOUR</b> A Council that is well managed, efficient and properly resourced and that is responsive to its communities and stakeholders.	<b>24.1</b> Maintain a strong focus on financial discipline to enable Council to properly respond to the needs of the communities it serves.	Strong financial discipline maintained. Delivering approved programs complying with statutory obligations.
	<b>24.2</b> Implement a comprehensive and targeted business improvement program	Improve information systems and business processes to provide responsive and customer focused service delivery
<b>GOAL TWENTY FIVE</b> A sustainable council that is a best practice employer providing a safe, happy and productive workplace.	<b>25.1</b> Continue to prioritise safety and risk management initiatives, employee welfare initiatives and upgrades to Council's works depot and waste management facility.	Initiatives and upgrades undertaken.

## **How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:**

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES IN ACTION: Improving government services; faster housing approvals; driving public sector diversity.

STATE PRIORITIES: Delivering strong budgets; Better Government digital services.

## Community Engagement Strategy and Outcomes

As part of its 2015 Fit for the Future Plan, Council noted that it had sufficient resources to meet planned levels of service and the renewal of community infrastructure. It also noted, however, that:

The community engagement strategy articulates how Council will engage with the community to ensure that the Community Strategic Plan is developed in line with the community's needs and reflects the community's vision for the future of the Muswellbrook Shire.

Council's Engagement Strategy aims to:

- To identify the community's priorities and vision for the Muswellbrook Shire, its towns and villages over the next 10 years
- Develop a Delivery Program and Operational Plans to realise the community's vision and priorities
- Test the relevance of the pillars and themes of the draft 2027 Community Strategic Plan

Our community engagement is guided by the following principles:

- Comply with 'The council charter' as per the NSW Local Government Act 1993 section 8
- Apply a deliberative democracy approach to community engagement
- Address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues in an integrated manner applying the 4 pillars of sustainability in the planning and reporting process.

NSW IP&R legislation requires a newly elected Council to endorse its new 10-year CSP within six months of the local government election. The Muswellbrook CSP 2027 needs to be endorsed by the elected Council no later than March 2017.

Council's strategic planning documents sit within the IP&R framework as outlined previously.

Activities that have been undertaken in 2016-17 as part of our Community Engagement have included:

- **Media releases** - local radio and newspapers are kept informed about the range of opportunities to provide feedback and "have your say"
- **Council newsletter** - Council's community newsletter keeps the community informed about our engagement process and how to get involved
- **Website feedback forum** - Council's website includes information about Listening Post sites, post it walls and a portal to lodge submissions and ideas on various topics and issues of community significance
- **Listening Posts** - Council staff collect community feedback at Listening Posts; these are set up at shopping centres, schools and popular locations
- **Post it walls and boxes** - Post it walls and feedback boxes are provided at the libraries and swimming pools
- **Submissions** - local individuals and groups from across the Shire are invited to make submissions for the consideration and information of the Community Panel
- **Community Panel** - residents are randomly drawn from across the Shire to form a demographically representative panel. They regularly meet over a specific period to prepare recommendations for Council about their vision and priorities for the Muswellbrook area. Once the Community Panel process is complete the Panel will present their views to the Council.

The five characteristics of deliberative democracy that Council's Community Panel will utilise are:

- Information - accurate and relevant data is made available to all participants
- Substantive balance - different positions are compared based on their supporting evidence
- Diversity - all major positions relevant to the matter are considered
- Conscientiousness - participants sincerely weigh all arguments
- Equal consideration - views are weighed based on evidence, not on who is advocating a particular view

Council has consulted with our community extensively. This has been done in relation to a number of specific projects, such as the Muswellbrook and Denman Town Centre Plans, but also in more general terms, such as our Listening Post interactions.

## Financial Position

Over the last eight (8) years, Council has made a conscious and concerted effort to achieve ongoing improvements in its Operating Result and has been successful in reducing the General Fund budgeted result from a deficit of \$2,915,580 in 2010/11 to just \$97,875 for 2016/17. This has been achieved through a series of measures including:

- Financial and budgetary discipline in regard to expenditures.
- Careful investment in projects that have reduced ongoing operational costs
- Diversification of Council's revenues, including investment in commercial properties that have allowed for the payment of an increasing and ongoing dividend.
- Increased revenues related to the expansion of mining activities in the Shire.

The achievement of a balanced budget, or even a small surplus is important for two major reasons. The first is that it allows for the continuation of services at their current levels without the need to unexpectedly increase revenues related to the provision of the services, that is, there is no need to unexpectedly increase fees and charges. The second is that it allows Council to replace and renew infrastructure and other community assets as they deteriorate. This ensures that the standard of this infrastructure is maintained over time. This prevents the accumulation of an "infrastructure backlog" or a catalogue of infrastructure items that Council does not have sufficient funds to be able to correct.

In addition to the achievement of a solid operating result, it should also be noted that the General Fund has a strong cash position, holding \$19.402M in reserve fund and a very acceptable level of debt (\$5.871M) that it can easily service with at its current revenue levels. This gives Council a degree of flexibility as it seeks to respond to the financial challenges that it faces.

As part of its 2015 *Fit for the Future* Plan, Council noted that it had sufficient resources to meet planned levels of service and the renewal of community infrastructure. However, Council now faces a situation of uncertainty in that there now exists a large degree of uncertainty in regard to revenues related to mining operations. This uncertainty arises from a series of threats as some mines reach the end of their approved or useful lives and opportunities as other mines open or expand their operations. If Council is to be able to maintain the strong financial situation that it has currently achieved and to be able to maintain services and infrastructure standards, it needs to be able to replace any revenues lost from this source. Similarly, in order to be able to properly plan for the provision of services and replacement and renewal of infrastructure, Council needs to be able to be confident in regard to the ongoing levels of revenue that it expects to receive over time.

Council also recognises that it needs to respond in regard to the local social and economic impacts that are currently arising in relation to the uncertainty facing the mining industry and this is why Council proposes a range of new programmes that are geared toward helping the community and the local economy adapt to these changes and to provide the Shire with a new base from which it can progress in the new economic realities that apply.

In order to be able to provide these new services, such as allocations towards job creation, the improvement of the local natural environment and the creation of new facilities such as those proposed in regard to performing arts and conventions, the aquatic centre and the central business district of Denman, Council will need to give serious consideration to all its possible revenue sources in regard to the funding of these proposals. These considerations could include the reallocation of funding away from other existing activities and services, review of the fees and charges levied on specific users of community facilities, the appropriate use of debt and cash reserves or the possible application for a Special Rate Variation aimed at raising enough revenue to allow for the provision of these new activities and facilities.

Council has prepared a budget based around the facilitation of the activities and targets outlined in this Delivery Program and a summary of these proposals, based on the scenario of the Special Rate Variation application being accepted and on the scenario of the application being refused are presented on the following pages. It should be noted that these figures and allocations will be subject to change on an annual basis as the needs, goals and targets of the organisation change and evolve.

## Special Rate Variation

As part of its 2015 Fit for the Future Plan, Council noted that it had sufficient resources to meet planned levels of service and the renewal of community infrastructure. It also noted, however, that:

“Council would consider as an option, and in consultation with community, making application for a Special Rate Variation to fund any new infrastructure identified by the community.”

Since the last Community Strategic Plan and Fit for the Future Plan the issues, particularly the economic issues have become more acute. Council's ability to address these issues has in part been met by the introduction of new programs for job creation, innovation and research and sustainability.

These programs, which have substantial priority, have largely been funded by further efficiencies achieved since the Fit for the Future process was introduced and additional revenues flowing from Council's Future Fund. In order to drive the transition of the Shire into a regional centre (Goal 4 of the CSP), Council proposes a Special Rate Variation to fund three regionally significant projects: a Regional Convention and Performance Centre – a major component of the Muswellbrook Town Centre Plan, an expansion and upgrade to the Regional Aquatic Centre and the delivery of the Denman Town Centre revitalisation plan. These projects are also aligned with the priorities of this Plan together with the Premier's Priorities in Action, State Priorities, Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and other State Government plans.

Regional Convention and Performance Centre	
Premier's Priorities in Action	Creating Jobs
	Building Infrastructure
State Priorities	Encouraging Business Investment
	Increasing cultural participation
Hunter Regional Plan 2036	Transform the productivity of the Upper Hunter
	Promote innovative small business and growth in the service sectors
	Grow tourism in the region
	Protect and enhance agricultural productivity
	Enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces
	Revitalise existing communities
	Deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities
Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Strategy	Encourage population to the region and develop knowledge intensive activity
Upper Hunter Workforce Plan	Implement initiatives to broaden the workforce
	Attract higher education to Muswellbrook

**Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre (Stage III) Revitalisation Project**

Premier's Priorities in Action	Building Infrastructure
	Tackling childhood obesity
State Priorities	Building Infrastructure
Hunter Regional Plan 2036	Grow tourism in the region
	Enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces
	Revitalise existing communities
	Deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities
Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Strategy	Encourage population to the region and develop knowledge intensive activity
Upper Hunter Workforce Plan	Implement initiatives to broaden the workforce Attract higher education to Muswellbrook
<b>Denman Town Centre Revitalisation</b>	
Premier's Priorities in Action	Creating Jobs
	Building Infrastructure
State Priorities	Encouraging Business Investment
	Increasing cultural participation
Hunter Regional Plan 2036	Transform the productivity of the Upper Hunter
	Promote innovative small business and growth in the service sectors
	Grow tourism in the region
	Protect and enhance agricultural productivity
	Enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces
	Revitalise existing communities
	Deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities
Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Strategy	Encourage population to the region and develop knowledge intensive activity
Upper Hunter Workforce Plan	Implement initiatives to broaden the workforce Attract higher education to Muswellbrook

Each of the projects has been the subject of considerable interest from the community over a sustained period of time but could not be delivered within the current resourcing envelope which is fully committed to higher priority projects in job creation and diversification.

In light of the community's desire to achieve the goals of this Plan as quickly as possible, Council proposes a Special Rate Variation accumulating over four years at 2.5 per cent each year to bring forward the three identified projects to completion within the period of the Delivery Program.



# Budget Overview

## Proposed Capital Works Programmes Allocations 2017/18 to 2020/21 Including SRV and Related Projects

Capital Works Programme	Proposed 2017/18 Allocation	Proposed 2018/19 Allocation	Proposed 2019/20 Allocation	Proposed 2020/21 Allocation
Roads				
- Regional Roads Renewal	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
- Roads Reseal Programme	\$1,117,000	\$1,145,000	\$1,173,000	\$1,173,000
- Urban Road Renewal Programme	\$512,000	\$520,000	\$530,000	\$530,000
- Rural Road Renewal Programme	\$400,000	\$410,000	\$420,000	\$420,000
- Rural Road Regravelling	\$328,000	\$328,000	\$330,000	\$330,000
- Denman Masterplan		\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	
- Heavy Patching Programme	\$492,000	\$500,000	\$510,000	\$510,000
- Sub total	\$2,919,000	\$5,473,000	\$5,533,000	\$3,033,000
Mine Affected Roads	\$403,970	\$412,049	\$420,290	\$428,696
CBD Programme		\$300,000	\$300,000	\$250,000
Bridges Programme	\$300,000	\$305,000	\$305,000	\$305,000
Kerb and gutter	\$125,000	\$130,000	\$130,000	\$130,000
Cycleways and footpaths	\$156,000	\$160,000	\$165,000	\$165,000
Carparks	\$103,000	\$110,000	\$115,000	\$120,000
Other Minor Programmes	\$65,000			
Drainage	\$158,000	\$158,000	\$159,000	\$160,000
Traffic safety / control devices	\$128,591	\$117,539	\$135,124	\$100,000
Total Roads and Ancillary Works	\$4,358,561	\$7,165,588	\$7,262,414	\$4,691,696
Works Fleet and Vehicles	\$743,672	\$762,264	\$781,320	\$800,853
Recreation and Buildings				
- Recreation Renewals	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$255,000	\$260,000
- Sporting Grants	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
- Aquatic Centres	\$210,000	\$7,000,000	\$0	\$60,000
- Convention Centre	\$200,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	
- Cemeteries	\$100,000	\$105,000	\$90,000	\$90,000
- Tree Management	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$65,000
- Renewable Energy		\$200,000	\$120,000	\$80,000
- Buildings	\$300,000	\$350,000	\$375,000	\$385,000
- Sub total	\$1,160,000	\$13,005,000	\$5,940,000	\$965,000
Waste	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
Corporate services				
- Vehicles	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
- Public Art	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
- Art Acquisitions	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
- Library Books Programme	\$141,000	\$133,250	\$136,581	\$139,996
- Commercial Buildings		\$0	\$520,000	\$500,000
- Works Depot Fuel Tanks	\$200,000			
- Information Services Strategy	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$400,000
- Capital Works Contingency	\$40,579		\$135,447	\$6,069
- Corporate Services Programme	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$180,000	\$165,000
- Sub total	\$1,246,579	\$1,098,250	\$1,787,028	\$1,526,065
Emergency management	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
<b>TOTALS - CAPITAL WORKS</b>	<b>\$8,058,812</b>	<b>\$22,581,102</b>	<b>\$16,320,763</b>	<b>\$8,533,614</b>

### OTHER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Loan Repayments	\$621,839	\$555,486	\$445,162	\$518,558
Transfer to Reserves				
- VPA Funds	\$1,825,967	\$1,880,746	\$1,937,168	\$1,999,283
- Waste Facility Remediation	\$318,318	\$337,417	\$357,653	\$379,122
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$10,824,936</b>	<b>\$25,354,751</b>	<b>\$19,060,746</b>	<b>\$11,430,577</b>

**Proposed Capital Works Programmes Allocations 2017/18 to 2020/21  
Excluding SRV and Related Projects**

<b>Capital Works Programme</b>	<b>Proposed 2017/18 Allocation</b>	<b>Proposed 2018/19 Allocation</b>	<b>Proposed 2019/20 Allocation</b>	<b>Proposed 2020/21 Allocation</b>
Roads				
- Regional Roads Renewal	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
- Roads Reseal Programme	\$1,117,000	\$1,117,000	\$1,173,000	\$1,203,000
- Urban Road Renewal Programme	\$512,000	\$500,000	\$530,000	\$530,000
- Rural Road Renewal Pogramme	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$420,000	\$420,000
- Rural Road Regravelling	\$250,000	\$255,000	\$320,000	\$330,000
- Denman Masterplan		\$2,500,000	\$0	
- Heavy Patching Programme	\$492,000	\$500,000	\$530,000	\$550,000
- Sub total	\$2,841,000	\$5,342,000	\$3,043,000	\$3,103,000
Mine Affected Roads	\$403,970	\$412,049	\$420,290	\$428,696
CBD Programme	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Bridges Programme	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$305,000
Kerb and gutter	\$125,000	\$130,000	\$130,000	\$130,000
Cycleways and footpaths	\$156,000	\$160,000	\$165,000	\$165,000
Carparks	\$103,000	\$110,000	\$115,000	\$120,000
Other Minor Programmes	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000
Drainage	\$158,000	\$158,000	\$159,000	\$160,000
Traffic safety / control devices	\$93,606	\$94,858	\$110,231	\$107,241
Total Roads and Ancillary Works	\$5,145,576	\$7,671,907	\$5,507,521	\$5,583,937
Works Fleet and Vehicles	\$743,672	\$762,264	\$781,320	\$800,853
Recreation and Buildings				
- Recreation Renewals	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$255,000	\$260,000
- Sporting Grants	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
- Aquatic Centres	\$60,000	\$3,500,000	\$0	\$100,000
- Cemeteries	\$100,000	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000
- Tree Management	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$80,000
- Renewable Energy		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
- Buildings	\$300,000	\$350,000	\$375,000	\$450,000
- Sub total	\$810,000	\$4,390,000	\$920,000	\$1,105,000
Waste	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
Corporate services				
- Vehicles	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
- Public Art	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
- Art Acquistions	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
- Library Books Programme	\$141,000	\$144,250	\$147,581	\$150,996
- Commercial Buildings		\$0	\$500,000	\$600,000
- Works Depot Fuel Tanks	\$200,000			
- Information Services Strategy	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
- Capital Works Contingency	\$0	\$124,000	\$174,000	\$194,000
- Corporate Services Programme	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$180,000	\$165,000
- Sub total	\$1,156,000	\$1,233,250	\$1,816,581	\$1,924,996
Emergency management	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
<b>TOTALS - CAPITAL WORKS</b>	<b>\$8,405,248</b>	<b>\$14,607,421</b>	<b>\$9,575,422</b>	<b>\$9,964,786</b>

**OTHER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

Loan Repayments	\$621,839	\$555,486	\$422,659	\$446,925
Transfer to Reserves				
- VPA Funds	\$1,825,967	\$1,880,746	\$1,937,168	\$1,995,283
- Waste Facility Remediation	\$318,318	\$337,417	\$357,653	\$379,122
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$11,171,372</b>	<b>\$17,381,070</b>	<b>\$12,292,902</b>	<b>\$12,786,116</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21**

**Fund:** All Funds  
**Business Unit:** Consolidated General, Water, Sewer and Commercial Buildings Funds - With SRV

	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Revenues</b>						
Rates and Charges	(20,031,815)	(20,031,815)	(20,914,977)	(21,983,957)	(23,213,715)	(24,181,232)
User Charges and Fees	(13,528,819)	(13,548,819)	(14,184,400)	(14,288,015)	(14,861,233)	(15,327,496)
Interest and Investments Revenues	(2,254,500)	(2,268,000)	(2,162,209)	(1,977,563)	(1,913,963)	(1,883,648)
Other Revenues	(2,424,537)	(2,552,776)	(2,409,788)	(2,463,804)	(2,520,379)	(2,578,016)
Operating Grants and Contributions	(6,250,744)	(6,373,128)	(5,300,389)	(5,393,841)	(5,487,008)	(5,582,053)
Internal Revenue	(4,783,353)	(6,010,476)	(5,059,852)	(5,239,623)	(5,419,178)	(5,456,519)
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>(49,273,768)</b>	<b>(50,785,014)</b>	<b>(50,031,615)</b>	<b>(51,346,803)</b>	<b>(53,415,476)</b>	<b>(55,008,964)</b>

	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Wages and Salaries	13,094,137	13,290,484	13,571,739	13,889,526	14,469,790	14,911,101
Materials and Contracts	14,214,548	15,460,205	15,174,867	15,414,205	15,841,372	16,235,664
Other Costs	3,204,843	3,268,085	3,307,281	3,375,721	3,469,520	3,572,997
Borrowing Costs	1,715,858	1,715,858	2,126,712	2,404,022	2,519,970	2,791,417
Overheads	4,783,353	4,783,353	4,997,352	5,174,623	5,354,178	5,535,702
Depreciation	11,286,985	11,286,985	10,411,565	10,771,184	11,149,532	11,530,181
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>48,299,724</b>	<b>49,804,970</b>	<b>49,589,516</b>	<b>51,029,281</b>	<b>52,804,362</b>	<b>54,577,062</b>
<b>Total Operating Result Before Capital</b>	<b>(974,044)</b>	<b>(980,044)</b>	<b>(442,099)</b>	<b>(317,522)</b>	<b>(611,114)</b>	<b>(431,902)</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21**

**Fund:** General  
**Business Unit:** Consolidated General Fund

	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Revenues</b>						
Rates and Charges	(14,450,315)	(14,450,315)	(15,563,977)	(16,356,162)	(17,465,653)	(18,306,119)
User Charges and Fees	(6,434,666)	(6,444,666)	(6,694,225)	(6,699,700)	(6,981,927)	(7,144,561)
Interest and Investments Revenues	(931,500)	(945,000)	(938,209)	(947,193)	(956,889)	(965,433)
Other Revenues	(2,424,537)	(2,552,776)	(2,409,788)	(2,463,804)	(2,520,379)	(2,578,016)
Operating Grants and Contributions	(6,174,744)	(6,297,128)	(5,230,889)	(5,322,951)	(5,414,701)	(5,508,300)
Internal Revenue	(4,783,353)	(6,010,476)	(5,059,852)	(5,239,623)	(5,419,178)	(5,456,519)
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>(35,199,115)</b>	<b>(36,700,361)</b>	<b>(35,896,940)</b>	<b>(37,029,433)</b>	<b>(38,758,727)</b>	<b>(39,958,948)</b>

	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Wages and Salaries	11,231,316	11,427,663	11,563,034	11,807,840	12,311,479	12,673,002
Materials and Contracts	10,912,698	12,164,705	12,097,192	12,379,832	12,717,917	13,019,525
Other Costs	2,286,850	2,333,742	2,395,631	2,446,074	2,513,583	2,589,968
Borrowing Costs	592,127	592,127	588,937	586,087	722,996	1,018,386
Overheads	1,763,353	1,763,353	1,835,177	1,869,220	1,904,465	1,940,571
Depreciation	8,510,646	8,510,646	7,355,778	7,480,789	7,794,118	8,107,010
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>35,296,990</b>	<b>36,792,236</b>	<b>35,835,749</b>	<b>36,569,842</b>	<b>37,964,558</b>	<b>39,348,462</b>
<b>Total Operating Result Before Capital</b>	<b>97,875</b>	<b>91,875</b>	<b>(61,191)</b>	<b>(459,591)</b>	<b>(794,169)</b>	<b>(610,486)</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21**

**Fund:** Future Funds  
**Business Unit:** Education Division and Commercial Division  
**Fund**

	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Revenues</b>						
User Charges and Fees	(3,052,303)	(3,062,303)	(3,203,300)	(3,097,543)	(3,174,733)	(3,254,153)
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>(3,052,303)</b>	<b>(3,062,303)</b>	<b>(3,203,300)</b>	<b>(3,097,543)</b>	<b>(3,174,733)</b>	<b>(3,254,153)</b>

	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>December 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Wages and Salaries	80,000	80,000	81,424	83,866	86,382	88,974
Materials and Contracts	577,150	570,800	563,575	545,531	556,716	568,158
Other Costs	359,043	375,393	379,600	379,696	387,221	394,903
Borrowing Costs	908,235	908,235	908,235	884,235	884,235	884,235
Overheads	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,100,000	1,200,000	1,300,000	1,400,000
Depreciation	0	0	269,687	275,995	280,655	289,069
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>2,924,428</b>	<b>2,934,428</b>	<b>3,302,521</b>	<b>3,369,323</b>	<b>3,495,209</b>	<b>3,625,339</b>
<b>Total Operating Result Before Capital</b>	<b>(127,875)</b>	<b>(127,875)</b>	<b>99,221</b>	<b>271,780</b>	<b>320,476</b>	<b>371,186</b>

Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues

	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Fleet Operations</b>						
Revenue	(2,048,427)	(2,048,427)	(2,165,062)	(2,215,206)	(2,266,820)	(2,319,369)
Expenses	2,048,427	2,048,427	2,165,062	2,215,206	2,266,820	2,319,369
<b>Total Fleet Operations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Recreation</b>						
Revenue	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,400)	(20,800)	(21,220)
Expenses	1,424,527	1,424,527	1,569,753	1,609,709	1,650,703	1,693,799
<b>Total Recreation</b>	<b>1,404,527</b>	<b>1,404,527</b>	<b>1,549,753</b>	<b>1,589,309</b>	<b>1,629,903</b>	<b>1,672,579</b>
<b>Aquatic Centres</b>						
Revenue	(651,050)	(651,050)	(631,100)	(530,522)	(706,469)	(758,870)
Expenses	1,265,575	1,265,575	1,215,308	941,866	1,482,161	1,592,645
<b>Total Aquatic Centres</b>	<b>614,525</b>	<b>614,525</b>	<b>584,208</b>	<b>411,344</b>	<b>775,692</b>	<b>833,775</b>
<b>Roads and Drainage - Works</b>						
Revenue	(3,595,787)	(3,599,787)	(3,148,346)	(3,180,955)	(3,214,203)	(3,248,106)
Expenses	10,866,668	11,140,093	10,070,171	10,333,668	10,525,108	10,820,228
<b>Total Roads and Drainage - Works</b>	<b>7,270,881</b>	<b>7,540,306</b>	<b>6,921,825</b>	<b>7,152,713</b>	<b>7,310,905</b>	<b>7,572,122</b>
<b>Technical Services</b>						
Revenue	0	(37,730)				
Expenses	767,406	1,033,167	747,296	766,561	786,342	806,652
<b>Total Technical Services</b>	<b>767,406</b>	<b>995,437</b>	<b>747,296</b>	<b>766,561</b>	<b>786,342</b>	<b>806,652</b>
<b>Domestic Waste</b>						
Revenue	(2,355,651)	(2,355,651)	(2,431,841)	(2,625,199)	(2,722,713)	(2,829,937)
Expenses	2,355,651	2,355,651	2,431,841	2,625,199	2,722,713	2,829,937
<b>Total Domestic Waste</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Waste Management Facility</b>						
Revenue	(4,891,957)	(4,971,273)	(5,297,219)	(5,406,689)	(5,519,482)	(5,632,462)
Expenses	4,297,037	4,673,516	4,611,607	4,716,261	4,823,995	4,934,964
<b>Total Waste Management Facility</b>	<b>(594,920)</b>	<b>(297,757)</b>	<b>(685,612)</b>	<b>(690,428)</b>	<b>(695,487)</b>	<b>(697,498)</b>



**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21****General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues**

	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Economic Development and Community Services</b>						
Revenue	(260,000)	(260,000)	(88,000)	(89,730)	(91,493)	(93,293)
Expense	752,404	794,734	1,115,548	1,141,315	1,167,515	1,194,171
<b>Total Economic Development and Community Services</b>	<b>492,404</b>	<b>534,734</b>	<b>1,027,548</b>	<b>1,051,585</b>	<b>1,076,022</b>	<b>1,100,878</b>
<b>Human Resources and Safety</b>						
Revenue	(42,000)	(42,000)	(42,000)	(42,840)	(43,696)	(44,570)
Expense	709,564	700,958	675,005	692,890	711,260	730,135
<b>Total Human Resources and Safety</b>	<b>667,564</b>	<b>658,958</b>	<b>633,005</b>	<b>650,050</b>	<b>667,564</b>	<b>685,565</b>
<b>Property and Building Services</b>						
Revenue	(272,210)	(252,450)	(215,000)	(219,300)	(223,679)	(228,152)
Expense	1,988,102	1,995,202	1,963,610	2,032,491	2,102,137	2,172,844
<b>Total Property and Building Services</b>	<b>1,715,892</b>	<b>1,742,752</b>	<b>1,748,610</b>	<b>1,813,191</b>	<b>1,878,458</b>	<b>1,944,692</b>
<b>Financial Services</b>						
Revenue	(19,231,237)	(20,616,945)	(20,294,363)	(21,101,866)	(22,321,137)	(23,118,715)
Expense	1,198,762	1,261,228	1,227,452	1,255,155	1,283,632	1,312,911
<b>Total Financial Services</b>	<b>(18,032,475)</b>	<b>(19,355,717)</b>	<b>(19,066,911)</b>	<b>(19,846,711)</b>	<b>(21,037,505)</b>	<b>(21,805,804)</b>
<b>Cultural</b>						
Revenue	(39,500)	(39,500)	(26,700)	(27,234)	(27,777)	(28,352)
Expense	311,153	319,153	316,482	324,387	332,772	665,914
<b>Total Cultural</b>	<b>271,653</b>	<b>279,653</b>	<b>289,782</b>	<b>297,153</b>	<b>304,995</b>	<b>637,562</b>
<b>Libraries</b>						
Revenue	(190,100)	(190,100)	(178,250)	(181,811)	(183,562)	(189,147)
Expense	791,662	793,462	804,872	826,782	849,292	872,435
<b>Total Libraries</b>	<b>601,562</b>	<b>603,362</b>	<b>626,622</b>	<b>644,971</b>	<b>665,730</b>	<b>683,288</b>
<b>Information Services</b>						
Expense	681,706	716,706	904,851	927,168	950,432	940,878
<b>Total Information Services</b>	<b>681,706</b>	<b>716,706</b>	<b>904,851</b>	<b>927,168</b>	<b>950,432</b>	<b>940,878</b>
<b>Customer Service and Administration</b>						
Expense	683,403	683,403	697,378	711,232	725,453	739,961
<b>Total Customer Service and Administration</b>	<b>683,403</b>	<b>683,403</b>	<b>697,378</b>	<b>711,232</b>	<b>725,453</b>	<b>739,961</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21****General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues**

	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Emergency Services</b>						
Revenue	(234,000)	(192,038)	(195,000)	(198,900)	(202,878)	(206,935)
Expenses	809,643	872,961	860,976	879,134	897,885	917,043
<b>Total Emergency Services</b>	<b>575,643</b>	<b>680,923</b>	<b>665,976</b>	<b>680,234</b>	<b>695,007</b>	<b>710,108</b>
<b>Environmental Planning</b>						
Revenue	(532,750)	(562,873)	(545,050)	(556,201)	(567,569)	(579,192)
Expenses	710,643	764,729	860,199	882,190	904,769	927,958
<b>Total Environmental Planning</b>	<b>177,893</b>	<b>201,856</b>	<b>315,149</b>	<b>325,989</b>	<b>337,200</b>	<b>348,766</b>
<b>Regulatory Services</b>						
Revenue	(135,200)	(135,200)	(94,000)	(95,880)	(97,795)	(99,750)
Expenses	264,956	258,862	256,360	263,519	270,880	278,449
<b>Total Regulatory Services</b>	<b>129,756</b>	<b>123,662</b>	<b>162,360</b>	<b>167,639</b>	<b>173,085</b>	<b>178,699</b>
<b>Integrated Planning</b>						
Revenue	(15,000)	(15,000)	(33,500)	(34,170)	(34,853)	(35,550)
Expenses	680,698	856,254	596,948	610,025	623,387	637,043
<b>Total Integrated Planning</b>	<b>665,698</b>	<b>841,254</b>	<b>563,448</b>	<b>575,855</b>	<b>588,534</b>	<b>601,493</b>
<b>Executive Services</b>						
Revenue	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	0	0	0
Expenses	936,555	931,555	835,541	856,301	877,695	899,580
<b>Total Executive Services</b>	<b>896,555</b>	<b>891,555</b>	<b>835,541</b>	<b>856,301</b>	<b>877,695</b>	<b>899,580</b>
<b>Corporate Services Management</b>						
Revenue	(700)	(700)				
Expenses	1,039,102	1,058,102	1,065,256	1,093,332	1,121,982	1,151,410
<b>Total Corporate Services Management</b>	<b>1,038,402</b>	<b>1,057,402</b>	<b>1,065,256</b>	<b>1,093,332</b>	<b>1,121,982</b>	<b>1,151,410</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>						
Revenue	(643,546)	(669,637)	(491,509)	(502,530)	(513,801)	(525,328)
Expenses	713,346	843,971	844,233	865,451	887,625	910,136
<b>Total Sustainability</b>	<b>69,800</b>	<b>174,334</b>	<b>352,724</b>	<b>362,921</b>	<b>373,824</b>	<b>384,808</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21****General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues**

		2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Education Division</b>							
	Revenue	(558,995)	(558,995)	(574,641)	(527,685)	(540,641)	(554,209)
	Expenses	523,985	523,985	825,204	838,197	851,737	869,258
<b>Total Education Division</b>		<b>(35,010)</b>	<b>(35,010)</b>	<b>250,563</b>	<b>310,512</b>	<b>311,096</b>	<b>315,049</b>
<b>Commercial Division</b>							
	Revenue	(2,493,308)	(2,503,308)	(2,628,659)	(2,569,858)	(2,634,092)	(2,699,944)
	Expenses	2,400,443	2,410,443	2,477,317	2,531,126	2,643,472	2,756,081
<b>Total Commercial Division</b>		<b>(92,865)</b>	<b>(92,865)</b>	<b>(151,342)</b>	<b>(38,732)</b>	<b>9,380</b>	<b>56,137</b>
<b><u>Minor Funds Principal Activities</u></b>							
<b>Water</b>							
	Revenue	(6,205,650)	(6,205,650)	(6,260,875)	(6,388,657)	(6,606,468)	(6,833,907)
	Expenses	6,001,648	6,001,648	5,938,990	6,079,130	6,230,613	6,385,239
<b>Total Water</b>		<b>(204,002)</b>	<b>(204,002)</b>	<b>(321,885)</b>	<b>(309,527)</b>	<b>(375,855)</b>	<b>(448,668)</b>
<b>Sewer</b>							
	Revenue	(4,816,700)	(4,816,700)	(4,670,500)	(4,831,170)	(4,875,548)	(4,961,956)
	Expenses	4,076,658	4,076,658	4,512,256	5,010,986	5,113,982	5,218,022
<b>Total Sewer</b>		<b>(740,042)</b>	<b>(740,042)</b>	<b>(158,244)</b>	<b>179,816</b>	<b>238,434</b>	<b>256,066</b>

Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21

Fund: All Funds  
 Business Unit: Consolidated General, Water, Sewer and Commercial Buildings Funds -  
 Without SRV

	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Revenues</b>						
Rates and Charges	(20,031,815)	(20,031,815)	(20,611,413)	(21,653,751)	(22,876,040)	(23,826,673)
User Charges and Fees	(13,528,819)	(13,548,819)	(14,184,400)	(14,373,315)	(14,782,899)	(15,252,594)
Interest and Investments Revenues	(2,254,500)	(2,268,000)	(2,162,209)	(1,977,563)	(1,913,963)	(1,883,648)
Other Revenues	(2,424,537)	(2,552,776)	(2,409,788)	(2,463,804)	(2,520,379)	(2,578,016)
Operating Grants and Contributions	(6,250,744)	(6,373,128)	(5,300,389)	(5,393,841)	(5,487,008)	(5,582,053)
Internal Revenue	(4,783,353)	(6,010,476)	(5,059,852)	(5,239,623)	(5,419,178)	(5,456,519)
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>(49,273,768)</b>	<b>(50,785,014)</b>	<b>(49,728,051)</b>	<b>(51,101,897)</b>	<b>(52,999,467)</b>	<b>(54,579,503)</b>
	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Expenses</b>						
Wages and Salaries	13,094,137	13,290,484	13,571,739	14,063,326	14,472,804	14,911,101
Materials and Contracts	14,214,548	15,460,205	15,174,867	15,469,180	15,845,433	16,236,225
Other Costs	3,204,843	3,268,085	3,307,281	3,375,721	3,453,944	3,544,669
Borrowing Costs	1,715,858	1,715,858	2,126,712	2,354,022	2,280,305	2,203,385
Overheads	4,783,353	4,783,353	4,997,352	5,174,623	5,354,178	5,535,702
Depreciation	11,286,985	11,286,985	10,411,565	10,828,181	11,079,703	11,338,606
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>48,299,724</b>	<b>49,804,970</b>	<b>49,589,516</b>	<b>51,265,053</b>	<b>52,486,367</b>	<b>53,769,688</b>
<b>Total Operating Result Before Capital</b>	<b>(974,044)</b>	<b>(980,044)</b>	<b>(138,535)</b>	<b>163,156</b>	<b>(513,100)</b>	<b>(809,815)</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21**

Fund:	General						
Business Unit:	Consolidated General Fund						
	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget	
Revenues							
Rates and Charges	(14,450,315)	(14,450,315)	(15,260,413)	(16,025,956)	(17,127,978)	(17,951,560)	
User Charges and Fees	(6,434,666)	(6,444,666)	(6,694,225)	(6,785,000)	(6,903,593)	(7,069,659)	
Interest and Investments Revenues	(931,500)	(945,000)	(938,209)	(947,193)	(956,889)	(965,433)	
Other Revenues	(2,424,537)	(2,552,776)	(2,409,788)	(2,463,804)	(2,520,379)	(2,578,016)	
Operating Grants and Contributions	(6,174,744)	(6,297,128)	(5,230,889)	(5,322,951)	(5,414,701)	(5,508,300)	
Internal Revenue	(4,783,353)	(6,010,476)	(5,059,852)	(5,239,623)	(5,419,178)	(5,456,519)	
Total Operating Revenues	(35,199,115)	(36,700,361)	(35,593,376)	(36,784,527)	(38,342,718)	(39,529,487)	
	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget	
Expenses							
Wages and Salaries	11,231,316	11,427,663	11,563,034	11,981,640	12,314,493	12,673,002	
Materials and Contracts	10,912,698	12,164,705	12,097,192	12,434,807	12,721,978	13,020,086	
Other Costs	2,286,850	2,333,742	2,395,631	2,446,074	2,498,007	2,561,640	
Borrowing Costs	592,127	592,127	588,937	586,087	583,331	580,354	
Overheads	1,763,353	1,763,353	1,835,177	1,869,220	1,904,465	1,940,571	
Depreciation	8,510,646	8,510,646	7,355,778	7,537,786	7,724,289	7,915,435	
Total Operating Expenses	35,296,990	36,792,236	35,835,749	36,855,614	37,746,563	38,691,088	
Total Operating Result Before Capital	97,875	91,875	242,373	71,087	(596,155)	(838,399)	

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21**

<b>Fund:</b>	<b>Future Funds</b>						
<b>Business Unit:</b>	<b>Education Division and Commercial Division Fund</b>						
		<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Revenues</b>							
User Charges and Fees		(3,052,303)	(3,062,303)	(3,203,300)	(3,097,543)	(3,174,733)	(3,254,153)
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>		<b>(3,052,303)</b>	<b>(3,062,303)</b>	<b>(3,203,300)</b>	<b>(3,097,543)</b>	<b>(3,174,733)</b>	<b>(3,254,153)</b>
		<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
Wages and Salaries		80,000	80,000	81,424	83,866	86,382	88,974
Materials and Contracts		577,150	570,800	563,575	545,531	556,716	568,158
Other Costs		359,043	375,393	379,600	379,696	387,221	394,903
Borrowing Costs		908,235	908,235	908,235	834,235	784,235	734,235
Overheads		1,000,000	1,000,000	1,100,000	1,200,000	1,300,000	1,400,000
Depreciation		0	0	269,687	275,995	280,655	289,069
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>		<b>2,924,428</b>	<b>2,934,428</b>	<b>3,302,521</b>	<b>3,319,323</b>	<b>3,395,209</b>	<b>3,475,339</b>
<b>Total Operating Result Before Capital</b>		<b>(127,875)</b>	<b>(127,875)</b>	<b>99,221</b>	<b>221,780</b>	<b>220,476</b>	<b>221,186</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21****General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues**

	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Fleet Operations</b>						
Revenue	(2,048,427)	(2,048,427)	(2,165,062)	(2,215,206)	(2,266,820)	(2,319,369)
Expenses	2,048,427	2,048,427	2,165,062	2,215,206	2,266,820	2,319,369
<b>Total Fleet Operations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Recreation</b>						
Revenue	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,400)	(20,800)	(21,220)
Expenses	1,424,527	1,424,527	1,569,753	1,609,709	1,650,703	1,693,799
<b>Total Recreation</b>	<b>1,404,527</b>	<b>1,404,527</b>	<b>1,549,753</b>	<b>1,589,309</b>	<b>1,629,903</b>	<b>1,672,579</b>
<b>Aquatic Centres</b>						
Revenue	(651,050)	(651,050)	(631,100)	(615,822)	(628,135)	(683,968)
Expenses	1,265,575	1,265,575	1,215,308	1,227,638	1,264,166	1,359,552
<b>Total Aquatic Centres</b>	<b>614,525</b>	<b>614,525</b>	<b>584,208</b>	<b>611,816</b>	<b>636,031</b>	<b>675,584</b>
<b>Roads and Drainage - Works</b>						
Revenue	(3,595,787)	(3,599,787)	(3,148,346)	(3,180,955)	(3,214,203)	(3,248,106)
Expenses	10,866,668	11,140,093	10,070,171	10,333,668	10,525,108	10,720,468
<b>Total Roads and Drainage - Works</b>	<b>7,270,881</b>	<b>7,540,306</b>	<b>6,921,825</b>	<b>7,152,713</b>	<b>7,310,905</b>	<b>7,472,362</b>
<b>Technical Services</b>						
Revenue	0	(37,730)				
Expenses	767,406	1,033,167	747,296	766,561	786,342	806,652
<b>Total Technical Services</b>	<b>767,406</b>	<b>995,437</b>	<b>747,296</b>	<b>766,561</b>	<b>786,342</b>	<b>806,652</b>
<b>Domestic Waste</b>						
Revenue	(2,355,651)	(2,355,651)	(2,431,841)	(2,625,199)	(2,722,713)	(2,829,937)
Expenses	2,355,651	2,355,651	2,431,841	2,625,199	2,722,713	2,829,937
<b>Total Domestic Waste</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Waste Management Facility</b>						
Revenue	(4,891,957)	(4,975,491)	(5,297,219)	(5,406,689)	(5,519,482)	(5,632,462)
Expenses	4,297,037	4,677,734	4,611,607	4,716,261	4,823,995	4,934,964
<b>Total Waste Management Facility</b>	<b>(594,920)</b>	<b>(297,757)</b>	<b>(685,612)</b>	<b>(690,428)</b>	<b>(695,487)</b>	<b>(697,498)</b>

**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21****General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues**

	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Economic Development and Community Services</b>						
Revenue	(260,000)	(260,000)	(88,000)	(89,730)	(91,493)	(93,293)
Expense	752,404	794,734	1,115,548	1,141,315	1,167,515	1,194,171
<b>Total Economic Development and Community Service</b>	<b>492,404</b>	<b>534,734</b>	<b>1,027,548</b>	<b>1,051,585</b>	<b>1,076,022</b>	<b>1,100,878</b>
<b>Human Resources and Safety</b>						
Revenue	(42,000)	(42,000)	(42,000)	(42,840)	(43,696)	(44,570)
Expense	709,564	700,958	675,005	692,890	711,260	730,135
<b>Total Human Resources and Safety</b>	<b>667,564</b>	<b>658,958</b>	<b>633,005</b>	<b>650,050</b>	<b>667,564</b>	<b>685,565</b>
<b>Property and Building Services</b>						
Revenue	(272,210)	(252,450)	(215,000)	(219,300)	(223,679)	(228,152)
Expense	1,988,102	1,995,202	1,963,610	2,032,491	2,102,137	2,172,844
<b>Total Property and Building Services</b>	<b>1,715,892</b>	<b>1,742,752</b>	<b>1,748,610</b>	<b>1,813,191</b>	<b>1,878,458</b>	<b>1,944,692</b>
<b>Financial Services</b>						
Revenue	(19,231,237)	(20,616,945)	(19,990,799)	(20,771,660)	(21,983,462)	(22,764,156)
Expense	1,198,762	1,261,228	1,227,452	1,255,155	1,283,632	1,312,911
<b>Total Financial Services</b>	<b>(18,032,475)</b>	<b>(19,355,717)</b>	<b>(18,763,347)</b>	<b>(19,516,505)</b>	<b>(20,699,830)</b>	<b>(21,451,245)</b>
<b>Cultural</b>						
Revenue	(39,500)	(39,500)	(26,700)	(27,234)	(27,777)	(28,352)
Expense	311,153	319,153	316,482	324,387	332,772	341,393
<b>Total Cultural</b>	<b>271,653</b>	<b>279,653</b>	<b>289,782</b>	<b>297,153</b>	<b>304,995</b>	<b>313,041</b>
<b>Libraries</b>						
Revenue	(190,100)	(190,100)	(178,250)	(181,811)	(183,562)	(189,147)
Expense	791,662	793,462	804,872	826,782	849,292	872,435
<b>Total Libraries</b>	<b>601,562</b>	<b>603,362</b>	<b>626,622</b>	<b>644,971</b>	<b>665,730</b>	<b>683,288</b>
<b>Information Services</b>						
Expense	681,706	716,706	904,851	927,168	950,432	940,878
<b>Total Information Services</b>	<b>681,706</b>	<b>716,706</b>	<b>904,851</b>	<b>927,168</b>	<b>950,432</b>	<b>940,878</b>
<b>Customer Service and Administration</b>						
Expense	683,403	683,403	697,378	711,232	725,453	739,961
<b>Total Customer Service and Administration</b>	<b>683,403</b>	<b>683,403</b>	<b>697,378</b>	<b>711,232</b>	<b>725,453</b>	<b>739,961</b>



**Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21****General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues**

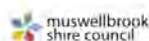
	2016/17 Original Budget	September 2016 Review Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
<b>Emergency Services</b>						
Revenue	(234,000)	(192,038)	(195,000)	(198,900)	(202,878)	(206,935)
Expenses	809,643	872,961	860,976	879,134	897,885	917,043
<b>Total Emergency Services</b>	<b>575,643</b>	<b>680,923</b>	<b>665,976</b>	<b>680,234</b>	<b>695,007</b>	<b>710,108</b>
<b>Environmental Planning</b>						
Revenue	(532,750)	(562,873)	(545,050)	(556,201)	(567,569)	(579,192)
Expenses	710,643	764,729	860,199	882,190	904,769	927,958
<b>Total Environmental Planning</b>	<b>177,893</b>	<b>201,856</b>	<b>315,149</b>	<b>325,989</b>	<b>337,200</b>	<b>348,766</b>
<b>Regulatory Services</b>						
Revenue	(135,200)	(135,200)	(94,000)	(95,880)	(97,795)	(99,750)
Expenses	264,956	258,862	256,360	263,519	270,880	278,449
<b>Total Regulatory Services</b>	<b>129,756</b>	<b>123,662</b>	<b>162,360</b>	<b>167,639</b>	<b>173,085</b>	<b>178,699</b>
<b>Integrated Planning</b>						
Revenue	(15,000)	(15,000)	(33,500)	(34,170)	(34,853)	(35,550)
Expenses	680,698	856,254	596,948	610,025	623,387	637,043
<b>Total Integrated Planning</b>	<b>665,698</b>	<b>841,254</b>	<b>563,448</b>	<b>575,855</b>	<b>588,534</b>	<b>601,493</b>
<b>Executive Services</b>						
Revenue	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	0	0	0
Expenses	936,555	931,555	835,541	856,301	877,695	899,580
<b>Total Executive Services</b>	<b>896,555</b>	<b>891,555</b>	<b>835,541</b>	<b>856,301</b>	<b>877,695</b>	<b>899,580</b>
<b>Corporate Services Management</b>						
Revenue	(700)	(700)				
Expenses	1,039,102	1,058,102	1,065,256	1,093,332	1,121,982	1,151,410
<b>Total Corporate Services Management</b>	<b>1,038,402</b>	<b>1,057,402</b>	<b>1,065,256</b>	<b>1,093,332</b>	<b>1,121,982</b>	<b>1,151,410</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>						
Revenue	(643,546)	(669,637)	(491,509)	(502,530)	(513,801)	(525,328)
Expenses	713,346	843,971	844,233	865,451	887,625	910,136
<b>Total Sustainability</b>	<b>69,800</b>	<b>174,334</b>	<b>352,724</b>	<b>362,921</b>	<b>373,824</b>	<b>384,808</b>

<b>Muswellbrook Shire Council Estimates for 2017/18 to 2020/21</b>						
<b><u>General Fund Principal Activities - Use of General Revenues</u></b>						
	<b>2016/17 Original Budget</b>	<b>September 2016 Review Budget</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Budget</b>	<b>2019/20 Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Budget</b>
<b>Education Division</b>						
Revenue	(558,995)	(558,995)	(574,641)	(527,685)	(540,641)	(554,209)
Expenses	523,985	523,985	825,204	838,197	851,737	869,258
<b>Total Education Division</b>	<b>(35,010)</b>	<b>(35,010)</b>	<b>250,563</b>	<b>310,512</b>	<b>311,096</b>	<b>315,049</b>
<b>Commercial Division</b>						
Revenue	(2,493,308)	(2,503,308)	(2,628,659)	(2,569,858)	(2,634,092)	(2,699,944)
Expenses	2,400,443	2,410,443	2,477,317	2,481,126	2,543,472	2,606,081
<b>Total Commercial Division</b>	<b>(92,865)</b>	<b>(92,865)</b>	<b>(151,342)</b>	<b>(88,732)</b>	<b>(90,620)</b>	<b>(93,863)</b>
<b><u>Minor Funds Principal Activities</u></b>						
<b>Water</b>						
Revenue	(6,205,650)	(6,205,650)	(6,260,875)	(6,388,657)	(6,606,468)	(6,833,907)
Expenses	6,001,648	6,001,648	5,938,990	6,079,130	6,230,613	6,385,239
<b>Total Water</b>	<b>(204,002)</b>	<b>(204,002)</b>	<b>(321,885)</b>	<b>(309,527)</b>	<b>(375,855)</b>	<b>(448,668)</b>
<b>Sewer</b>						
Revenue	(4,816,700)	(4,816,700)	(4,670,500)	(4,831,170)	(4,875,548)	(4,961,956)
Expenses	4,076,658	4,076,658	4,512,256	5,010,986	5,113,982	5,218,022
<b>Total Sewer</b>	<b>(740,042)</b>	<b>(740,042)</b>	<b>(158,244)</b>	<b>179,816</b>	<b>238,434</b>	<b>256,066</b>



Muswellbrook Shire Council  
**Community  
Strategic Plan**  
2017-2027





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*Cover: Amelia Constable (right), Katie Constable (left) at the 2016 Bottoms Up Festival in Muswellbrook. Photographer: Dan Pereira*



## What we want

We want community wellbeing to be at the heart of everything we do and every consideration we make.

