

**Attachment**

**Communications Feedback**

## Feedback from the community consultations

Council undertook extensive engagement during the period 1 December 2017 to 1 February 2018 using a variety of channels to consult with the community on their views on the proposed resourcing options.

The results obtained from the various mediums used are outlined below:

### Telephone Survey

Randwick Council engaged independent research agency Micromex Research to undertake a representative community telephone survey.

The objectives of the survey were to:

- Measure awareness levels and sources of information about a Special Rate Variation
- Measure levels of support for different SRV options
- Obtain a hierarchy of preferences for the different options
- Community attitude of a number of key projects
- Measure community satisfaction with the performance of Council

A total of 603 interviews were conducted which included 492 respondents selected through a random selection process using the White Pages and an additional 111 respondents recruited to take part in the survey face-to-face at local shopping centres, town centres and public areas.

A sample size of 603 provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 4.0% at 95% confidence.

The sample was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2016 ABS community profile of the Randwick City Local Government Area.

Summary results:

1. 57% of residents stated that 'Option 3 – the preferred approach' was their first preference
2. 76% of residents stated that 'Option 1 – a rate peg only' was their least preferred outcome
3. 30% of residents were aware