We want to be inclusive. We want everyone to enjoy full participation in our community.

We want to be culturally rich and diverse with our Shire's communities having strong identities and a shared 'sense of place'.

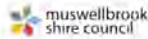
We want a local economy with full employment in a diverse range of high value industries.

We want to be leaders in environmental sustainability.



Muswellbrook Shire Community Strategic Plan 2016-2017

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## Message from the Mayor



Muswellbrook Shire is one of the State's economic and social 'heavy lifters'. For over four decades it has been at the heart of the State's energy industry. The Shire's two baseload power stations provide 40% of the State's baseload energy requirements. It is also the home of Australia's oldest continuing coal mining operation, Muswellbrook Coal, and the Shire's thermal coal industry provides 25% of the State's total thermal coal exports. It is the home of the two largest thoroughbred horse studs in the southern hemisphere and approximately 40% of the value of thoroughbred bloodstock in Australia is reared within the Shire. It accounts for some 40% of the Hunter's viticulture and is home to the largest dairy industry in the Hunter.

Socially, Muswellbrook has played an important part in lifting people out of social disadvantage. With over 450 social housing dwellings, Muswellbrook has a proud history of providing skills and jobs to people coming to live in Muswellbrook's social housing from across New South Wales – predominantly into the energy industry but also into agriculture and the retail services industries.

The economic and social heavy lifting, however, is taking a toll. The volatility of the thermal coal market has had enormous social ramifications including rapid rises in unemployment. Between December 2012 and December 2015, unemployment rose from 3.1% to 12.4%. During the same period, a housing shortfall, that had forced more than 40 families to live in camping grounds across the Shire, reversed into a housing supply glut with more than 280 unoccupied dwellings and a consequential drop in the mean price of a three bedroom Muswellbrook home by some \$105,000. Land use conflict between the Shire's main export industries has also weighed heavily on social cohesion within the Shire.

Socially, the transfer of the community housing

management from the NSW Government to a private sector provider has seen a substantial deterioration in key performance outcomes including the stability of social housing tenants – approximately 30% of tenants coming to live in Muswellbrook's community housing now transition out within twelve months. Moreover, 44% of tenants coming to live in Muswellbrook's social housing were homeless at the time of placement and 94% of tenants are in the highest categorisation of need. The issues of social disadvantage with which the Muswellbrook community presently deals are much more complex and layered than ever before.

This Community Strategic Plan (the Plan) sets a clear direction, reflective of community expectation, that there be a reduction in the volatility of the local economy by diversifying into other more sustainable industries, an immediate support for job creation, initiatives to stabilise the tenancy turnover in Muswellbrook's social housing and transitioning Muswellbrook into a Regional centre.

Much has already been done in this regard, Council during its last term achieved a balanced budget and the community's Future Fund now generates a \$1m annual dividend to Council's General Fund – approximately a third of the way to achieving our target of being in a position to offset the deterioration of the mining category of the general rate from 2019. We improved access to higher education by working with the University of Newcastle to establish a University research centre in Muswellbrook, built the Sam Adams Residential Student College, built a new home for the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music and worked with Hunter TAFE on a new Town Centre Campus for its business courses. We worked with Calvary Aged Care to develop a new fully graduating aged care facility, upgraded substantial parts of the Muswellbrook Town Centre, helped seed-fund a cinema and built a Regional playground. We undertook the first projects in support of the Denman Town Centre revitalisation and made substantial improvements to the Denman Recreation Area. Importantly, we made substantial commitments to improve our consultation with you by establishing listening posts, more community consultations and by making significant investments in communications.

This Plan has been the culmination of twelve months of consultation and careful planning. Council thanks the General Manager and his staff officers for the preparation of the document and we commend the Plan to the community.

Martin Rush - Mayor



## The Governing Body

The Governing Body of the Council consists of twelve (12) councillors elected for four years. The Chair of Muswellbrook Shire Council (the Mayor of Muswellbrook) and the Deputy Chair are elected by councillors every two years.

### The Mayor and Councillors

The Mayor holds a number of Council delegations and some statutory responsibilities to make determinations on behalf of the Governing Body of the Council between Council meetings. The Mayor is responsible to the Governing Body for the determinations he or she makes. The Governing Body has also provided certain delegations to Councillor Spokespersons for Council's principal activities to speak on behalf of Council and make policy determinations between Council meetings with respect to those specific principal activities.



Cr Martin Rush - Mayor



Cr Scott Bailey



Cr Mark Bowditch



Cr Janelle Risby



Cr Jason Foy



Cr Michelle Green



Cr Jacinta Ledlin



Cr Graeme McNeil



Cr Steve Reynolds



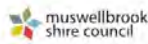
Cr Rod Scholes



Cr Stephen Ward



Cr Brett Woodruff



## The Integrated Planning and Reporting framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework was established in 2009 by the New South Wales NSW Government. This legislation requires all Councils to have the following plans developed in consultation with the community:

### The Community Strategic Plan 10 year plan

The Community Strategic Plan is an overview document that identifies the community's main priorities and visions for the future. It covers a minimum time frame of 10 years.

### The Delivery Program 4 year plan

The Delivery Program is a four-year plan. It is the point of reference for all activities undertaken by the Council during its term of office. The Delivery Program details the strategies Council will undertake over a four year period, working towards achieving certain visions in the Community Strategic Plan.

### The Operational Plan Annual plan

The Operational Plan is a sub-plan of the Delivery Program. It directly addresses the strategies outlined in the Delivery Program and identifies actions, programs and activities Council will be undertaking within the current financial year. The Operational Plan also allocates responsibilities for each action or set of actions and it identifies suitable performance measures for determining the effectiveness of the activities undertaken.

### Resourcing Strategy

The Resourcing Strategy demonstrates how Council will resource achievement of the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program. Council does not have full responsibility for implementing or resourcing all the community aspirations, state agencies, non-government organisations, community groups and individuals also have a role to play in delivering these outcomes. Council's Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plan and Workforce Management Plan have been developed to outline how Council intends to resource the actions identified in the Delivery Plan and objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.





## Community strategic plan in context – local issues and global mega-trends

The Shire's economy is closely linked to the fortunes of the energy industry and, in particular, the international thermal coal industry and the domestic power industry. Between the extraction of thermal coal, power generation and transmission, the energy industry employs more than 35% of the Shire's workforce and imports labour from neighbouring local government areas – the totality of which means that the Shire is a net importer of labour.

When the last community strategic plan was adopted, the prevailing focus had been on managing the rapid tripling in size of the thermal coal industry over the forward decade.

In addition to the rapid expansion of thermal coal extraction, a concept approval for a third thermal coal baseload power station – to be known as 'Bayswater B' had been granted which would have been a significant driver of employment growth in the Shire had it moved into construction and operation.

The Community's focus had been on air quality and dust management, visual impacts and on other community impacts – such as housing supply, childcare and health services. Council's 2013 Baseline Data Survey indicated that 50% of people requested

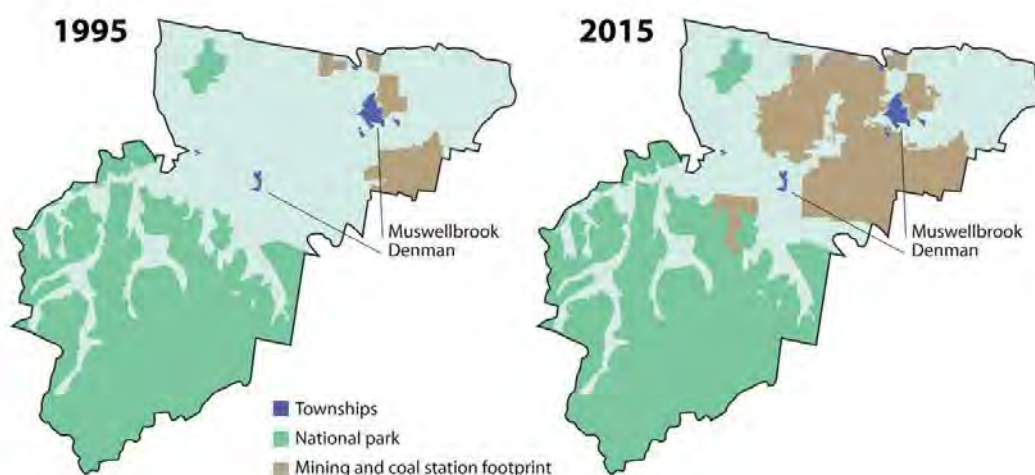


*Muswellbrook Shire's economy is closely linked to the fortunes of the energy industry.*

a reduction in excessive mining noise and dust and 52% wanted improved medical services. Similar data was reflected in Mt Arthur's then community survey which also noted a need to focus on housing supply and childcare services.

Much of Council's corporate focus had been on ensuring sufficient revenues were in place to support the growth of the State's energy industry in the Shire culminating in a Mining Affected Road Network Study and a Thomas Mitchell Drive Contributions Plan and, ultimately, a special rate variation in the mining category to bridge the projected

### Muswellbrook Shire Mining Footprint



*Figure 1 – the Shire's Mining Footprint illustration as it appeared in previous Council Integrated planning documents.*



shortfall in necessary local road funding. Council was also focused on hospital expansions, childcare capacity building, and the facilitation of housing development.

Since that time there has been a strong and sustained reversal in the long term projections for traded thermal coal and substantial local job losses. The recent closure of Drayton Coal in November 2016 and the planned closures of Muswellbrook Coal, Liddell Coal and Mangoola Coal will have a substantial impact on local employment – although partially offset by the anticipated commencement of mining at Mt Pleasant Coal. Moreover, AGL Macquarie, the owner of the Shire's two existing base load thermal coal stations, has announced closure dates for both its local stations<sup>1</sup>. The loss of the associated 600 jobs is expected to have a further substantial impact on the local economy.

Indeed, the community's focus has changed



*The community's focus has turned towards economic prosperity, social equity, environmental sustainability, cultural vitality, community infrastructure and community leadership*

markedly to jobs, economic diversification and resilience, transition to a low carbon future, education and skills, and for Muswellbrook to develop and emerge as a Regional Centre.

This has been borne out in a process of extensive and diverse consultations undertaken by Council of its community over the last twelve months. Residents have been invited to attend community forums, participate in both telephone and face-to-



Figure 2 illustrates the Muswellbrook LGA unemployment rate between December 2012 and December 2015:

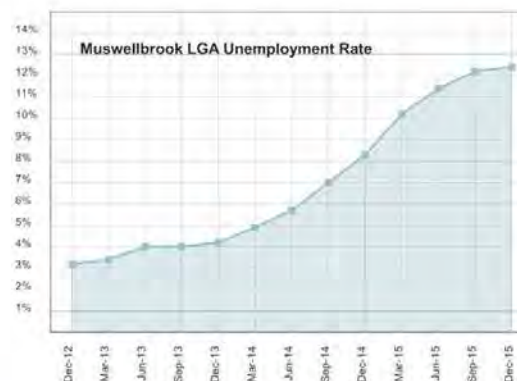


Figure 3 illustrates projected mine rating revenues for Muswellbrook Shire Council between 2016/17 and 2026/27:

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Small Area Labour Market September 2016

Alongside mine closures and job losses, there has also been a marked contraction in the mining services industry in the Shire's heavy industrial estate, including the collapse of large publically listed companies Subzero and ResCo Services, amongst others (with approximately 480 jobs lost in that sector).

The reversal in the long term projections for traded thermal coal is also expected to result in a substantial projected decline in the mining category of Council's general rating as illustrated in the following figure.

<sup>1</sup> 2022 (Liddell Power Station) and 2036 (Bayswater Power Station)



face surveys, and to make submissions in response to strategic documents such as the Denman Town Centre Strategy, the Muswellbrook Town Centre Strategy and the Local Environmental Plan.

Most recently, Council completed a series of community engagement Listening Posts at key locations around the Shire in which the community identified their priorities for the future of economic prosperity, social equity, environmental sustainability, cultural vitality, community infrastructure and community leadership over the next ten years and beyond.

The community has made it clear they are proud to live in Muswellbrook but are concerned about future job opportunities. They believe that Muswellbrook should be the Regional Centre for the Upper Hunter with infrastructure that is matching – such as a Regional Convention and Performance Centre, a children's water park and a new exhibition and show facility.

The community is rightly concerned that Council respond rapidly and effectively in its strategic response to the issue as well as the other local issues and/or mega-trends that have been identified in surveys or in community or councillor feedback.

A non-exhaustive list of these local issues and/or mega-trends is set out below.

These are, in broad terms, the key issues and challenges that the community – either through its State or Regional planning or through its local consultation has asked the Council to 'own' and, in response, to develop clear strategies to meet.

#### Local economic prosperity issues

Structural decline or uncertainty in the thermal coal industry, associated job losses, and the need to diversify the Shire's economic base

A rising middle class – particularly in south east Asia, and an associated growing demand for agricultural products

The growth of the knowledge, creativity, and digital economy and a reshaping labour market

The continued growth of the services sector and the concentration of services in Regional centres

A growing visitor economy

The movement from a linear to a circular economy

#### Local cultural vitality issues

A variety of opportunities for cultural participation

Opportunity to experience high quality national and international arts and culture

#### Local community infrastructure issues

Integrated footpath & cycleways

Improved accessibility to Council's facilities

Maintain and expand infrastructure to support Muswellbrook achieve Regional Centre status.

Ageing Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

#### Local community leadership issues

Community consultation and participation in council planning

Workforce and asset management

Business Improvement

#### Local social equity issues

An aging population and changing retirement patterns

Social disadvantage and social exclusion – particularly in Muswellbrook South

Early childhood education and social advantage indicia

Improving local liveability and amenity

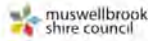
Easily accessible venues to appreciate and participate in arts and culture

#### Local environmental sustainability issues

Climate change

Loss/re-establishment/rehabilitation of native vegetation and vegetation connectivity

Poor riparian environments and poor public access to waterways



## Overview

Over the past twelve months, Council has undertaken a comprehensive program of consultation with its communities and stakeholders as part of the development of this Plan.

Residents have been invited to attend community forums, participate in telephone and face-to-face surveys and make submissions as part of the preparation of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and a range of whole-of-community strategic planning exercises.

Council is determined to meet the challenges set out in Chapter 1 head on. Whilst surveys indicate that the community is increasingly happy with the way that Council is tackling the “big issues”, the surveys also indicate that the community is asking Council to do much more and sooner. This Plan sets out the overarching goals that will provide a framework for the strategies, which Council, through consultation with the community and key stakeholders, has adopted in order to best meet the challenges of the present and future.

Council has particularly focussed on a whole of local government approach, integrated closely with the Hunter Regional Plan 2036, Premier’s Priorities in Action and State Priorities. Council realises that the ambit list of possible projects and programs vastly exceeds the available resources and in the prioritisation of projects and programs, Council proposes to elevate those projects and programs which deal with multiple issues, achieve multiple goals or have the greatest benefit to cost outcomes.



*Face-to-face surveys were conducted at key locations around Muswellbrook Shire*

The community’s goal outlined in this Plan have also been informed by, and aligned with the priorities and actions endorsed in the Premier’s Priorities in Action, and NSW State Priorities and other NSW Government plans to grow the economy, deliver infrastructure, protect the vulnerable, reduce human impacts on the environment and improve health, education and public services across NSW. Specific elements of those goals are also aligned with the goals and directions identified in the vision outlined in the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 which will guide the delivery of greater prosperity for communities across the Hunter region, including those in the Muswellbrook Shire.



# 1. Economic Prosperity

Jobs and job security continues to dominate as the primary economic issue in the Shire. In the Baseline Data Survey, just twelve percent of people agreed that there were good employment prospects for locals within the area. "Increased employment" was also the highest response to the question "If you had a magic wand, and could fix one thing what would that be?"

Between December 2012 and December 2015, unemployment rose from 3.1% to 12.4%. There is also a feeling of uncertainty about the future of thermal coal mining and the consequential impact of the decline on that industry on the community's economic viability.

Underpinning that feeling of uncertainty, are planned closure dates for a number of coal mining operations and power stations including: Muswellbrook Coal, Mangoola Coal, Liddell Coal, and Liddell Power Station within the next ten years. The impact of the job losses will only partially be offset by the development of Mt Pleasant Coal.

Traded thermal coal is an industry in structural decline, and this is also building into the pessimism around jobs.



*Job security continues to dominate as the primary economic issue in Muswellbrook Shire*

## Goal 1: Support job growth

The community told us their top concern is for the future of job opportunities in the Shire. There is, however, optimism about the future because of the Shire's natural and built advantages. The Shire has well maintained road and rail infrastructure, proximity to major domestic markets (Sydney and Newcastle) and, through the Port of Newcastle, international markets – including South Eastern Asia, and an abundance of natural resources – including water, minerals and soils.



*Muswellbrook Shire has well maintained road and rail infrastructure.*

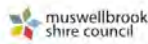
## Goal 2: Diversify the economy, facilitate the development of intensive agriculture and other growth industries, make the Shire a more attractive place to invest and do business

Consultation around the review of the Local Environmental Plan, has reinforced the community's desire to make better use of mining 'buffer' land for intensive agriculture and other value-adding purposes.

A stated outcome of a number of consultations and plans including the Upper Hunter Diversification Strategy and the Hunter Regional Plan is to diversify and build a more resilient Upper Hunter economy.

## Goal 3: Facilitate greater access to higher education and participation in the knowledge and creativity economy

The need to transition the local economy also creates a need to help facilitate the reshaping of the local workforce. The local workforce has relatively low levels of education – particularly higher education.



Over the next ten years, it is anticipated that a number of trends will impact upon the workforce including increased automation and a higher demand for knowledge and creative skills. Council has been working closely with Hunter TAFE and the University of Newcastle on projects such as the Sam Adams Residential Student College, the Tertiary Education Centre, the Upper Hunter Innovation Hub, and the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music in an effort to increase opportunities for locals to pursue higher education. Council has also been working closely with the University of Newcastle to encourage research and innovation in industries in which the Shire has a comparative advantage – such as rural based renewable energy development and intensive agriculture.

#### Goal 4: Develop Muswellbrook as a regional centre

Our community was also clear that they see Muswellbrook as the regional centre of the Upper Hunter, which is backed by the NSW Government's Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Plan. It is argued that the growth of the town will generate demand for jobs and services that will help offset some of the long term decline in the thermal coal and power industries. The development of Muswellbrook as a Regional centre has been reinforced in the Hunter Regional Plan.

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants its towns, villages and rural areas to be well planned and managed, with respect for the Shire's history, heritage and environment. The community wants the town centres to encourage economic and cultural growth and have attractive open civic and green space that are active, attract investment and cultural activity. The Muswellbrook Shire community wants Muswellbrook to be a 'Strategic Centre' for the Upper Hunter.



*Martin Rush at the opening of the Upper Hunter Tertiary Education Centre in August 2016.*

### How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:

#### Premier's Priorities In Action:

Creating Jobs; Improving education results.

#### State Priorities:

Strong budget and economy; encourage business investment; boosting apprenticeships; Improving Aboriginal education outcomes.

#### Hunter Regional Plan 2036:

to be the leading regional economy in Australia; enhance inter-regional linkages to support economic growth; transform the productivity of the Upper Hunter; greater housing choice and jobs; protect the economic functions of employment land; strengthen the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities; develop advanced manufacturing, defence and aerospace hubs; promote innovative small business and growth in the service sectors; grow tourism in the industry; protect and enhance agricultural productivity; manage the ongoing use of natural resources; diversify and grow the energy sector.



## 2. Social Equity and Inclusion

Whilst the Baseline Data Survey indicated that a majority of residents of the Muswellbrook Shire are engaged, feel a sense of pride in their communities and feel safe and secure in their homes, there remain a number of indicators where the community is seeking more, specifically in youth services, facilities and services for older people and a desire for support for local communities. There has also been considerable support for past liveability and amenity improvements such as the seed funding of a cinema, provision of a Regional quality playground, construction of a new home for the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music and Town Centre renewal. There is an expectation that these improvements will continue.



*The community seeks more youth and aged care facilities and services.*

### Goal 5: Continue to improve the affordability, liveability and amenity of the Shire's communities

The community supports Council's concerted effort to advocate for improvements in Muswellbrook South and other parts of the Shire with high concentrations of social disadvantage. The community continues to raise the need for action to address the significant structural issues associated with the built environment and lack of support services for residents living in these areas, all of which contribute to social isolation and inhibit access to existing services.

### Goal 6: Stabilise the tenancy turnover in the Shire's social housing

Since the last community strategic plan, there has been a marked deterioration in the stability of social housing tenants – approximately 30% of tenants coming to live in Muswellbrook's

community housing transition out within twelve months. Moreover, 44% of tenants coming to live in Muswellbrook's social housing were homeless at the time of placement and 94% of tenants are in the highest level of need. The issues of social disadvantage with which the Muswellbrook community presently deals are much more complex and layered than ever before.

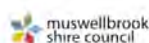
This is placing enormous demand on social welfare services as well as on education, health and other social services. There is also evidence that the service provision is less effective because of the instability in the social housing tenancies.

### Goal 7: Build social inclusion and improve the delivery of social services

The Wollombi Road residential area has a history of socio-economic and geographic disadvantage, for which the community continues to want change. Council has drafted a Wollombi Road Residential Precinct Master Plan which offers a way for revitalisation of this neighbourhood. The NSW Government, which has primary responsibility for social welfare and which owns the majority of the social housing in the Wollombi Road neighbourhood has indicated support for the Master Plan but is yet to provide any significant financial support to achieve its outcomes. Nonetheless, the NSW Government and its private sector management contractor have committed to working with Council to build social inclusion and improve the delivery of social services into the Shire.

### Goal 8: Retention and expansion of quality and affordable child care services.

Community members continue to call for enhanced support for, and increased access to, early childhood education, childcare facilities and the associated children's services in the Muswellbrook Shire region. Since that time new services and additional places have become available however it remains that not everyone in the community with young children knows what services are available, understands the value of early learning and the importance of removing barriers to early learning. In response, Council, in partnership with Mt Arthur Coal, developed the Muswellbrook Children's Services Strategic Plan which identified that all children require care and early learning opportunities prior



to the commencement of school – at home and outside of home. The Strategic Plan has identified measures to address specific gaps and opportunities, particularly for families that may be experiencing social disadvantage and exclusion, including single parent families; transient families; those children who have not attended child care, preschool or a ready-for-school program, and children in need of ongoing speech pathology and occupational therapy. Each of these issues has the potential to contribute to existing and future social exclusion. In response to these ongoing needs, the Community Strategic Plan sets out a goal to continue to address this area of need.

#### **Goal 9: Facilitate opportunities to expand seniors living.**

By the standards of other Local Government Areas, Muswellbrook Shire has a small ageing population. One of the factors in the past is that many residents, upon retirement seek a lifestyle away from Muswellbrook because there has been a lack of supported and integrated seniors' living. Whilst the development of the Calvary Muswellbrook Retirement Living has gone some way to address this market gap, it remains a concern of the community of the community that as the mega-trend towards an ageing population and changing retirement

patterns emerges, Council has a responsibility to facilitate options for its residents to be able to enjoy their latter years in their own communities, with the support of responsive care and health services, and their families and friends.

#### **Goal 10: Further the process of Aboriginal reconciliation in the Shire**

Council has been an active partner in the reconciliation process with local Aboriginal people since 1997 at which time Council convened a Reconciliation Committee in partnership with the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council. The Committee has achieved a number of significant milestones including the commissioning of a Reconciliation Mural. There is, however, much still to do. Council is keen to partner with the Land Council on a number of new initiatives involving the ecological and cultural enhancement of land it holds in the Shire together with other projects of cultural significance.

### **How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:**

#### **Premier's Priorities In Action:**

Reducing domestic violence; tackling childhood obesity; improving education results; protecting our kids; reduce youth homelessness; improving government services; creating jobs; building infrastructure; improving service levels in hospitals.

#### **State Priorities:**

Increasing housing supply; creating sustainable social housing; increasing cultural participation; improving Aboriginal education outcomes; reducing violent crime

#### **Hunter Regional Plan 2036:**

Thriving Communities; create healthy built environments through good design; enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces; revitalise existing communities; greater housing choice and jobs; promote housing diversity; deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities.aerospace hubs; promote innovative small business and growth in the service sectors; grow tourism in the industry; protect and enhance agricultural productivity; manage the ongoing use of natural resources; diversify and grow the energy sector.



### 3. Environmental Sustainability

The Shire has an enviable ecological environment situated between the Barrington Tops and the pristine wilderness of the Wollombi National Park World Heritage Area (which comprises 43% of the Shire). Nonetheless, a substantial part of the Shire

It was also noted that the rivers and creeks were largely inaccessible to the public. The survey is consistent with analysis which demonstrates that the Shire's rivers and creeks are in very poor ecological condition.

**43%** of Muswellbrook Shire  
is national park

has been disturbed for the purpose of open cut coal mining and the community has expressed concern about the ongoing rehabilitation of mined land, air quality, and noise associated with coal mining.

#### Goal 11: Higher quality final landforms with shallower voids and more emphasis on progressive rehabilitation with local workforce participation

There is strong community concern about the quality of the final rehabilitation of mined land and final landform voids and the long term appearance of the post-mining landscape including the overburden emplacements.

The community has expressed a view that it wants the final landform voids to be 'filled in' and the overburden emplacements to look much more natural.

#### Goal 12: Enhance native vegetation connectivity across the Upper Hunter

Agricultural and mining practices over many years have reduced native vegetation connectivity across the Hunter Valley floor and between the Wollombi National Park World Heritage Area and the Great Eastern Ranges. The community supports initiatives to enhance native vegetation connectivity in these areas.

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants to see the native vegetation of the Shire connect with corridors of remnant endangered vegetation across the Upper Hunter to maintain the natural beauty of the region and a connection with history and heritage of the Shire.

#### Goal 13: Our local rivers and creeks are enhanced, utilised and valued

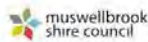
In the Baseline Data Survey, just 31% of people agreed that local rivers and creeks were healthy.



*In August 2016 non-indigenous trees were cleared along Muscle Creek, near Bell Street, then replenished with Australia Natives.*

#### Goal 14: Support initiatives which reduce the community's impact on the environment

The community has long been supportive of efforts to reduce its impact on the environment and became the first local government area in the Hunter to deploy a three bin waste management system many years ago. It also has one of the highest recycling rates in the Hunter and reuses 100% of its waste water. The community continues to express its view that it must minimise its impact on the environment but has increasingly emphasised that efforts to minimise waste – particularly landfill waste, must not become unaffordable. This is particularly so since the introduction of the NSW Government's



Environmental Waste Levy which now accounts for approximately 60% of the fees at Council's waste management centre. It has led to substantial fee increases at the waste management centre over a relatively short period of time which, in turn, appears to have dampened enthusiasm for further waste reduction initiatives in community surveys

Nonetheless, the need to continue to reduce waste is an emerging mega-trend as our economy moves from being linear to circular in terms of inputs. There are emerging economic opportunities for the Shire in becoming a leader in this field. For that reason, Council continues to support initiatives which reduce community impact on the environment.



*In 2016 Council buildings were fitted with a total of 237kw of solar panels.*

#### **Goal 15: Support Federal and State initiatives to reduce the human impact on climate change**

Although climate change does not feature as a significant issue in Council's Baseline Survey, the evidence is clear that human development has had a substantial and permanent impact on the world's climate. The consequences for the Shire, being a relatively dry part of the planet, are substantial – particularly on agriculture and water security.

Moreover, Council acknowledges that the Muswellbrook local government area makes one of the largest contributions to global warming of councils in NSW as a result of its economic reliance on thermal coal and thermal coal power generation.

While the Federal and NSW Governments have primary responsibility for transitioning the Shire's economy to a low carbon future, Council is committed to being a partner in that exercise.

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants to see improved regeneration and greening of mined lands, improved air quality and the protection of biodiversity and remnant endangered flora and fauna.

#### **How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:**

##### **Premier's Priorities In Action:**

Keeping our environment clean.

##### **State Priorities:**

A biodiversity-rich natural environment; protect and connect natural areas; sustain water quality and security; increase resilience to hazards and climate change.

##### **NSW Draft Climate Change Fund Strategic Plan:**

NSW Aspirational objectives: achieve net-zero emissions of 2050; NSW is more resilient to a changing climate; lead by example to reduce emissions in government operations.



## 4. Cultural Vitality



*Students attending the annual Aboriginal Flag Raising Ceremony in front of the Reconciliation Mural.*

The Shire has a rich and vibrant array of cultural activities. The Regional Art Gallery is highly regarded with a valuable collection of contemporary Australian works from almost all the well regarded Australian artists from the 1950s onwards. It also hosts an Art Prize which boasts the highest prize value of any regional gallery in Australasia at \$70,000. The Shire is also home to the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music, the Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter Eisteddfod, the Muswellbrook Amateur Theatre Society, Arts Upper Hunter and a number of other cultural bodies.

### Goal 16: Conserve the Heritage and History of the Shire

The heritage and history of the Shire is core to its identity, culture and vitality. Council recognises that heritage requires protection and conservation if it is to be enjoyed by future generations. Places of heritage significance provide a link to the past informing us about our cultural history and providing a sense of identity and community. They may consist of landscapes, places, buildings, structures, relics or works which are valued not simply because they are old but because they are associated with our history, people and events of meaning. It is a goal of Council to protect and ensure the long term conservation of the Shire's heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.

### Goal 17: Facilitate options to improve cultural activities in the Shire.

Over the last four years Council has been exploring ways to improve local events and cultural activities as a way of meeting the community's desire for a

'sense of place' improve liveability and encourage visitors.

The community is justifiably proud of its cultural vitality but has repeatedly indicated that the quality of performances, particularly from the Amateur Theatre Society and the UHCM Concert Orchestra (amongst other groups) warrants the construction of a Regional Performance Space.

### Goal 18: Facilitate cultural activities and events which engage the community and visitors, and which create a 'sense of place' and identity.

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants to grow and expand community cultural activities and events and wants to attract growing numbers of visitors to the region. The community wants to expand the Blue Heeler Film Festival, the Bottoms Up Festival, the Shire's Shows and Events that feature and promote the strengths and values of the Shire, of love for family, community, heritage, history, the land and agriculture.

### How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:

#### Premier's Priorities In Action:

Creating jobs; building infrastructure.

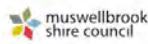
#### State Priorities:

Improving Aboriginal education outcomes; increasing cultural participation.

#### Hunter Regional Plan 2036:

Transform the productivity of the Upper Hunter; grow tourism in the region; create healthy built environments through good design; enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces; revitalise existing communities; deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities; strengthen the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities.





## 5. Community Infrastructure



*This new intersection at Crinoline Street in Denman improves safety*

Council maintains a road network of almost 700 km; Council has approximately 73 kms of stormwater drainage measures and over 1,000 rural culverts; 45 maintained carparks; 170 km of kerb and guttering; \$12.4M worth of traffic safety and control devices; and 40 km of footpaths and cycleways.

The community has high expectations of its infrastructure and Council has over many years worked to ensure that the renewal backlog has been addressed through significant investment. The level of service of our mining affected roads network has in large part been upgraded to ensure the needs of the mining industry and the jobs it supports are being met.

In the Baseline Data Survey from 2016, a desire for improvements in the Shire's road network continues to rate highly, and Council continues to commit significant resources to properly maintain these crucial community assets.

There is however more to do with respect to other asset classes, including upgrades to the Shire's aquatic centres, Council owned buildings and recreation spaces and new footpaths and cycleways. Well maintained community infrastructure helps enable Council to provide quality lifestyle infrastructure in support of our residents and to attract and sustain further economic and population growth.

### **Goal 19: Our community's infrastructure is planned well, is safe and reliable, and provides required levels of service.**

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants safe, reliable, roads, foot paths, cycle ways, car parks and drains that are well designed and built to support economic growth and public health. The community wants clean and inviting civic precincts that provide opportunity for community interaction, are easy to access and provide pleasant enjoyable environments.



*Footpath, street furniture and landscaping works in Bridge Street Muswellbrook completed in 2016.*

**Goal 20: A safe, secure and reliable water supply and sewerage services are provided to all residents that will ensure public health.**

Council provides water treatment and reticulated drinking water supply services to the urban areas of Muswellbrook, Denman and Sandy Hollow and sewerage reticulation and treatment to the urban areas of Muswellbrook and Denman. The fully regulated Hunter River provides a high reliability source for both Muswellbrook and Denman. Sandy Hollow relies for its water supply on the Goulburn River, which over the course of the last drought proved reliable for the village at its current size.

Muswellbrook Shire Council meets each of the water quality benchmarks set by the NSW Office of Water and will continue to do so.

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants clean, affordable and healthy water and waste management services that are sustainable and have a low impact on the environment.



*Council water technician testing water from the Hunter River.*

**Goal 21: The road, footpath and cycleway networks are integrated and allow for the safe movement of residents around the Shire**

The community seek well planned, maintained and safe footpaths, cycleways and carparks to assist with connectivity through the urban areas and across the Shire.

**How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:**

**Premier's Priorities In Action:**

Building infrastructure.

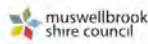
**State Priorities:**

Improving road travel reliability.

**Hunter Regional Plan 2036:**

Thriving communities: enhance access to recreational facilities and connect open spaces; Greater housing choice and jobs: deliver infrastructure to support growth and communities; A biodiversity-rich natural environment: sustain water quality and security.





## 6. Community Leadership

Council enjoys a high overall satisfaction rating among members of its communities. Civic and community leadership plays an important role in ensuring that the needs and aspirations of the community can be and achieved by Council.

It is vital that those sections of the community and individuals whose voice may not normally be heard in community discussions are included in community decision making. Those from culturally diverse backgrounds, young people, those experiencing social exclusion and people in geographically isolated areas, single parents and the elderly are often not heard. The Baseline Community Survey indicated that Council has room for improvement in the way communicates with the community and involves them in decision making.

Council strives for transparent and collaborative leadership, which is essential for good governance and maintaining ongoing community support for Council's activities.

Residents and community groups are encouraged and empowered to participate in their communities, building capacity to help influence decision making outcomes to bring about positive change in the community now and going forward into the future.

**Goal 22: Collaborative and responsive community leadership that meets the expectations and anticipates the needs of the community.**



The Muswellbrook Shire community wants leadership that is proactive and honest, that genuinely communicates with the community, listens to what the community has to say and advocates with other levels of government on behalf of the community.

**Goal 23: Genuine and well informed community participation in decision making.**

A well-functioning, properly resourced and efficient Council is crucial in helping the community achieve its vision for the future, and to ensure that its desires and expectations are able to be met. Council will continue to build capacity within the organisation, seek improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the services and infrastructure it delivers, and be a responsive and consultative Council deeply engaged in its community.

**Goal 24: A council that is well managed, efficient and properly resourced and that is responsive to its communities and stakeholders.**

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants Council to spend public money wisely, to provide friendly and quick customer service, to be open and provide information on council activities that is up to date and easy to understand.

**Goal 25: A sustainable council that is a best practice employer providing a safe, happy and productive workplace.**

The Muswellbrook Shire community wants Council to employ the best people for the job, to be a fair and equitable workplace that is focused on providing excellent service to the community.

### How Muswellbrook's Community Goals align with NSW Government Priorities and Plans:

#### Premier's Priorities In Action:

Improving government services; faster housing approvals; driving public sector diversity.

#### State Priorities:

Delivering strong budgets; Better Government digital services.

## Appendix 1 – Summary of community goals

### Economic Prosperity

- Goal 1: Support Job Growth
- Goal 2: Diversify the economy, facilitate the development of intensive agriculture and other growth industries, make the Shire a more attractive place to invest and do business
- Goal 3: Facilitate greater access to higher education and participation in the knowledge and creativity economy
- Goal 4: Develop Muswellbrook as a regional centre

### Social Equity and Inclusion

- Goal 5: Continue to improve the affordability, liveability and amenity of the Shire's communities
- Goal 6: Stabilise the tenancy turnover in the Shire's social housing
- Goal 7: Build social inclusion and improve the delivery of social services
- Goal 8: Retention and expansion of quality and affordable child care services.
- Goal 9: Facilitate opportunities to expand seniors living.
- Goal 10: Further the process of Aboriginal reconciliation in the Shire

### Environmental Sustainability

- Goal 11: Higher quality final landforms with shallower voids and more emphasis on progressive rehabilitation with local workforce participation
- Goal 12: Enhance Native Vegetation Connectivity Across The Upper Hunter
- Goal 13: Our local rivers and creeks are enhanced, utilised and valued
- Goal 14: Support initiatives which reduce the community's impact on the environment

- Goal 15: Support Federal and State initiatives to reduce the human impact on climate change

### Cultural Vitality

- Goal 16: Conserve the Heritage and History of the Shire
- Goal 17: Facilitate options to improve cultural activities in the Shire.
- Goal 18: Facilitate cultural activities and events which engage the community and visitors, and which create a 'sense of place' and identity.

### Community Infrastructure

- Goal 19: Our community's infrastructure is planned well, is safe and reliable, and provides required levels of service.
- Goal 20: A safe, secure and reliable water supply and sewerage services are provided to all residents that will ensure public health.
- Goal 21: The road, footpath and cycleway networks are integrated and allow for the safe movement of residents around the Shire.

### Community Leadership

- Goal 22: Collaborative and responsive community leadership that meets the expectations and anticipates the needs of the community.
- Goal 23: Genuine and well informed community participation in decision making.
- Goal 24: A council that is well managed, efficient and properly resourced and that is responsive to its communities and stakeholders.
- Goal 25: A sustainable council that is a best practice employer providing a safe, happy and productive workplace.



## Scenario 1

	Budget 2016/17	Budget 2017/18	Projected 2018/19	Projected 2019/20	Projected 2020/21
<b>General Fund</b>					
<b>Income Statement</b>					
Extra Operational Grants & Contributions	0	220	224	229	233
Employee Costs	0	0	0	0	0
Materials & Contracts	0	-750	-765	-780	-796
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>					
Additional Renewals		-	-	-	-
Reduce new Capex					
CBD Programme					
Drainage - Commercial Buildings					
Information Services Strategy					
<b>Capital Funding</b>					
Reserves					
Borrowing					

**NB: 2016/17 Buliding & Infrasture renewals estimated at \$6.862m**

## Scenarios 2 & 3

	Budget 2016/17	Budget 2017/18	Projected 2018/19	Projected 2019/20	Projected 2020/21
<b>General Fund</b>					
<b>Income Statement</b>					
Extra Operational Grants & Contributions	0	220	224	229	233
Employee Costs	0	0	0	0	0
Materials & Contracts	0	-750	-765	-780.3	-795.906
Interest Costs				280	140
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>					
Additional renewals					
Reduce new Capex					
CBD Programme					
Drainage - Commercial Buildings					
Information Services Strategy					
<b>Capital Funding</b>					
Reserves					
Borrowing					

## Convention Centre

Base Scenario 2 budgets (Funding model 1)

Projected  
2020/21  
Funding  
Model 1



User Fees & Charges	370
---------------------	-----

**Expenditure**

Employee Costs	249
Materials & Contracts	444
Borrowing Costs	199
Depreciation Expense	125
Other Costs	

1,017
-------

**Capital Expenditure & Funding**

2/02/2017

Project Cost	12,000	12,000	-
Loan Principal repayment		-	

**Funded By**

Capital Grant		-	-	3,500
Reserve Funds	5,000	5,000	-	
Borrowing	7,000	7,000	-	8,500
	12,000	12,000	-	12,000

2/02/2017

Projected
2019/20

12,000

Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27

Revised 2021/22 extrapolated

Employee cost adjustment = savir  
Big increase compared to FFF LTFI

250      255      260      265      271      276

Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27

Revised 2021/22 extrapolated

To cover additional borrowing in capex version 2/2/2017

See new Capex Incl SRV data sheet supplied (green tab)  
supplied 2/2/2017

Projected	Projected
2020/21	2020/21
Funding	Budget
Model 6	Change

200	-	170
190	-	59
435	-	9
474		275
360		235
		-
1,459		442

Note: The opex budget loaded is based on Funding model 1 and this has been updated based on this calculation (adjustments in blue column added to operating budget).

The Capital Budget was updated on 2/2/2017 so no adjustments have been loaded.

Projected 2019/20	Projected 2019/20
12,000	-
-	-
3,500	-
-	-
8,500	-
12,000	-

Projected 2020/21	Projected 2020/21	Projected 2020/21
	-	-
400	400	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-

**NB:** Any capex adjustmenst here are not linked through to the financial statements

## 6.2 SPECIAL RATE VARIATION APPLICATION

<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>A. Phone survey report - SRV consultation</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Fiona Plesman - Acting Director - Planning, Community &amp; Corporate Services</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Amanda King - Senior Enterprise Risk Management Officer</b>
<b>Community Plan Issue:</b>	<b><i>Progressive leadership</i></b>
<b>Community Plan Goal:</b>	<b><i>That Muswellbrook Shire Council is appropriately resourced to deliver infrastructure and services into the future</i></b>
<b>Community Plan Strategy:</b>	<b><i>Involve the community in decision making</i></b>

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to present to Council the proposed Application for a Special Rate Variation which is to be lodged with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) on 13<sup>th</sup> February.

**The Special Rate Variation Application will be tabled at the Extra Ordinary Meeting.**

### OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

**That Council:**

- 1. Endorse the application for a Special Rate Variation prior to lodgement with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).**

**Moved:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Seconded:** \_\_\_\_\_

### BACKGROUND

Councils in NSW seeking special variations to general rating income above the rate peg amount or to increase minimum rate levels above the statutory limit, are required to submit applications to the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for review and assessment by the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Applications will be assessed with determinations made in April 2017.

### CONSULTATION

Advertisements in local newspapers and on social media and website

Online survey from 3/1/17 – 3/2/17

Telephone survey of 550 residents conducted 17/1/17 – 24/1/17 – see the attached report

Community forum – Muswellbrook 23/1/17

Community forum – Denman 24/1/17

### CONSULTATION WITH COUNCILLOR SPOKESPERSON

The Integrated Planning Sunset Committee

Councillor Spokesperson Integrated Planning

Councillor Spokesperson Finance & Corporate Services

**REPORT**

Council established an Integrated Planning Sunset Steering Committee to guide the preparation of Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting documents, including the preparation of the Long Term Financial Plan and an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Rating Variation (SRV).

The application for the SRV needs to address the following criteria:

- The extent to which council has fulfilled its obligations under IP&R – which are for a clear link between councils Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and the aspirations of the community with the requirement for the SRV.
- Evidence that the community is aware of the need for and extent of a rate rise, and that the community has been consulted.
- The impact on affected ratepayers must be reasonable.
- The relevant IP&R documents have been exhibited and endorsed by Council.
- The IP&R documents and Councils application explain the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies Council has realised in past years and plans to realise over the proposed SRV period.
- Projects proposed for funding via the SRV that are over \$1M are required to have Capital Expenditure Reviews submitted to the Office of Local Government prior to submission of the SRV application.

Council has engaged extensively with the community using the following methods:

- Listening posts
- Community Forums
- Externally managed phone survey (see attached report from Jetty consulting)
- On-line survey via Councils web site.

Online survey results (as of Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 3.30pm)

853 responses.

YES = 49.4%; NO = 43.6%; .NOT SURE = 7%

**OPTIONS**

Council not apply for a special rating variation

**CONCLUSION**

**The Special Rating Variation Application will be tabled at the Extra Ordinary Meeting.**

**SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The SRV if successful will assist Council in the delivery of new infrastructure necessary to support economic diversification and realisation of the Muswellbrook and Denman Town Centre Strategies.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Should Councils application for the SRV be successful Council will remain within the required benchmarks to maintain Fit for the Future status.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Not Applicable

**STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable

**OPERATIONAL PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

The SRV Application links with IP&R goals stated in the new Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program 2017 to 2021

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Risk management regarding the proposed major projects are addressed in the Capital Expenditure Reviews



## A poll of Muswellbrook Shire residents to measure support for a proposed Special Rate Variation



Results from a random and statistically valid telephone survey of 550 adult residents, conducted by Jetty Research for **Muswellbrook Shire Council**

**Dated:**  
February 2017

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Prepared by	Christine Dening
Reviewed by	James Parker
Date	February 2017
Document Name	Muswellbrook Shire Council SRV Survey
Version	Draft 1.0

Muswellbrook Shire Council SRV Survey  
© Jetty Research, February 2017

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Front cover: Proposed Muswellbrook Regional Convention and Performance Centre (from Council's Facebook page)



### Disclaimer

While all care and diligence has been exercised in the preparation of this report, Jetty Research Pty. Ltd. does not warrant the accuracy of the information contained within and accepts no liability for any loss or damage that may be suffered as a result of reliance on this information, whether or not there has been any error, omission or negligence on the part of Jetty Research Pty. Ltd. or its employees.



## Executive summary

In December 2016, Muswellbrook Shire Council commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of its adult residents to measure knowledge of, and support for a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV).

Muswellbrook Shire Council residents were contacted randomly by phone and asked to participate in a telephone survey regarding an "important local issue". Apart from ensuring at least 20% of interviews were conducted within the 2328 postcode, no other formal quotas were applied. However, we did attempt to ensure an adequate mix of respondents across age groups and genders.

Based on the number of adult residents within the Muswellbrook Shire, a random sample of 550 adult residents implies a margin for error of approximately  $\pm 4.1\%$  at the 95% confidence level. This essentially means that if we conducted a similar poll 20 times, results should reflect the views and behaviour of the overall survey population – in this case "all adult residents excluding council employees and councillors" – to within a  $\pm 4.1\%$  margin in 19 of those 20 surveys.

For more information on survey methodology, sampling error and sample characteristics, see pages 8-9. For more detailed information on the demographic breakdown of survey respondents, see pages 10-13.

### Among the survey's major conclusions:

1. Knowledge of Council's proposal to deliver three new facilities was high among residents, with 84% claiming to having read, heard or seen information regarding the proposal prior to our call.
2. Three-quarters of ratepayers recalled receiving a letter from Council regarding the SRV. Of these, 80% said they had read it.
3. Support for, and opposition to the special rate variation was evenly split: 44% of respondents supported the SRV while 45% were opposed (and 11% unsure).
4. Those who supported the SRV tended to do so as they saw value in the projects targeted for funding via the SRV: 22% of all respondents agreed to the need for all three projects, 17% felt the need to progress and/or upgrade facilities generally, 8% agreed to at least some of the proposed projects, and 5% felt the projects may result in increased tourism or employment for the region.
5. Those who opposed the SRV did so either because they opposed one or more of the proposed facilities (15% of all respondents), or because they felt that they or other community members would struggle to pay it (14%). Some also felt that Council should find another way to fund the projects (9%) or had other more important priorities (9%). Five per cent simply felt the rate proposed was too high.



6. When asked specifically whether their opposition was based mainly on: (a) concern about the rate; or (b) a belief that the projects were not necessary, 40% of those opposed to the SRV said this was because they felt it was too high, while 21% didn't believe Muswellbrook needed the facilities being sought. A further 18% felt it was both factors equally, while 8% argued it was principally because the facilities were not of value to them. (As a proportion of *all* respondents, this equates to 18% saying the amount was too high while 10% believed the proposed facilities were not necessary and 8% claimed both objections equally.)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James D. Parker".

James Parker, QPMR, B. Ec, Grad Cert Applied Science (Statistics), AMSRS  
Managing Director  
February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017





## Introduction

### Background and Objectives

In December 2016, Muswellbrook Shire Council commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of local residents to determine attitudes towards a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV). The proposed SRV is targeted towards:

1. A regional quality water park at the Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre and the replacement of the 84-year old 50 metre pool;
2. Delivery of the Denman town centre revitalisation; and
3. A regional convention and performance venue in Muswellbrook's town centre.

Specifically, the research sought to:

- Measure knowledge of proposed SRV;
- Measure awareness/reading of background materials;
- Measure support for the proposed SRV, and reasons for support/opposition
- See how results vary by factors such as urban/rural, age, gender, postcode etc.

### Methodology

The survey was conducted using a random fixed line and mobile telephone poll of Muswellbrook adult residents. Respondents were initially selected at random from a verified and random telephone database of 3,486 residential fixed line and mobile telephone numbers within the LGA.<sup>1</sup>

Quotas were applied by region, with a minimum of 20% of the sample sought within the 2328 postcode (incorporating the town of Denman) and a maximum of 80% in the 2333 postcode (in which Muswellbrook is situated). This was designed to reflect differences in population size while still maintaining an adequate sample size for cross analysis. No other formal quotas were applied, although attempts were made to ensure an adequate mix of respondents across age groups and sub-regions.

No mention of the survey subject matter was made in the survey pre-amble, to avoid response/non-response bias<sup>2</sup>. Instead, residents were merely asked if they would assist Council by completing a research survey on "an important local issue".

Respondents were screened to ensure they were aged 18 or over, residents of the Muswellbrook shire, and were not councillors or permanent Council employees.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers were provided by SamplePages, a respected supplier of random valid numbers to the market and social research industry

<sup>2</sup> That is, participation biased towards those with a pre-existing interest in the survey's subject matter



A survey form was constructed collaboratively between Muswellbrook Shire Council and Jetty Research (see Appendix 1), based on satisfying the above objectives.

Telephone polling was conducted between January 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> from Jetty Research's Coffs Harbour CATI<sup>3</sup> call centre. A team of 12 researchers called residents on weekday evenings (excluding Friday) from 3.30 to 8pm. Where phones went unanswered, were engaged or diverted to answering machines, researchers phoned on up to five occasions at different times of the afternoon or evening.

In all, 550 residents completed a telephone survey. Interview duration varied from 4 to 12 minutes, with an average of 6.1 minutes. Response rate was good, with 56% of those reached and potentially eligible agreeing to take part.

Please note that due to the nature of the survey, not all respondents answered every question. The number of respondents answering each question is marked as "n = XXX" in the graph accompanying that question.

Cleaned data was entered into statistical database SPSS for analysis. Where differences in this report are classed as significant, this implies they are statistically significant based on independent sample t-scores, Chi-square or other analysis of variation (ANOVA) calculations. In statistical terms, significant differences are unlikely to have been caused by chance alone. Unless indicated otherwise, significant differences are typically highlighted in blue (above mean) and pink (below mean).

Results have been post-weighted by age and gender to match the adult population profile of the Muswellbrook Shire in the 2011 ABS census. (See Appendix 2 for weighting calculation.)

### Sampling error

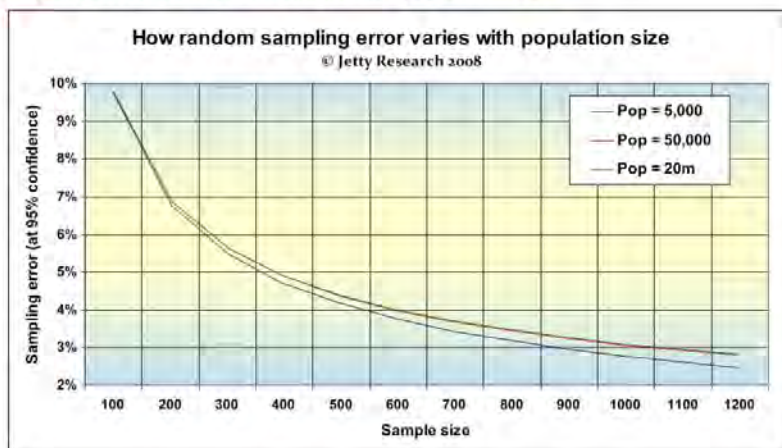
According to the 2011 ABS Census (Usual Resident profile) the total adult (18+) population of the Muswellbrook Shire was 11,497. Hence the sampling error of an n=550 sample is +/- 4.1%. (This means in effect that if we conducted a similar poll 20 times, results should reflect the views and behaviour of the overall survey population to within a +/- 4.1% margin in 19 of those 20 surveys.)

As Graph i, over page, shows, margin for error falls as sample size rises. Hence cross-tabulations or sub-groups within the overall sample will typically create much higher margins for error than the overall sample. For example, using the above population sizes, a sample size of 100 exhibits a margin for error of +/- 9.8% (again at the 95% confidence level).

<sup>3</sup> Computer-aided telephone interviewing



Graph i: How sampling error varies with sample and population size



In addition to the random sampling error, above, there may also be some forms of non-random sampling error which may have affected results. These include respondents without fixed line phones, the proportion of non-respondents (refusals, no answers etc.), social desirability bias<sup>4</sup> and/or imperfections in the questionnaire. However, steps have been taken at each stage of the research process to minimise non-random error wherever possible.

<sup>4</sup> By which respondents provide answers that present themselves in a more favourable light

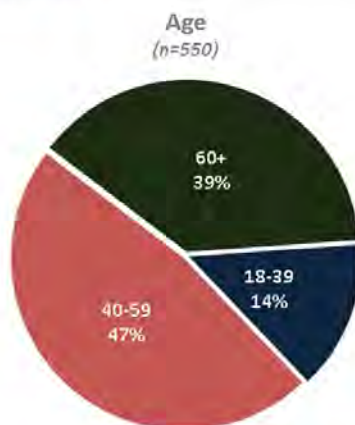




### Sample characteristics

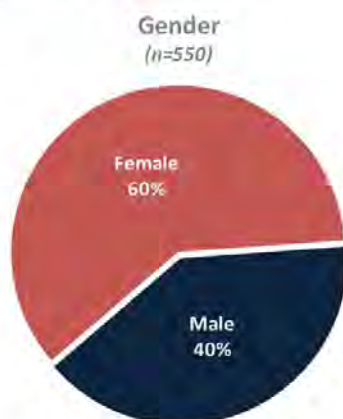
The following breaks down the CATI (telephone) survey sample by demographic characteristics:

Graph i: Survey sample by age (unweighted)



The sample shows a spread across the three age groups, but skewed (as is common in random telephone polling) to older residents. As previously mentioned, results were post-weighted by age and gender to match the profile of the LGA according to 2011 Census data.

Graph ii: Survey sample by gender (unweighted)

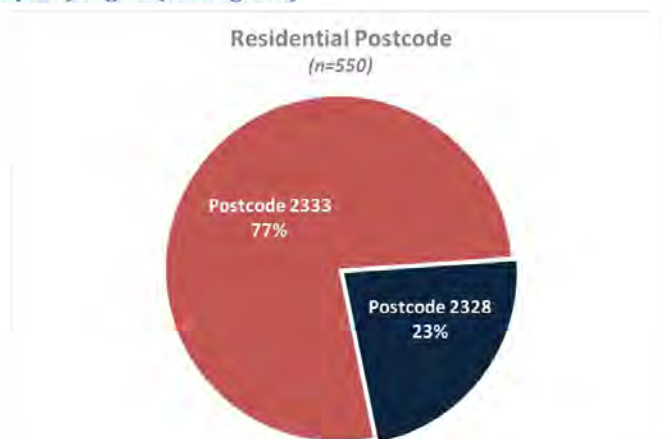


The random sample was slightly skewed towards females. However again this was corrected through post-weighting the sample to 2011 Census data.



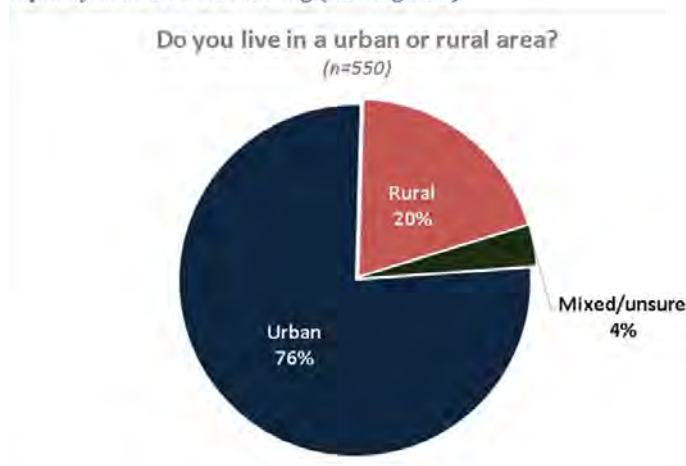


Graph iii: Survey sample by region (unweighted)



Just over three-quarters of the sample lived in the 2333 postcode, with the balance in 2328. This means the sample was slightly biased towards residents of Denman and others within the 2328 postcode, who comprised 16% of the LGA's population at the time of the 2011 Census.

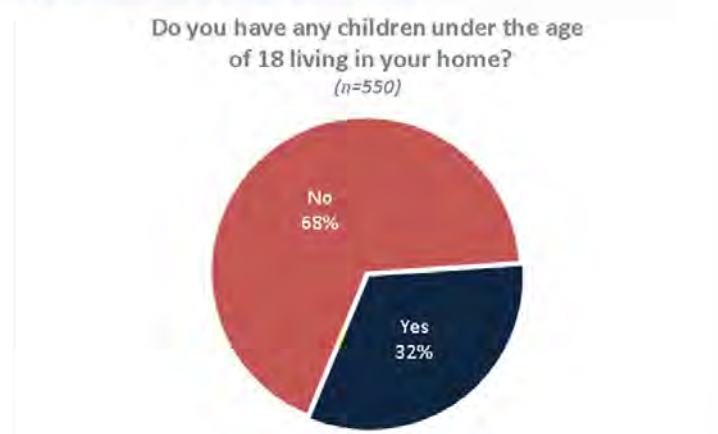
Graph iv: Survey sample by urban v rural setting (unweighted)



Three-quarters of the sample (76%) resided in urban areas, with 24% being rurally-based or in a mixed area.

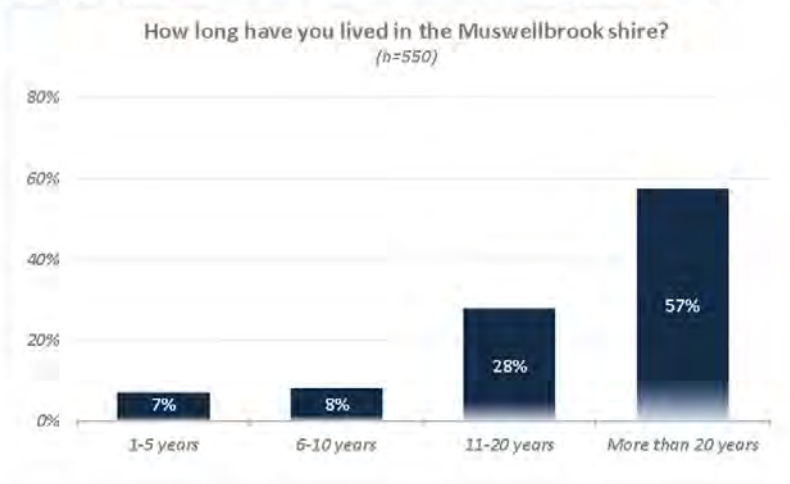


Graph v: Survey sample by children at home (unweighted)



Just over one-third of those surveyed had children living at home (68%).

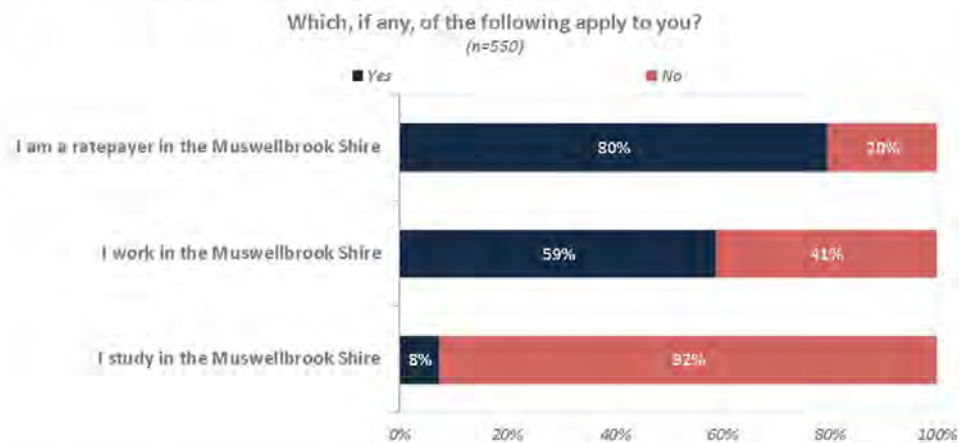
Graph vi: Survey sample by length of time in the Muswellbrook Shire (unweighted)



Over half of the sample (57%) had lived in the Muswellbrook Shire for more than 20 years, while 28% had lived within the LGA between 11 and 20 years and 15% for 10 years or less.



Graph vii: Which, if any of the following apply to you?



Four in five respondents were ratepayers in the Muswellbrook Shire (80%), while three in five worked locally. Just under one in ten (8%) studied within the shire.



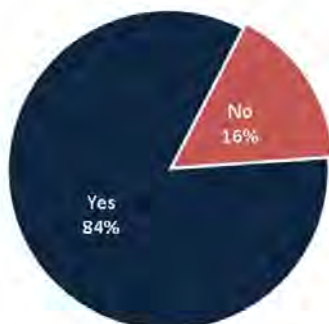
## Part 1: Awareness of, and knowledge regarding the proposed SRV

The survey proper began with a series of questions designed to determine residents' awareness of the proposed special rate variation and understanding of what it entailed.

Respondents were first asked whether they had read, heard or seen anything about Council's proposal to deliver three new facilities prior to being contacted for this research:

Graph 1.1: Awareness of proposed new facilities prior to call

Prior to this call had you read, heard or seen anything  
about Council's proposal to deliver three new facilities?  
(n=550)



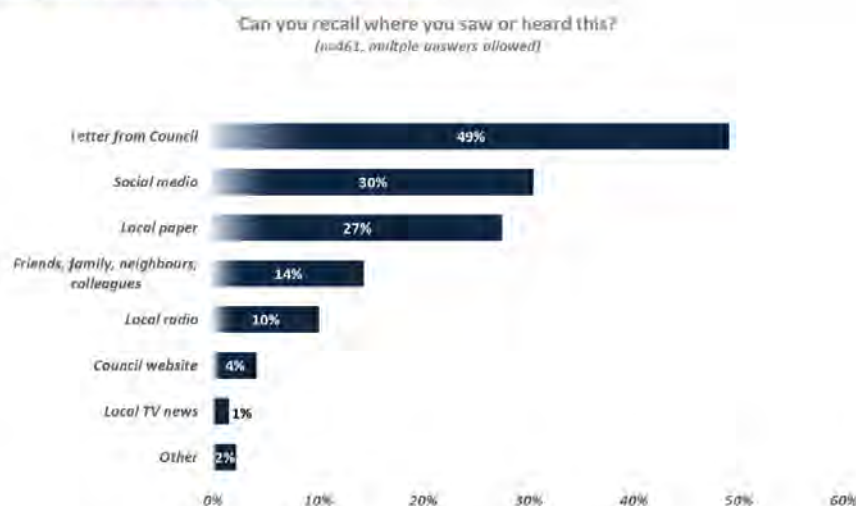
Knowledge of Council's proposal to deliver three new facilities was high among residents, with 84% claiming to having read, heard or seen information regarding the proposal.

Those who were aware of the proposal were then asked where they had seen or heard about it:

(Continued over page...)



Graph 1.2: Can you recall where you saw or heard this?



Almost half of those respondents with previous awareness recalled receiving a letter from Council – higher among those aged 60 years and over (60%), and those with children at home (56%).

Almost one-third heard about Council proposal via social media (30%), 27% via the local paper, 14% from word-of-mouth and 10% the local radio.

As outlined in table 1.1, below, information sources differed by demographic characteristics:

Table 1.1: Information source by age, gender, urban vs. rural and children at home

Source of information regarding proposed SRV	Age			Gender		Urban/rural		Children at home	
	18-39	40-59	60+	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Yes	No
Local paper	17.3%	29.7%	42.5%	32.4%	22.4%	25.9%	33.6%	21.5%	32.7%
Local radio	5.3%	12.8%	14.4%	12.5%	7.7%	9.3%	13.2%	4.3%	15.2%
Local TV news	0.0%	2.2%	3.1%	1.9%	1.1%	1.1%	2.9%	.9%	2.0%
Council website	3.3%	6.3%	2.0%	3.7%	4.6%	5.1%	.5%	5.7%	2.7%
Letter from Council	39.7%	53.1%	59.5%	51.1%	46.9%	47.4%	55.4%	41.5%	55.7%
Friends, family, neighbours, colleagues	14.5%	16.4%	10.8%	13.2%	15.6%	14.9%	12.3%	17.8%	11.3%
Social media	52.2%	22.3%	4.3%	21.6%	39.6%	32.6%	22.3%	44.7%	18.0%
OTHER	0.0%	2.8%	5.4%	2.9%	1.5%	2.0%	3.2%	.3%	3.9%
TOTAL	188	169	103	234	226	366	95	215	246

Older residents, men and those with children at home were significantly more likely to see the information in the local paper, while social media awareness was highest among younger residents, women, urban residents and those with children still at home.

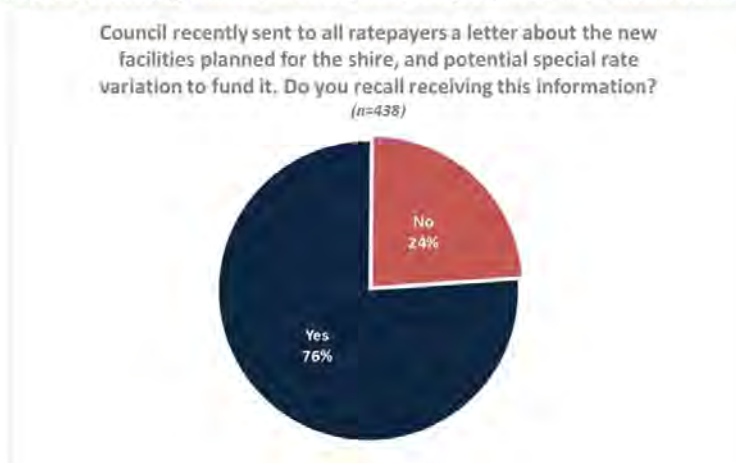




Other sources included the library, at the pool, at the information centre, at the men's shed and through a Council meeting.

Muswellbrook Shire ratepayers<sup>5</sup> were then asked whether they recalled receiving the letter from Council regarding the new facilities planned for the shire, and potential special rate variation to fund it:

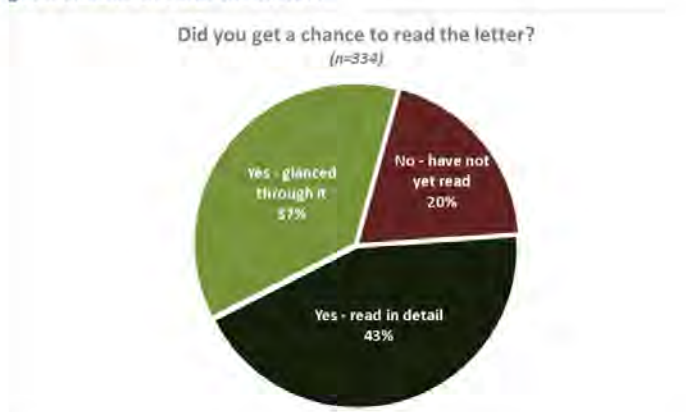
**Graph 1.3: Do you recall receiving Council's letter about the proposed new facilities and related SRV?**



Three-quarters of ratepayers recalled receiving the information from Council regarding the SRV – higher among those without children living at home (at 82%, against 70% among those with children at home).

Ratepayers who recalled receiving the letter were then asked whether they had read it:

**Graph 1.4: Did you get a chance to read the letter?**



<sup>5</sup> As per those who had declared themselves as such earlier in the survey – see Graph vii



Four in five respondents who recalled receiving the letter claimed to have read it – 43% in detail and 37% glancing through it.

Older residents, those residing in rural areas and those without children were the most likely to say they had reviewed Council letter in detail (at 52%, 59% and 48% respectively).





## Part 2: Support for the proposed SRV

Residents were next asked a series of questions designed to determine their support for the SRV, and reasons why they either supported or opposed the proposal.

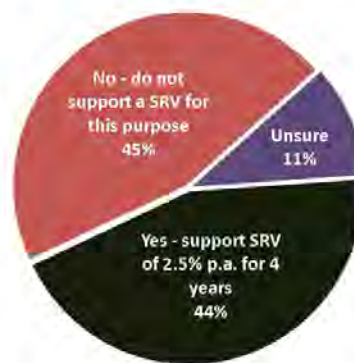
Respondents were first offered some information regarding the proposed SRV and its purpose:

*Council is proposing a 2.5% special rate variation each year over the next four years. This rate increase would enable Council to deliver the following three new facilities: a regional quality water park at the Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre and the replacement of the 84-year old 50 metre pool; delivery of the Denman town centre revitalisation; and a regional convention and performance venue in Muswellbrook's town centre. The cumulative impact on rates over the next four years would range from \$29 per annum in year 1 for an average ratepayer to \$147 per annum in year 4. If the rate variation were not to occur, Council would still be able to replace the 50 metre pool, but without the water park. Only stage 1 of the Denman town centre revitalisation could proceed, and there would be a limited upgrade of the Muswellbrook town centre, but with no regional convention and performance venue.*

Residents were then asked, given the above information, whether they supported Council's application for a 2.5% special rate variation over the next 4 years:

Graph 2.1: Do you support Council's application for a 2.5% special rate variation over the next 4 years?

Do you support Council's application for a 2.5% special rate variation over the next 4 years?  
(n=550)



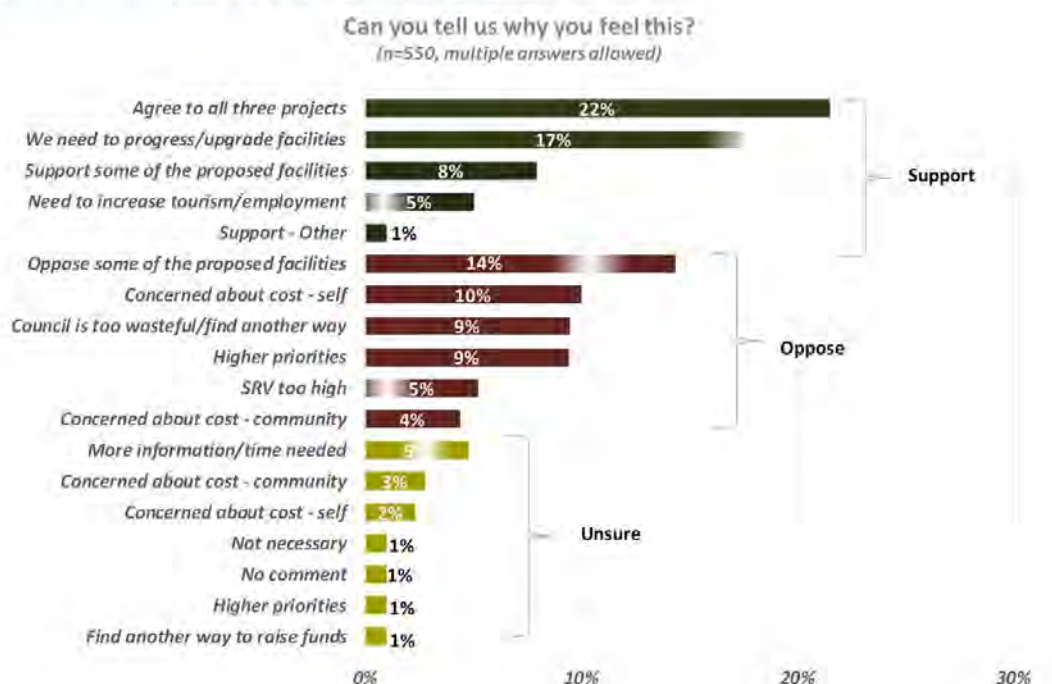
Opinion was evenly split, with 44% of those surveyed supporting the proposed SRV and 45% rejecting it. The balance of 11% were unsure.

Those residing in urban areas were more likely to support the SRV than those in rural areas (46% vs. 38%). There were no other differences in levels of support by demographic characteristics. (However it should be noted that within the 2333 postcode there was 46% support against 45% opposition. In the 2328 postcode, however, 38% were supportive against 49% opposed.)



In an unprompted follow-up question, residents were then asked why they supported or opposed the SRV. These responses have been coded, with major themes shown in green (support), red (oppose) or yellow (unsure):

Graph 2.2: Can you briefly explain why you think this?



Those who supported the SRV tended to do so as they valued the projects targeted for funding: 22% of all respondents said they agreed to all three projects, while 17% felt the need to progress and/or upgrade the facilities, 8% agreed to at least some of the proposal and 5% felt the projects may result in increased tourism or employment for the region.

Those who opposed the SRV did so either because they opposed one or more of the proposed facilities, or because they felt that they or other community members would struggle to pay it. Some also felt that Council should find another way to fund the projects (9%) or had other more important priorities for projects within the community (9%). Five per cent simply felt the rate was too high.

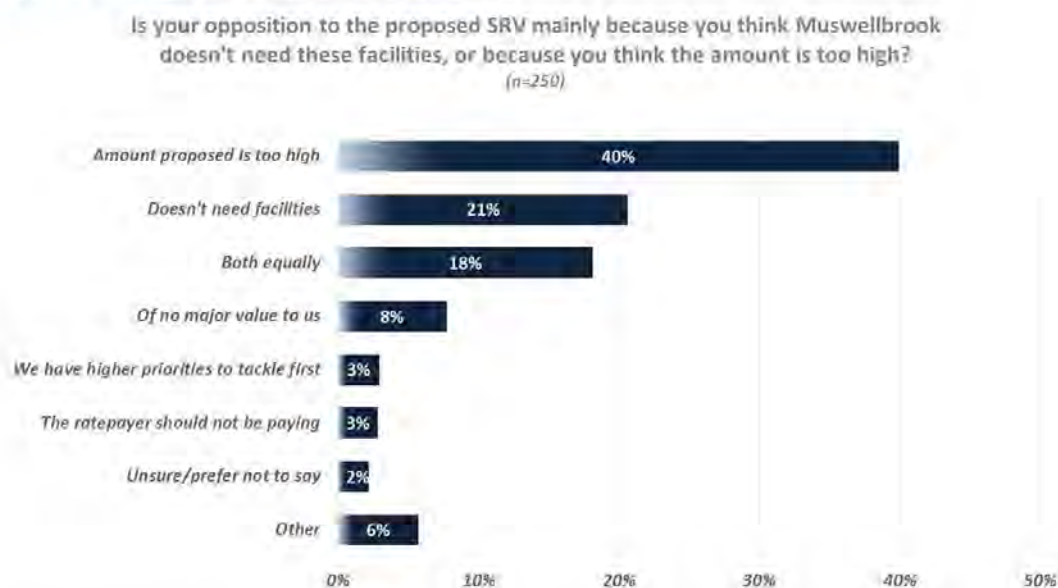
Those classing themselves as uncertain regarding with position towards the SRV felt they needed more information or time (5% of all respondents) and/or had concerns regarding the cost to themselves (2%) or the community (3%).

The full list of verbatim comments is available in Appendix 3.



Those who were opposed to the SRV were then asked specifically whether this was mainly because (a) they thought Muswellbrook didn't need these facilities; or (b) because they thought the amount being asked was too high.

**Graph 2.3: Specific principal reason for opposition**



Of those who did not support the SRV, 40% said this was because they felt it was too high, and 21% didn't believe Muswellbrook needed the facilities being sought. A further 18% felt it was both factors equally, while 8% argued it was principally because the facilities were not of value to them.

Perception among opponents that the SRV rate proposed was too high was greatest among females (45% vs. 36% among males) and those residing in Muswellbrook (43% vs. 30% among Denman residents).

Of *all* respondents, 18% said the amount was too high while 10% believed the proposed facilities were not necessary and 8% claimed both objections equally.





## Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire

### Version 1

### Muswellbrook\_Council\_RV\_2017

Last modified:23/01/2017 7:36:32 PM

- Q1. Good afternoon/evening, my name is (name) and I'm calling from Jetty Research on behalf of Muswellbrook Shire Council. We need to briefly speak with residents aged between 18-59, would you be in that age group? YES - Council has asked us to call residents at random to conduct a short survey about an important local issue. The survey only takes around 5 minutes, all answers are confidential, and we're not trying to sell anything. Would you be willing to assist Council by completing a short survey? .  
..NO MORE 60+

*Offer a CALL BACK or check if anyone else in the home might like to take part. Contact at council is Amanda King 6549 3707. Mention we had a high response from the 60+ age group and now need to get a good mix of other ages*

Yes 1  
No 555

*Answer if Attribute "No" from Q1 is SELECTED*

Q1

- Q2. Thank you for your time. Have a great afternoon/evening. . If not in shire or a councillor/permanent council employee: I'm sorry in that case you don't qualify for this survey. Thank you for your time and have a great afternoon/evening.

**End**

- Q3. Thanks so much. I just have a few quick questions to ensure you qualify for the survey. Firstly can you confirm that you live in the Muswellbrook Shire?

*Must live in the shire*

Yes 1  
No 555

Go to Q2

Q3

- Q4. Are you or any immediate members of your family a Councillor or a permanent Council employee?

*Casual or contractor qualify for survey.Immediate is husband/wife*

Yes 1  
No 555

Go to Q2

Q4

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Muswellbrook Shire Council SRV Survey  
© Jetty Research, February 2017



Q5. And would your age be between?

**PROMPTED**

18-39	1		
40-59	2		Q5
60+	3		

Q6. Gender?

**Dont ask**

Male	1		
Female	2		Q6

Q7. And your postcode please?

**UNPROMPTED**

2328	1		
2333	2		Q7
OTHER			Q7

Q8. May I have your first name for the survey?

**Only so we can refer to you by name**

Q8

Q9. Thanks [Q8]. To kick things off, can you tell me which if any of the following apply to you by answering yes or no?

**PROMPTED**

	Yes	No	
I work in the Muswellbrook Shire	1	555	Q9_1
I study in the Muswellbrook Shire	1	555	Q9_2
I am a ratepayer in the Muswellbrook Shire	1	555	Q9_3



- Q10. [Q8] prior to this call had you read, heard or seen anything about Council's proposal to deliver three new facilities - a water park, Denman town centre revitalisation, and a regional convention and performance venue in Muswellbrook, and Council's plan to fund them through a special rate variation?**

*Before our phone call*

Yes 1  
No 555

Q10

- Q11. Can you recall where you saw or heard this?**

*Answer If Attribute "Yes" from Q10 is SELECTED*

**UNPROMPTED - probe and tick any that apply**

Local paper	1	Q11_1
Local radio	2	Q11_2
Local TV news	3	Q11_3
Council website	4	Q11_4
Letter from Council	5	Q11_5
Friends, family, neighbours, colleagues etc.	6	Q11_6
OTHER		Q11_O

- Q12. Muswellbrook Shire Council recently sent to all ratepayers a letter about the new facilities planned for the shire, and potential special rate variation to fund it. Do you recall receiving this information?**

*Answer If Attribute "I am a ratepayer in the Muswellbrook Shire" from Q9 is Yes*

Yes 1  
No 555

Q12

- Q13. Did you get a chance to read the letter?**

*Answer If Attribute "Yes" from Q12 is SELECTED*

**PROMPTED**

Yes - read in detail 1  
Yes - glanced through it 2  
No - have not yet read 3

Q13





- Q14.** Now [Q8], Council is proposing a 2.5% special rate variation each year over the next four years. This rate increase would enable Council to deliver the following three new facilities: A regional quality water park at the Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre and the replacement of the 84-year old 50 metre pool; delivery of the Denman town centre revitalisation; and a regional convention and performance venue in Muswellbrook's town centre..The cumulative impact on rates over the next four years would range from \$29 per annum in year 1 for an average ratepayer to \$147 per annum in year 4. If the rate variation were not to occur, Council would still be able to replace the 50 metre pool, but without the water park. Only stage 1 of the Denman town centre revitalisation could proceed, and there would be a limited upgrade of the Muswellbrook town centre, but with no regional convention and performance venue..With all that in mind, do you support Council's application for a 2.5% special rate variation over the next 4 years?

**UNPROMPTED.** The dollar amounts listed are only an average e.g. average household in the shire

Yes - support option 1 (SRV of 2.5% p.a. for 4 years)	1
No - do not support a SRV for this purpose	2
Unsure	666

Q14

- Q15.** Can you briefly explain why you think this?

**Record response**

Q15

- Q16.** And is your opposition to the proposed Special Rate Variation mainly because you think Muswellbrook doesn't need these facilities, or because you think the amount being asked is too high?

Answer If Attribute "No - do not support a SRV for this purpose" from Q14 is SELECTED

**UNPROMPTED**

Doesn't need facilities	1
Amount proposed is too high	2
Both equally	3
Unsure/prefer not to say	4
OTHER	

Q16



Q17. Thanks so much [Q8], we're almost done. Can you tell me if you live in a urban or rural area?

**UNPROMPTED**

Urban	1
Rural	2
Mixed/unsure	3

Q17

Q18. And do you have any children under the age of 18 living in your home?

Yes	1
No	555

Q18

Q19. And finally, how many years have you lived in the Muswellbrook Shire?

**Enter years, as number only. (E.g. if respondent says 'more than 20', just enter 20).**

Years	1
-------	---

Q19\_1\_1

Q20. Thanks so much [Q8], that's the end of the survey. Muswellbrook Shire Council greatly appreciates your views. Did you have any questions about the survey? Thanks again and have a great afternoon/evening.

**End**



## Appendix 2: Weighting method and calculation

It is common in random surveys such as this to weight results by age and gender. This avoids the need to sample by quota (which is far more expensive than purely random sampling), and ensures the data from under- and over-represented groups is adjusted to meet the demographic profile of the survey population.

In this case, the 2017 survey sample has been post-weighted to match the age and gender profile of the 2011 ABS census for the Muswellbrook Shire (Usual Resident profile). To do this we divide the 2011 Census results by gender (male/female) and across three age groups (in this case 18-39, 40-59 and 60-plus.) This divides respondents into one of six and gender categories, as shown below:

Muswellbrook adult population by age and gender (ABS data 2011)		
Age	Male	Female
18-39	22.0%	20.1%
40-59	19.6%	17.0%
60+	10.3%	11.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>48.1%</b>

Meanwhile the 2016 sample breaks down as follows:

Randomly selected survey respondents by age and gender		
Age	Male	Female
18-39	5.8%	8.2%
40-59	19.3%	28.2%
60+	14.7%	23.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>60.2%</b>

Dividing the 2016 sample by the 2011 Census data for each age and gender category provides the following weighting factors:

Weighting factor by age and gender		
Age	Male	Female
18-39	3.788	2.457
40-59	1.015	0.603
60+	0.699	0.463

These weightings are then assigned to each data record based on each respondent's age/gender profile, and the raw data for each question is adjusted accordingly.





### Appendix 3: Reason for support or non-support

<i>Support / not support the SRV</i>	<i>Can you briefly explain why you think this?</i>
Not supportive	Think it's too high
Not supportive	Wouldn't use the new facilities too expensive
Not supportive	Would prefer funding to be spent on infrastructure like footpaths, roads etc.
Not supportive	Would not get the full use. I see the swimming pool being good value but really nothing else .if just the pool id pay a small extra rate
Not supportive	Without the SRV you can still have the pool upgrade, town doesn't need an Aquatic Centre or performance venue.
Not supportive	Why should pensioners have to pay money for facilities that they won't use? It will be difficult for pensioners to meet the proposed higher rates.
Not supportive	When I moved here 20 years ago, I was told that I would get kerb and guttering and storm water drainage, it's still not done, no one has looked at the problem
Not supportive	We're pensioners so can't afford it
Not supportive	We're out of town and these things will be of no benefit to us
Not supportive	We pay enough rates here already with all these levy's included. It is too expensive with everything else they want us to cover as well. Spent all the money on Campbell's corner they should utilise that instead.
Not supportive	We pay enough rates already as I am a single pensioner I am concerned at the price. We are also being charged for Emergency services on the rates. I will not benefit from any of these changes and I think pensioners should be exempt. I feel very strongly I should not subsidised the rest of the community
Not supportive	We pay above annual rates where we are and receive zero services can't even get council to pick up burnt out car bodies, live out of town pay very high rates on property yet do not get services of those closer to town
Not supportive	We need the pool upgrade but I have doubts about the need of the other items.
Not supportive	We live rural and we do not get any services. Muswellbrook town centre is dead, there are better places to put the money.
Not supportive	We have a beautiful heated and outdoor swimming pool both with restricted hours of use. Outdoor pool and water park should be accessible from 6am to 6pm for all residents regardless of the numbers of residents using the facilities.
Not supportive	We had a vote in the men's shed we all voted against it
Not supportive	We get a lot a lot of money from the mines but most of us are pensioners who cannot afford it, suggest they pay for it
Not supportive	We don't need these facilities what we have are sufficient
Not supportive	We don't need the stuff
Not supportive	We don't need it too many vacant shops as it is we need employment in town what use is a convention centre here
Not supportive	We don't use any of the existing facilities as it is and wouldn't in future. I am a rural resident and pay overly inflated rates already, and receive no council services in return.
Not supportive	We don't need a theatre and there are more important things to spend money on than a water park. Roads and infrastructure need to be fixed first
Not supportive	We do not need the convention centre - we have an arts centre. The rates will be too high and the money can come from other council funds

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Not supportive	We definitely don't need a water park and when we try to go to the pool now you can only get into the inside heated pool and we want to use the cold water outdoor pool which is always closed during the hottest part of the day.
Not supportive	We are self-funded retirees and can't afford the increase
Not supportive	We are pensioners why would we want to pay more. Why would they need a new convention centre what is wrong with what they have already got? I think they need to focus on more important things there is nothing wrong with Denman with the way it is.
Not supportive	We are paying high rates as it is. There is nothing wrong with the pool we have.
Not supportive	We are only living on a pension we can't afford the increase
Not supportive	We are on a rural property and our rates are already high enough and it is too much to ask the rural people to subsidise the town people. We pay \$9000 already and we don't get our garbage collected, water or anything whereas other areas nearby do get garbage collection services.
Not supportive	We already pay too much in rates, some areas are even more expensive than others, and council does not do enough on important issues to fix roads, dirty water supply. I also feel council wastes money, e.g., 20000 on a Christmas tree
Not supportive	Until the pool is proven to be unrepairable I do not agree, we do not need a new pool nor we need a conventional centre, however the Denman upgrade is needed
Not supportive	Unable to afford SRV. Caller lives on a pension.
Not supportive	Too high.
Not supportive	This is a ridiculous amount of increase for rate payers especially when council own commercial property in Sydney.
Not supportive	Thinks the council should manage its funds better and not require SRV to fund new facilities.
Not supportive	Think the plans are too glandulous for this shire
Not supportive	They waist money nothing that goes to the town we pay rates and they just waist.
Not supportive	They tried to renovate the Denman town centre before, and it was not successful, and do we really need a water park?
Not supportive	They give us nothing the rates are already high enough and I don't think they are using the money for what they saying they are going to use it for it is not their money it is funded through the mining. The real issues in the shire they are just not interested in fixing.
Not supportive	They get enough money from the mining community to be able to provide those facilities I do not believe we need to pay extra rates to pay for these. This is a high rate of rental area that does not have to pay rates but yet they still get to use the facilities.
Not supportive	They don't provide a good enough service as it is now, I don't trust them to manage the money wisely.
Not supportive	They could be doing other things to raise the funds rather than a SRV. Council puts rates up each year and residents have no say in what they do.
Not supportive	They are wasting too much now on renovating buildings in the town. I'm not in favour of the pool upgrade because council wasted money it was given to them by the mines. The coal dust settles on pools. Perhaps an indoor pool would be better.
Not supportive	They are facilities that impact me as a rate payer. There are more pressing safety issues to fund to get fixed and maintained.
Not supportive	There should be other ways to fund it.
Not supportive	There is other things that need doing in the area. Should fix cemetery's parks are a disgrace buildings need attention
Not supportive	There is not enough information as yet. I thought the town centre had already been allocated, and was in the pipeline to finish. Is there money left over. I'm trying to make my decision with only limited information, when we tried to get more info we were unable to

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	find out anything
Not supportive	There are too many increases
Not supportive	There are more important things that money can be spent on. Muswellbrook main street needs a little sprucing up so that it doesn't look so dead. Campbell's corner looks lovely
Not supportive	The water park needs sun protection, the performance venue in town are sufficient, and Muswellbrook area should not be burdened with rates for cost of Denman upgrade, Denman residents should pay for this
Not supportive	The water park is a waste of money it is too expensive to get in in the first place, on the wages here it is out of reach for local families and if the water park goes in the prices will go up this is a waste of money
Not supportive	The swimming club has to fund new blocks at the Denman Memorial pool because the Council tore down the old blocks. Our town does not get council support even for minor such things. We have to fight for every facility we need and service, even moving the fields.
Not supportive	The rural areas have urgent need of more important priorities such as infrastructure, roads, bridges, garbage services etc. Also very few people would actually use these new facilities.
Not supportive	The rates in the letter from Council said the average rates in the area are seven hundred plus dollars. Mine are 1680 at the moment and that's without a garbage service. They have everything wrong, and if they want take my rates then they should come and fix Wells Gully Road.
Not supportive	The rates go up every single year and I have received nothing in the past and nearly to the point we had to consider selling and now they want to put them up again for things that only one of them I would use
Not supportive	The rates go up anyway the rates are dear enough
Not supportive	The rates are far too high as it is
Not supportive	The proposal doesn't go on to say what happens after the next four years, where do the rates go from there
Not supportive	The pool does not need changing and our rates should be enough to pay for the new facilities.
Not supportive	The plans for Denman are just going to make turn people away. It will only be a one way St, there will not be enough parking. Out of town visitors won't even be able to come through the town with caravans.
Not supportive	The performing arts centre is a no-no. The water park isn't essential but the pool is Denman town centre I support
Not supportive	The money should be spent on storm water drainage. I have been flooded twice in less than three years. This is a very practical ask it needs special attention as it will happen again.
Not supportive	The minimal upgrades are sufficient, there are other issues more important for council to address or focus on.
Not supportive	The mines should foot the bills as they give a substantial amount to support the town for the Muswellbrook district, the mines supplies these royalties for this region and council should ensure the use of that money is given for this proposal.
Not supportive	The majority of Denman residents do not want the proposal for Denman we have not been consulted and feel that we have had not change to do anything about it, and the performance centre is not needed at all there are more important things the shire needs
Not supportive	The increase after the first year will be substantial and may significantly affect a lot of ratepayers





Not supportive	The facilities are not needed and other existing facilities should be improved or updated
Not supportive	The Denman proposal is not going to work for the elder residents due to lack parking provisions, other work needs to be prioritised. Also the swimming centre should be funded in full buy the horse studs as they closed the mine but they do not contribute back into the community.
Not supportive	The council should spend their money on creating jobs for local people,
Not supportive	The council is about 40 years too late with some of these things and I don't want Denman interfered with
Not supportive	The cost to the rate payers will end up costing too much, also I am a business owner who will be affected by the building of a convention centre, which the Muswellbrook are does not need at the moment. There is no job security in this area to support such expansions.
Not supportive	The convention centre wouldn't work they go to the gold coast not Muswellbrook
Not supportive	The aged pensioners and low income and single income people they would not be able to afford that kind of expense. Council not delivering at present value for money. Roads need more attention first some are a death trap.
Not supportive	They do nothing at the pool anyway it is never open there is no point in having a waterpark if they can't afford to employ people on the outdoor pool on 40 degree days and my son always gets sick from the indoor pool so we don't bother going there anymore, if they can't mow the lawn on a regular basis I don't see how they will maintain the water park
Not supportive	Support the pool upgrade this will be good for the young people of the town however do not support rate increase
Not supportive	Support the new pool, but the others new facilities are not warranted.
Not supportive	Some of the issues with council over the last twelve months, no communication with community, issues regarding actions taken then telling community about it afterwards like changing our street address, complete lack of consultation with the community
Not supportive	Residents who live out of town would not benefit from these new facilities.
Not supportive	Rates are too high as it is. Muswellbrook Council can likely afford to do this with current funding.
Not supportive	Rates are high enough as it is and there is little to show for it.
Not supportive	Rates are high as it is and council services in the Muswellbrook area are poor.
Not supportive	Rates are costly as it is. Waterpark isn't necessary
Not supportive	Rate payers will be without the 50 metre pool until it is replaced, this could be 1 month or 12 months knowing the council, Muswellbrook residents have been paying premium rates for minimal services as it is, this is unfair, council have spent funds unwisely which could have been used to fund this, we do not need flowers in roundabouts and artwork, we need basic services and facilities for all residents. Chamber of commerce should encourage businesses to help with upgrades to town centres.
Not supportive	Rate increase is too high.
Not supportive	Our wages wouldn't go up that much to cover it.
Not supportive	Probably wouldn't use the water park. I'm moving from Muswellbrook in two year's time
Not supportive	Previous resident of Denman and very little money spent in Denman by the Council in the past. Residents in the immediate area for the developments should be liable for rate increases if that is Councils decision. Conference and performance centre is supported but feel that Denman residents shouldn't have to contribute. Pool doesn't need upgrading and had previously been funded by the mines. Mines should contribute more as workers are not rate payers and take advantage of the facilities
Not supportive	Prefer funds to be spent on the hospital which is a far higher priority. The health of local people should have priority over the luxury of performance venues.

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Not supportive	Pensioners will find it hard to pay, otherwise the proposals are needed.
Not supportive	Out in the rural area we receive not a lot have to take our own garbage, the roads are awful.
Not supportive	Our main concern is pensioners being able to afford it. None of the developments I think are really needed. The town centre of Muswellbrook has empty shops that need filling before anything else. Footpaths need improving in the town centre, especially in front of the court house where I tripped and nearly fell.
Not supportive	Ongoing maintenance of the current pool costs as much as the building of the pool. Maintenance costs of these new facilities are a concern.
Not supportive	Object to what they want to do to the main street in Denman by making it a one way street.
Not supportive	Not sure there is value in some of the projects, added some wish list items to an important project.
Not supportive	Not supportive of performance centre or revitalisation project because other things need attention such as roads and water supply.
Not supportive	Not in favour I think there are other priorities
Not supportive	None of these development influence you and you've heard that some of the Denman business owners are against a one way street
Not supportive	None of the facilities would be relevant to me
Not supportive	Need more information about the rate increase and what is happening after the 4 year period.
Not supportive	My rates are the highest in the state as it is. Council wastes their money as it is, there aren't even footpaths near my home for my children to ride their bikes on.
Not supportive	Muswellbrook people don't appear to be able to support things big developments like these.
Not supportive	Muswellbrook gets much more funding than Denman it seems. I think we need more funding for other community facilities.
Not supportive	Mines give the Council a lot of money for the Shire however the Council will not spend the money donated by the mines that are already saved. Mine money originally purchased the Muswellbrook heated pool. Council should spend the donated money first rather than rate variations and increases.
Not supportive	Let's walk before we run and they won't get the juice out of the aquatic park, the other two are not high on rate payers lists seems to cater more for outside or even mining industry and that is where they should start with asking for funding rather than rate increase
Not supportive	Just spent money on Muswellbrook town centre. Agree with the water park but nothing else
Not supportive	It's already hard enough for a pensioner to pay the existing rates let alone another rate rise.
Not supportive	It's a waste of money, it could be used on many other facilities. I know people in Denman and they don't want this proposal. The pool is always closed so why upgrade it. We had a town hall and it wasn't used and turned in to an art gallery so why build any more. Money should be used to upgrade the sewerage treatment works that has needed it for the past 10 years.
Not supportive	It's a lot of money for pensioners on limited income
Not supportive	It is unfair on rate payers to do such a big project at once. The pool does need work but the proposed rate variation is too much.
Not supportive	It is too expensive.
Not supportive	It is too expensive





Not supportive	It is hard enough to pay the rates now. The pool does need upgrading but not so expensively.
Not supportive	It is a big rise by the fourth 4, other avenues should use to fund such a project
Not supportive	It doesn't apply but I do pay rent.
Not supportive	Is there really a need for a water park we have a pool we don't really need a water park if need to fix the roads so people can come. I travel on the roads every day which are in need of maintenance and they should concentrate on the roads first
Not supportive	Instead of spending the money in the Muswellbrook Shire spend it on the Shires roads.
Not supportive	In Denman we do not benefit from the Council.
Not supportive	I'm willing to support some but not all. We pay reasonable rates. I would not support the convention centre,
Not supportive	I'm struggling to pay my rates now, and it will make life very difficult for me
Not supportive	I'm sick of council always raising the rates. What's the purpose off upgrading the pool and charging more when already costs a lot to go. The Denman water system does need to be upgraded.
Not supportive	I'm only casual and I can't afford for my rates to go up I struggle to pay them as it is they need to be making new jobs
Not supportive	I'm not going to use many of these facilities proposed. We pay enough rates to be able to fund these without a rate rise.
Not supportive	I'm in the swimming club and the plans we have viewed are not positive for the Club
Not supportive	I'm a pensioner so I should not be charged it's not fair, i've raised all my children and really dont think its fair that us poor pensioners should not be charged for this only the people that have families should be charged
Not supportive	If you up the rates people are struggling as it is and they could lose their house or be unable to pay rates
Not supportive	If the waterpark goes into the swimming pool it will not be accessible to all due to the cost, those who need it the most would benefit if it is free and in public places. The town is not big enough for the entertainment Centre seating, it should be built into the University.
Not supportive	If I say no they will do it anyway put your rates up they don't care.
Not supportive	If Council can't afford to do these developments they shouldn't consider doing it
Not supportive	I'm a pensioner and I would not be able to afford it.
Not supportive	I'm 60 and none of this interests me
Not supportive	I wouldn't be of any use to me, as I don't use those facilities
Not supportive	I would struggle with the rate increase, being a pensioner. Over 4-5 years my rates have gone up approx. \$200 a year or more. On a fixed income it is very difficult.
Not supportive	I would not be happy, I'm on a pension, and would not use the facilities, and nothing has been done to rebuild the Denman Hall, which I think should be a priority
Not supportive	I would be happy with just the pool getting replaced and our rates are high enough as they are
Not supportive	I won't be using the Convention Centre it is similar to the Music Conservatorium and we don't need the Convention Centre.
Not supportive	I will not use the proposed three new facilities and think it expensive to fund it through rate increase when I won't use it
Not supportive	I will not get any benefit from the development
Not supportive	I want more information and have made an appointment to see Mr Rice and a lot of elderly residents are concerned about the proposals. We need an information meeting to be held for all residents who would like to attend
Not supportive	I want further assurance that the moneys would be spent on the water park before our





	rates go further, also we need more information with regards to what happens after the four years with rates, e.g., will it reduce or go up further?
Not supportive	I use the pool and it does need replacing, however I don't think a water park would increase pool users. I have been a resident for 40 years and there are other venues in the town that can be used for performances so I feel this will be a waste of money, council gets a lot of funding from mining companies etc., and they could pay for this without a rate increase.
Not supportive	I think we pay too much rates as it is Denman doesn't receive very much for our money.
Not supportive	I think we pay enough rates in Denman and don't get much for our money. We also have to pay for the septic on our property we don't even get rubbish collection and we are only 5km from town
Not supportive	I think they waste money on too many unnecessary things and they have enough money already to get those improvements done.
Not supportive	I think they should be funding it an alternate way or not do it at all
Not supportive	I think they have wasted enough money and it would not be what they are saying it would be more also they are not saying how much they are intending to spend. Why would you build a convention centre right near a railway line then have to build barriers? I think the town is not big enough to support all these things they are proposing.
Not supportive	I think there are better things worth doing around town like bike tracks as the roads are too dangerous. Would like to know who came up with the ideas for improvement and what consultation was done. How were these evaluated against other projects needed in the community?
Not supportive	I think there are a lot of donations from the mine coming in and I think they should be used for these things. Our rates have risen greatly over the years and I think these should be funded in a different way.
Not supportive	I think the money that they spending I cannot see the benefits
Not supportive	I think the money could be better used elsewhere
Not supportive	I think the cost of living is going up there is a disparity between cost of living rises and income in this area there needs to be conservatism in expenditure asking ratepayers to fund projects that aren't particularly necessary is not worth the sting in residents pockets
Not supportive	I think that they should concentrate more on the outer areas, while I'm happy for them to replace the swimming pool and first stage of town centre they need to broaden their attention outside of the central town itself, I am totally against the regional convention centre only 5% of population here would use it
Not supportive	I think that over a period of time, the improvements would be able to take place without the rate increase
Not supportive	I think that it is too high and if you are not going to use the water park it is not going to benefit some people at all.
Not supportive	I think that all the environmental vandalism perpetrated by mining in this shire and whole hunter area is vandalism and mines should make a greater contribution alleviating damage by substantially contributing to projects council are talking about
Not supportive	I think the money is better spent else where
Not supportive	I think it is too much of an increase we would have to increase our rent and would not get a tenant in there.
Not supportive	I think it is too high we get nothing done here at Aberdeen Rd from the overpass out towards sandy beach there are no walkways or anything council always promises to get it done and never go ahead with anything. We have no way of getting around here without putting walkways in these areas.
Not supportive	I think it is a bit too high.



Not supportive	I think it is a bit too costly for a single income family to have to pay such high rates.
Not supportive	I question two of the facilities that are proposed.....especially the performance centre...the regional arts centre doesn't have the support of the local community
Not supportive	I prefer the number 2 option
Not supportive	I pay enough rates now and really none of those projects will have any benefit for me or my family
Not supportive	I oppose because I wouldn't use the water park or the pool, but I do agree with upgrade of Denman town centre
Not supportive	I only support the waterpark nothing else I would support increase if all the money was spent on the waterpark and it needs to be disable friendly
Not supportive	I live in the shire but don't get a garbage pickup...I think this is more important than the new facilities planned
Not supportive	I live in Denman and everything is given to Muswellbrook. We have the local pool has always only had cold water in the showers.
Not supportive	I like the pool idea but if it only gets used for half a year it is not open full time I have grandchildren but they don't use the pool and I don't think the water park would be a good idea. I do like the idea of a new 50m pool though and the other proposals I am not too sure about as I don't know much about them.
Not supportive	I know that council have approval to do other things that will service the community. What is capable without the rate variation is adequate for my needs.
Not supportive	I have not seen anything done properly in m yet
Not supportive	I have been a serving member on Muswellbrook Shire Environment Committee, It was shut down by the current Mayor Martin Rush. Whilst Martin Rush is Mayor I will not support Council and any Council issues.
Not supportive	I have a pool and what happens in Denman doesn't really affect me....also the council has released too much land and my property value has gone down as a result
Not supportive	I have a few properties & it would amount to too much. Coal mining area but not performing as it used to, so the town is not going forward at all.
Not supportive	I feel that Council should be able to fund it as we pay enough rates already.
Not supportive	I don't want my rates to go any further, I am on a pension and it is very hard to pay all my bills as it is
Not supportive	I don't think the things they are proposing are necessary
Not supportive	I don't think it's necessary
Not supportive	I don't want to pay anymore rates, then I have to. The town is dying and full of commission housing. Muswellbrook and Denman have a major "ICE" problem. Don't want my children to mix with these people, would rather go to another town. Also the Council is very poorly run.
Not supportive	I don't use the town pool, we have a pool and the rates would unnecessarily go up for us.
Not supportive	I don't use the swimming pool in Muswellbrook. I don't see the need for another Convention Centre and the way they are going about the main street upgrade.
Not supportive	I don't use the pool and happy with Denman town centre and don't go to Muswellbrook very often
Not supportive	I don't understand why we don't get a reduction in rates if paid yearly. Also my finances simply don't support this sort of increase.
Not supportive	I don't trust the council that this will only be for 4 years. I would support this if I believed after 4 years our rates would go back down as I would like these facilities, however I am not convinced.
Not supportive	I don't think we should have to pay for it.
Not supportive	I don't think we need these new facilities

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Not supportive	I don't think we need a convention centre the motel has one and so has the RSL there are enough here.
Not supportive	I don't think they would use the convention centre as they don't use what we have now. Trade is dwindling and the town is dying. Every second house is for sale and housing valuations are decreasing greatly. Costs to the pool are ridiculously high and people can't afford it
Not supportive	I don't think they have given us what we pay for now.
Not supportive	I don't think the town needs what they are suggesting. No one will use the convention centre it's a joke. With the down turn in the mining industry the council should be bringing in new industries and finding jobs instead. There are a lot of trade people in town with expertise and they are the people needing jobs, and we should do something to keep them here or they will go somewhere else. It is a pool of expertise the council should promote to industry.
Not supportive	I don't think the economic growth in the area is large enough for rate payers to afford it. The town needs things and it's a great idea but not sure if everyone can afford the rise.
Not supportive	I don't think the council handles their rates payers finances very well and don't think they should handle the money or development. I believe there is a conflict of interest with the mayor interfering with the council management. I think the mayor doesn't listen to the residents.
Not supportive	I don't think Muswellbrook needs a water park, they could refurbish another venue for the convention centre, so council spend too much money on Muswellbrook and not on other areas. Our rates funds should be better spent on other things such as road repairs, rubbish collection, to beautify what we already have. Create more jobs. Get people off the dole and get people working.
Not supportive	I don't think just rate payers should pay, everyone should pay. We pay way too much on our rates.
Not supportive	I don't think it's needed, it should not be up to the ratepayers to fund this. If council wants it they should wait till they can afford it, or get funding from the industries/companies responsible for destroying the environment and ruining the town.
Not supportive	I don't think it is viable and I think the prices would be so high that normal families would not be able to access it.
Not supportive	I don't see that we get value for money at the moment and our rates are higher than Newcastle rates and other regional centres. The current council does not deliver value for the money. In addition, the council has funds in reserve - the Future Fund.
Not supportive	I don't know if Denman can handle the one way street which isn't a help, Muswellbrook already has a pool that is okay, and the cost of the pool entry is already too high and what cost will be the water park be for families. I am in support of the convention centre but not sure how much use it will be. A lot of rate payers will be paying for not using any of these facilities. The area is already struggling financially with the slump from the mines. Half the shops are empty they should be worrying about creating business first.
Not supportive	I don't feel that council has been responsible with money in the past and they have wasted money in the past. Once the rates go up they will keep going up. I don't feel the rate payers should pick up the tab for council wasting and mismanaging previous rate payer's money.
Not supportive	I don't believe that after the 4 years that council would remove the special rate variation, also the cost to enter the water park is not revealed. Lack of information.
Not supportive	I don't believe about paying excessive amounts of rates when the rural roads are so terrible. Why can't they fix the roads first?
Not supportive	I don't agree with them putting the rates up any more than they have to.
Not supportive	I don't agree with the water park....it's pointless cos it's too expensive and very few

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	people go there anyway. Pass-outs would help a bit
Not supportive	I don't agree with the Denman revitalisation plan, also there are more important things for council to focus on than a water park. Also not enough information about what happens after the 4 year period.
Not supportive	I believe this is a very good proposal but council should look at other funding options such as mining industry funding, as our rates are already way too high, Denman may lose its small town charm if it becomes too modern or fancy. The water park is a good idea but I wonder how much they will charge people for this as the cost of the pool is already quite high, and the indoor heated pool council built which had problems with the heating makes me worry, and there isn't always enough staff to supervise as it is, I think the performance venue is the best idea and to save money council could just do this and not the other things.
Not supportive	I believe the performance centre should be privately funded. I think for a rural ratepayer it is a waste of my resources when other facilities are in greater need of improvement - an example of this is the Newcastle river being unsuitable for swimming - if unsuitable for swimming it stands to reason it is also unsuitable for drinking.
Not supportive	I believe if we are going to pay a rate increase we need to fix the roads. Roads should take greater priority than fun parks.
Not supportive	I am struggling to pay the rates as it is, I am on a minimal pay.
Not supportive	I am a pensioner and the increase would affect me greatly. I agree with the Denman and water park/pool but don't agree with convention centre as there are plenty of other areas to use and there are limited shops need to increase business rather than build the convention centre
Not supportive	I am a pensioner and I don't think there is a real need to put that sort of money into the aquatic centre and the other things planned. I think our money should be going more towards the medical system.
Not supportive	I agree that m needs to move ahead it is a backward town and money has been spent the wrong way but the pension doesn't go up and we are already on a tight budget as it is so I am concerned if the rates go up especially as I am unlikely to use the facilities but this won't affect the cost
Not supportive	Higher council rates is a concern.
Not supportive	Have 2 rental properties empty why would I do that to myself...bad timing
Not supportive	Fees to get into the pool are expensive and should cover the redevelopment of the pool. Don't agree with the location of the convention centre. Need to use money more wisely. Conservatorium should have been built bigger to suit the proposed convention centre
Not supportive	Everything goes to Muswellbrook not Denman our town hall got burnt down and never replaced visitors visit and wonder what happen to our council. What happens to all the money from mining why not use that instead of charging poor rate payers
Not supportive	Does not support the development of the water park because it is not a good use of council funds. Rural garbage service is a higher priority.
Not supportive	Demon actually paid for the pool the council didn't pay for the pool. Totally disagree with raising the rates. The rise goes to Muswellbrook and not Denman.
Not supportive	Denman residents should not be paying for facilities in Muswellbrook.
Not supportive	Denman main street doesn't need upgrading/restructuring. Other streets need attention. Current funding should be able to cover the proposed water park facility. Town Hall has been changed to art gallery which was a perfect performance space.
Not supportive	Current funding could take care of upgrades. Further upgrades not necessary.
Not supportive	Current funding can replace the pool, but the SRV is steep for people on a pension.
Not supportive	Creating work should be priority however this project will only create temporary work, the





	project is only for younger people and it is unfair that older people will find this under stress and difficulty out of their pension.
Not supportive	Council raising its own revenue and being greedy. Most people will struggle to pay the extra. Council doesn't support the battler and the farmers.
Not supportive	Council is putting money into the wrong projects. Prior revitalisation of the creek is a waste of money because of flooding which will undo all the work that has been done.
Not supportive	Council has spent too much money on Campbell's Corner and venue improvements are used from residents in other shires and do not contribute towards improvements like the conservatorium. Support pool upgrade providing it is done correctly and only once and money should be directed towards more shelters. Fix canal so that it doesn't flood first
Not supportive	Council has previously spent a lot of money revitalising town centres already and this has not made any noticeable difference.
Not supportive	Council has enough money to purchase properties in other areas, therefore council should use those moneys to fund the proposed projects.
Not supportive	Council don't use their money wisely as it is.
Not supportive	Council did not support the operation of the local mine, locals will be losing jobs as a result. Disappointed in operation of the aquatic centre as it is - it is closed in January!
Not supportive	Council are supposed to collect rubbish, provide sewerage and basic facilities, and not go into the commercial world. My rates are too high as it is. I am on a farm and pay high rates as it is for no service.
Not supportive	Council always have a reason to put the rates up and would not be using the new facilities in the near future.
Not supportive	Cause I don't want a rise in the rates
Not supportive	Believes the SRV will remain in place after the 4 year period.
Not supportive	Believes the new convention centre is unnecessary. The local community will likely not support this facility. Why take money away from the local service clubs and businesses that already offer such venues? People can't afford these things.
Not supportive	Being a pensioner I don't really agree to any of this really. It really. Doesn't apply to me. Therefore there should be no charge
Not supportive	Because we are struggling to pay our bills as it is if it goes up we will get further behind
Not supportive	Because we are just about to go onto aged pension and we just got a drop in our rates don't want them to go up again
Not supportive	Because the rates quoted in the letter from council are approximately half of what we're paying, and the additional facilities are of very little value to me
Not supportive	Because the rates are high enough as it is
Not supportive	Because the Muswellbrook developments don't affect me and I don't think the Denman town centre needs a major facelift
Not supportive	Because rates always go up, and land value has gone down. I worry that after the 4 years, the rates will not go back down to current costs
Not supportive	Because of what they plan to do with the money we do not need a convention centre and I don't see the need for a water park when they could upgrade Denman and don't, and nobody in town wants a one way street in the centre of town
Not supportive	Because I think they are spending too much money on the town centre and its not bringing the people back there
Not supportive	Because I pay a lot of rates, and we have had bad roads in my area, and they have not been attended to. And I do not like the design of the Denman plan, e.g., the one way traffic in the town centre.
Not supportive	Because I have multiple properties in town so substantial rate increase for me and concerned that that rate would become the base at the end of the four years rather than



	going back down
Not supportive	Because I don't think for what we get for our money and it is harder with water rates on top of normal rates it's hard to justify the costs we have to cover every year to own a home, what we get from council is that there is more important things to spend our money on
Not supportive	Because I think people are suffering in this shire as it is, esp. Rate payers, the third part of proposal is a waste of money and it's a lot of money to benefit a target audience doesn't improve roads etc.
Not supportive	Because I do not want to be paying an extra 147 in for years on my rates
Not supportive	As a retired person it would be difficult to afford this increase.
Not supportive	Aquatic Centre I would not use. Denman town centre would like to see it progress. Convention centre has no purpose as we can use other facilities which is more than adequate. Should keep existing facilities viable
Not supportive	All this money for water park, and then we have to pay to use the facility. Put a water park which is free, similar to Lake Keepit, or Cairns, installed in a public park for free. , Who will convention centre benefit?
Not supportive	Agree with the pool being replaced and that something needs to be done with the town centre to make it lively. Woolworths should have been built in the main street. Council needs to support local trade's people and business.
Not supportive	Against the performance centre and the amount spent on Campbell's Corner.
Not supportive	A number of friends live in Denman and do not support the revitalisation proposal. It may take business away from existing retailers and may be to the detriment of the community
Not supportive	A lot of people are losing their jobs in the area and it would be hard to afford the increase.
Not supportive	10 million came from the mining industry, why not fix or build water park then
Not supportive	We have enough bills ,cannot afford more rates increases
Unsure	Worried about pensioners who may battle when the rise in rates and most pensioners would not use all the new facilities (maybe the convention centre). Probably would be good for the town but do we really need the three facilities.
Unsure	Why replace the pool what is the reason
Unsure	We are on the pension and am worried about the rate increase and how we are meant to be able to afford this.
Unsure	Those facilities aren't needed by the town
Unsure	Thinks that there are other areas, such as infrastructure works (e.g., roads), that are more important. Has observed the pool in Denman is fine but seems to be under-used.
Unsure	Think there's better thing that can be done
Unsure	Think the idea is pretty good, but multiple property owners will be hit hard, previous revitalisations have not been successful in bringing more people/businesses to the area.
Unsure	The water park is a good idea for the kids, not too fussed about Denman town centre upgrade. Convention centre I'm not in favour, because I don't think it will get enough use, and where will it be located. Council needs to provide ratepayers with more detail about plans for distribution of funds.
Unsure	The same old things keep coming up and nothing gets done, there must be others way of raising funds
Unsure	The Council has a lot more money than they are saying because of the local coal mines.
Unsure	Read over not sure
Unsure	Rate increase would impact me very badly, and I wouldn't us the pool, but I would like to see funds spent on aged care, and road maintenance. , Muswellbrook needs an injection of enthusiasm, to revitalise the whole area





Unsure	Not sure if I could use the facilities, the waterpark would have to be very child friendly.
Unsure	Not fully clear on the projects and unwilling to comment.
Unsure	No
Unsure	No
Unsure	Need to think about it more
Unsure	Need more time to review information and think about it?
Unsure	Need more time to consider and read the information.
Unsure	Need more information about this such as would this increase employment in the area. How do the improvements impact on the community.
Unsure	Moneys tight and have not had the chance to think whether this is going to be good for the community and rate payers.
Unsure	Money should be spent on Muswellbrook main street area and encourage business like markets or something to revitalise this town. Maybe cheaper version of the waterpark. We are losing the population, the council needs to work on the town and encourage activities especially in sports fun runs, bike rides etc. They are spending the money in the wrong area. The leisure centre can be upgraded without the water park just fix it up.
Unsure	Letter stated sum facts but were not supported, e.g. Muswellbrook has the lowest rates in the area, which is not correct.
Unsure	Its great what they're proposing but you have to think about the budget read
Unsure	It wouldn't affect us as we are in our 70's.
Unsure	It would be good to have the improvements but a strain on pensioners and low income to pay the rise
Unsure	Income has ceased due to mine not going ahead decision by the Govt. At the moment do not have a job. Can't afford extra rate rise.
Unsure	I'm not convinced that we need the convention centre and not sure if it would be used enough to warrant the expense, if it bought performances and shows to the area but I feel we don't have the population to support that. I support the water park and the Denman revitalisation
Unsure	I'm not a rate payer but I do pay rent which would obviously go up if this occurs and I cannot afford any further increases in my rent.
Unsure	I'm about to retire and my money is tied up and I'm on a low budget. If they dropped the price to get in to the pool to half the price then they would triple the numbers in rates.
Unsure	If we are paying for the water park do we get free entry or will we have to pay an entry fee. Denman rates should be used to revitalise their town not Muswellbrook rates and vice versa
Unsure	If things are going ahead that's okay but I would be a bit concerned as a pensioner how to afford.
Unsure	I've been in Denman all my life and seen when Council tried to make the Main St a one way St. If they could make all these options works it would be great.
Unsure	I would need to know a lot more about the planned performance centre before I know whether I will support the SRV
Unsure	I would like to have more information before I can form an opinion. How many would use these facilities, rents are too high. What will the convention centre be used for, will it have a bar.
Unsure	I understand that it will provide better facilities but I do not know how residents will afford the increase. I have mixed feelings.
Unsure	I support it to a point but have reservations in regards to where things will be situated, and don't think they are very constructive options. It lacks imagination.
Unsure	I still have to work out the numbers and see how it will impact on my rates.

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Unsure	I pay enough rates on my property. Then go to the pool and have to pay more to go into the pool. Happy to see the new facilities but ratepayers should have some kind of discount to attend.
Unsure	I like the idea of what they are trying to do, but worried about the economic situation. There has been a big slowdown in our town. The land values have dropped, and it may affect the amount coming in to fund these facilities
Unsure	I haven't formed an opinion yet
Unsure	I have not heard much about it I would like to see something like that go in but I just hope that they do it right. I need more information about what they are actually going to do. The young kids need more things to do in the town.
Unsure	I don't live in Muswellbrook or Denman, I'm in an outlying area, and I don't have kids, and would not get any benefit from these proposed new facilities, but recognise that some progress needs to be made to upgrade facilities
Unsure	I don't have enough information to decide
Unsure	I believe that the rate variation will not revert back after the fourth year. In the fourth year we would paying basically for the first four years in one year. For a pensioner this far too high to be able to afford.
Unsure	I am not sure.
Unsure	I am not rate payer and it is difficult to answer, more information is needed. Price of pool entry has gone up substantially, so I do not think the waterpark will be affordable at the pool as prices will increase further. I have a child and I could not afford to pay that.
Unsure	I am not convinced that the water park would be utilized, therefore it would be a waste of money, and there is no need for 500 seats in the performance venue, 300 would be more than enough and would make the proposal cheaper.
Unsure	I am a pensioner who lives alone and that is a lot of money for me. Improvements in Muswellbrook won't help me here in Denman
Unsure	Husband takes care the bills so I'm unsure
Unsure	Council will do this work anyway, whether we support or oppose. The pool fees are too expensive for families. Denman has missed out on all the funds.
Unsure	Because I live out of town the Denman one I did support haven't been in the pool for years but Denman would be good
Unsure	At this stage I'm planning to retire with in the next few months and also may be leaving the area.
Unsure	Are upgrades necessary? The current pool is underused.
Unsure	Any development of this kind would be good but it doesn't affect me directly
Unsure	Am worried other elderly pensioners who can't afford this rate variation and that they wouldn't use these facilities. If they do go ahead with Convention Centre will we get the Artists and performers?
Supportive	You have to move with the times or the town will die
Supportive	Yes. We pay rates to get things done so we need things done in Denman. We really need angle parking in town as it is really hard to get a parking space.
Supportive	Yes but only if the money is used for that purpose and doesn't go into general revenue
Supportive	Will better the local community.
Supportive	We've lost out with the closed mines, I think rate payers should get behind council and get things done
Supportive	We need to revitalise the town centre
Supportive	We need to do something....it will bring people to the town....and it's good for local employment
Supportive	We need these things in the area

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Supportive	We need something more here to keep kids entertained
Supportive	We need something here, and it's only for 4 years is worth it.
Supportive	We need progress
Supportive	We need better facilities
Supportive	We need at least three elements of the proposal, however we do not need a new convention centre, Other buildings could be converted for such use.
Supportive	We need all the facilities we can get
Supportive	We live in a retirement facility, and we are not sure how this will impact us
Supportive	We have children so there are benefits for families with children, however it is very big rise of rates by the fourth year.
Supportive	We are short of facilities around here however am concerned about whether it goes back down after the four years
Supportive	We are looking forward to seeing the new facilities and improvements and I think the town needs upgrading
Supportive	Water park and performance venue would be good for the community as currently there is only the high school hall.
Supportive	Unsure about the location of the entertainment centre, would not like to see buildings demolished.
Supportive	Town needs the facilities to draw more people.
Supportive	Town need these things
Supportive	To help build the town up
Supportive	To go forward it has to be done
Supportive	To get better facilities for Muswellbrook and to get a convention and entertainment area to provide better performances for residents
Supportive	To further improve the town.
Supportive	This town needs more infrastructure and more things to do.
Supportive	This town has been in need of a convention centre for years, and this is the only way to get it.
Supportive	Things should be updated in Muswellbrook and Denman.
Supportive	They need to start doing something for this town
Supportive	They need the money to do the work.
Supportive	They are all things that need to be started and completed. This would make a huge difference for the towns.
Supportive	These facilities are important to the town
Supportive	There is nothing in Muswellbrook for families.
Supportive	There is nothing here to do, we need more entertainment for the kids.
Supportive	There is a need for the pool upgrade and other facilities.
Supportive	There are currently no good facilities for young children in summer. Water Park and performance venue great ideas! Revamp will attract tourism.
Supportive	There are a lot of young families in the area and we need recreation such as the water park, although need lifeguards so it is open, and could do with Denman upgrade and convention centre would be useful currently use school halls etc. Which do not even have aircon
Supportive	The variation supports a lot of upgrades
Supportive	The town pool needs to be replaced, in favour of progress but worried about the people that can't afford it.
Supportive	The town needs upgrading and the town would be nicer to live in for the residence





Supportive	The town needs these things. They are not mind boggling figures.
Supportive	The town needs these things badly
Supportive	The town needs these facilities. Children and grandchildren especially need new aquatic facilities and theatre.
Supportive	The town needs these facilities
Supportive	The town needs these facilities
Supportive	The town needs the water park for the children, Denman upgrade is needed but not the convention & entertainment venue.
Supportive	The town needs something like this.
Supportive	The town needs more, we as rate payers would benefit from these new facilities
Supportive	The town needs extra things in it to attract people to the town performing arts centre would be good
Supportive	The town needs all of those facilities.
Supportive	The town need it they need to look at a new sporting field which we need
Supportive	The town does need more places for entertainment.
Supportive	The town desperately needs this, it has been a long time coming.
Supportive	The SRV is reasonable and things need to be done sooner rather than later.
Supportive	The pool is old and needs replacement; the town needs these new developments.
Supportive	The place is going backwards so something has to be done. I think the council should encourage renewable energy industries which would help things, but if nothing is done it will end up a ghost town.
Supportive	The money has to come from somewhere. A little increase in the rates won't affect us too much, others may not be able. Will give kids something to do.
Supportive	The local people should contribute to these upgrades as they are the ones who will be using them.
Supportive	The improvement of these facilities is a really good idea, ratepayers should contribute to funding it as it will benefit ratepayers.
Supportive	The facilities would help families like mine
Supportive	The facilities are important for the town and community.
Supportive	The cumulative increase for Year 4 is way too high.
Supportive	The council has a vision of going further and I support this. We need to move forward not stay stagnant.
Supportive	That it wouldn't be too much over the four year period.
Supportive	Support the other projects but not the convention & entertainment venues. I do not think people will come and use the venue.
Supportive	SRV is not a big amount for needed facilities.
Supportive	Sounds like a reasonable amount not so large that it would have a drastic effect on anyone and the area needs these projects to go ahead
Supportive	Something good for the children.
Supportive	So the town has more facilities for the younger children
Supportive	Reasonable amount to charge.
Supportive	Progress, something else for the younger people to do.
Supportive	Prefers that mines contribute 50% to these upgrades.
Supportive	People in the town will benefit from it and the town needs a boost.
Supportive	Our rates are not too bad and 2.5% is not excessive
Supportive	Nothing for young people
Supportive	Nothing at present for the kids to do in the area. Facilities are necessary.



Supportive	Not sure how it would affect me in a retirement village. Think it is good for young people
Supportive	Not sure
Supportive	Not a rate payer at the moment. Town needs the new facilities. Residents need to see that the money is being spent within the community and for their benefit
Supportive	Not a lot of money and if we don't do it we may never get it done. Negligible amount for the return
Supportive	Needs going ahead they are doing great works right now so keep going
Supportive	Needs an uplift. And more police presence young kids are ruining the good things in Muswellbrook cameras on every corner.
Supportive	Need the convention centre and the upgrade to Denman and water park but not sure about the pool?
Supportive	My kids would love the water park, not much for families to do together around here.
Supportive	My kids would benefit from this.
Supportive	My daughter is involved in dramatic arts and I think the performance venue would be an asset for our area. A new pool would be nice.
Supportive	My daughter is in a performance group which the performance would be good and anything to better the town is great.
Supportive	Muswellbrook vastly needs improvements. Allot of the businesses are dying - area needs revamping.
Supportive	Muswellbrook relies on mining industry which is cyclical - new facilities may bring more tourism.
Supportive	Muswellbrook needs more facilities for the younger people in the community. Entertainment centre a great idea for the region. Revitalisation is important for bringing business back to the area.
Supportive	Muswellbrook needs an upgrade.
Supportive	Muswellbrook needs a lot more for people.
Supportive	Muswellbrook main centre needs to be upgraded.
Supportive	Muswellbrook is a long way behind other places, so new facilities would be good and bring more interest in the town.
Supportive	Money from the various new mining companies in the area for infrastructure would help.
Supportive	Makes it possible to do the three new facilities at once instead of waiting for years to complete them all.
Supportive	Mainly for the water park.
Supportive	Main street area is in dire need of a revamp which will ultimately assist local businesses. Water park would be of benefit to young people.
Supportive	Living in an isolated area Council needs to provide and upgrade facilities for the residents
Supportive	Like to see things go ahead for the town
Supportive	I've got grandchildren and it would be good for them, the main street of Denman would be better for tourists however I don't think older ratepayers should be charged they should be excluded from the service
Supportive	I've got a 10 year old daughter that would love the water park
Supportive	It's upgrading of foot paths which I use. The water park sounds good and great for the kids. I support them trying to upgrade the Community but they should be able to fund these with the rates already. The amount that they propose is too high, considering it goes up every year.
Supportive	It's got its benefits for the region and has its negatives.
Supportive	It's for a good cause.
Supportive	It's better for the town for Denman people coming in would like it on holidays .Make





	prettier and bring more into the town
Supportive	It's a very hot area so pools good, exhibition centre region needs something like that and revitalising town I live here and would be good
Supportive	It's good to look into the future rather than dwell in the past
Supportive	It's going to improve all the facilities
Supportive	It would not get done
Supportive	It would give the younger generation more to do and the theatre is definitely needed
Supportive	It would bring a lot more income to the town in way of events. We could become a hub area and look professional and classy and people outside town would come. The pool is rubbish and is only opened limited hours (only 3 hours on a week day) and the water park would be good if it was great quality and they could hold school functions, parties etc. Would need it to be managed correctly and be open a lot longer hours and try to accommodate all age ranges, toddlers, teenager and parents and retirees. Denman town centre, not happy with part of the revitalisation we are a relaxed town. Planning and aesthetics is good, involve locals as there is a large elderly population and we require more room. Needs more parking not enough parking in the design.
Supportive	It would be good for the town. But I would prefer the rates not to go up.
Supportive	It would be good for the town, not sure how successful the water park will be, so I am supportive of change, so the town can grow and develop
Supportive	It would be good for the pool to be finished. We need these things for the town.
Supportive	It will provide something for the children and young people to do.
Supportive	It will make a better town for my family
Supportive	It will give people more things to do, especially the pool and water park
Supportive	It will benefit the town
Supportive	It will beautify Denman and the other areas
Supportive	It will be good for town as its getting a bit ghostly in Muswellbrook, shops have shut down.
Supportive	It is progress, at my age I don't get around a lot, but I admire what the mayor is doing with the town.
Supportive	It is doing something good for the towns.
Supportive	It is a great idea and will keep teenagers out of trouble
Supportive	It is a good idea to gradually increase the rate variation. The swimming pool needs to be upgraded and revamping as it is old.
Supportive	It has got to go ahead, we need to attract more people to the town and this will help.
Supportive	It may provide value to the rate payers
Supportive	Interested in the regional performance centre and the people in Denman to get the revitalisation.
Supportive	In the past there has been too much spent in Muswellbrook Council and Denman needs some attention, in addition there are empty shops in Muswellbrook so something needs to be done to encourage people to go to Muswellbrook
Supportive	In terms of Muswellbrook the upgrades there would be fantastic especially at the pool. Maybe bring more people into town the convention centre would be a boost to the town
Supportive	Improvements for the community would be good.
Supportive	Improve Muswellbrook area and it will give residence with children something to do.
Supportive	I'm not good really but happy with it all going ahead its good for the community cannot be a bad thing. Any improvement is a good improvement.
Supportive	If it entices more people to come to our Community it would be great. Our town needs it.
Supportive	If it benefits the town with improvements I am in support

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Supportive	If I was a rate payer I would think these options would be great for the town.
Supportive	I've always been a lover of swimming and for the improvements to Denman, I don't want to pay but want the improved facilities
Supportive	I'm only going to be here for 12months so I'm fine with it going ahead, if I was planning on staying it might be too expensive for me.
Supportive	I'm in favour but I want to know more about the water park before I decide....and I want a new toilet block in Simpson Park
Supportive	I'd like to see the new facilities in the town
Supportive	I would like to see the waterpark and all that go ahead but I disagree with council going into competition with businesses they shouldn't be purchasing land and using ratepayer's money to refurbish it.
Supportive	I would like to see some more things available for young people to do. However, I would also like to see Denman have kerb and guttering throughout the town too so I think they might have other things that need to come first.
Supportive	I want to see the town have a bit of direction...we need all types of families here
Supportive	I want a pool for the kids I want my kids to enjoy the park
Supportive	I think we need to improve our facilities because the pool is fairly average and we need more facilities for kids like theatrical and things like that and it would be good if they provided more shade at the pool.
Supportive	I think we definitely need a performance centre and the pool upgrade would be great as well.
Supportive	I think those things will be great in the town as long as other areas don't suffer from lack of funds.
Supportive	I think this is a good idea it will benefit the kids
Supportive	I think they have got to improve things in Denman and that street in particular.
Supportive	I think these facilities are important, but I'm keen for Denman to get its fair share of the funds
Supportive	I think there is not a lot here for young people, I think it will provide places for young people to go
Supportive	I think the water park would be a good investment for our town and bring in more people to the town. We need something other than mining, to help support the local area
Supportive	I think the town needs it.
Supportive	I think the town does need the facilities we do not have a town hall or anything.
Supportive	I think the new waterpark will be great for the local kids, and we need these new facilities to revitalise our area
Supportive	I think the money would be well-spent
Supportive	I think the children need somewhere to go to that has a little bit more excitement and we do need a convention centre.
Supportive	I think that they need doing anything new in this town would be great I just wish that when they did up Campbell's corner in Muswellbrook which is right in the centre of town they could have made that a very nice convention centre because that is where the conservatorium is now which is empty.
Supportive	I think that it would benefit the community and also attract people to the town.
Supportive	I think priority needs to be given to Denman and the performing arts centre over the swimming pool. I use the swimming pool a lot and can continue to function as is.
Supportive	I think my Grandkids will benefit from the facilities and the town needs them
Supportive	I think Muswellbrook needs upgraded facilities to keep up with other areas, particularly Singleton.



Supportive	I think just because things have to advance the town is pretty bad at the moment and they need to do something to improve it.
Supportive	I think its required in the town and if that is needed to fund them then better getting on with it sooner rather than later
Supportive	I think it's a small price to pay to have these improvements. People whinge they haven't got anything but you have to pay to get things.
Supportive	I think it's important to improve the area
Supportive	I think it's a great idea for the town.
Supportive	I think it would be really good if they fix the area up a bit and put more things in because there is not really much to do around here.
Supportive	I think it would be good for the town...especially the pool / water park
Supportive	I think it will help the town and be good for children and young adults
Supportive	I think it will be good for the future and the next generation.
Supportive	I think it will be a benefit to the community
Supportive	I think it is reasonable cost and reasonable projects
Supportive	I think it is important for the residents in the area and for the kids in the future.
Supportive	I think if it is going to get things better for the district the whole place needs a facelift.
Supportive	I think Denman needs the upgrades
Supportive	I support the water facility and the pool. I think Denman is fine as it is. I am more in favour of fixing up the roads.
Supportive	I support all of the projects that Council has proposed and very prepared to pay for this things to proceed
Supportive	I like the idea of these things, however there are more urgent needs such as the roads and gutters which are a danger and hazard to public.
Supportive	I just think it will be good for the town.
Supportive	I have young kids growing up in the community. These facilities will benefit them in the long run. I run a child care facility so we would use these facilities for work. This idea would benefit everyone.
Supportive	I have seen what the council has done with Campbell's corner, the subway and approach to southern Muswellbrook it is a credit to the council
Supportive	I have a young son and I am sure he would enjoy the pool and I would also use the pool. I pay rent so whether the rates go up don't really matter to me.
Supportive	I guess because the convention centre is needed to maintain the viability of the town.
Supportive	I feel this is something that the town needs, however I think there should be an incentive for ratepayers such as some free trips to the water park.
Supportive	I feel they are all things that the town needs
Supportive	I don't think this is a lot of money for those improvements
Supportive	I don't think it is that much of an impact and it is probably going to bring things in and it will be good for the town.
Supportive	I don't think I would notice the impact on my budget and I support the provision of the new facilities
Supportive	I don't go to the pool and I don't visit Denman but I am supportive. I think a water park would be great for kids. I hope they keep it open during the school holidays and in the evenings. Current pool opening hours are inadequate. Keeping the pool open later provides a great avenue for community integration.
Supportive	I don't consider it a whole lot of money per person that they are asking for and the extra facilities in Denman would be great.
Supportive	I believe it will give people more reasons to stay in the community





Supportive	I believe Denman needs to have the town centre upgraded
Supportive	I am supportive of any growth within the region.
Supportive	I am involved with the arts and I think it's good value
Supportive	I am happy to pay for this and I think it will help the town especially young people, community consultation and letterbox drops are helpful for any new proposals/developments so that ratepayers can clearly see where funds are spent.
Supportive	I am a mum and would definitely take my kids to the water park
Supportive	I would support the rate variation only if something is done to improve the condition of Giants creek Road
Supportive	Have young grandchildren and it would be good for them.
Supportive	Have to have progress. Unless we have this sort of thing happening we will go backwards
Supportive	Grown up in the area I love the area. Good to see they are making it a better place to live and visit
Supportive	Good value for the ratepayers
Supportive	Good idea to have more facilities but nothing wrong with the old pool.
Supportive	Good for the town i've moved here couple of years ago it's starting to look unloved like it did 20 years ago need upgrade to bring people in and keep the locals there as well
Supportive	Good for the town seems to be a minimum cost to the rate payer. But only over 4 years
Supportive	Good for the town keep improving facilities for the town
Supportive	Good for the community
Supportive	Good for Denman & Muswellbrook areas
Supportive	Frustrated with council they should have done the water park when first doing the pool.
Supportive	For the town would be good
Supportive	For improvements sake
Supportive	Family live in the shire and family that have moved away. I would like to think that these new developments will prevent other members of my family moving
Supportive	Facilities are needed and they will draw people to the area.
Supportive	Facilities and improvements are necessary to attract more people to the area.
Supportive	Developments better for the whole community.
Supportive	Denman is my favourite town we need the water park for the kids would be great.
Supportive	Deliveries would be good for the town and may increase tourism.
Supportive	Create work for the town.
Supportive	Council may need extra funds to beautify the place.
Supportive	Change is needed and funding has to come from somewhere.
Supportive	Better to have the 3 upgrades in full rather than just a percentage of an upgrade
Supportive	Because we have investment properties in the shire and we want to see things go ahead
Supportive	Because these things are badly needed in our area
Supportive	Because the town's got to grow
Supportive	Because I think there is a need for it
Supportive	Because I think the aquatic centre would be used a lot more and council would make a lot more money back with more visitors at aquatic centre and Denman is very rundown so deserve makeover however I don't think performance centre will be used that much I think the performance centre will take away from local businesses
Supportive	At this stage I'm mainly for the pool not so much the water park I enjoy a swim good for the town
Supportive	As long as the increase is limited to four years, and rates go back down
Supportive	Anything that improves the town is worthwhile it's for my grandchildren

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Supportive	Anything that can improve facilities in the town would be great. These new facilities will keep people in the town centre to shop, etc. Rather than travelling to other areas to shop.
Supportive	Any type of development is good for the town
Supportive	Amount is reasonable for the facilities proposed.
Supportive	All for spending money for improvements
Supportive	A lot of young people and families in the town that need things to do.
Supportive	Great for the town especially the performance centre



## **7 ADJOURNMENT INTO CLOSED COUNCIL**

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, in the opinion of the General manager, the following business is of a kind as referred to in Section 10A(2) of the Act, and should be dealt with in a Confidential Session of the Council meeting closed to the press and public.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Council adjourn into Closed Session and members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting of the Closed Session, and access to the correspondence and reports relating to the items considered during the course of the Closed Session be withheld unless declassified by separate resolution. This action is taken in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act, 1993 as the items listed come within the following provisions:**

#### **8.1 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REVIEW - REGIONAL CONVENTION AND PERFORMANCE CENTRE**

Item 8.1 is classified CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the local government act 1993, as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business, and Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

#### **8.2 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REVIEW - AQUATIC CENTRE UPGRADE AND EXPANSION**

Item 8.2 is classified CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the local government act 1993, as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business, and Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

**Moved:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Seconded:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **8 CLOSED COUNCIL**

**9 RESUMPTION OF OPEN COUNCIL**

**10 CLOSURE**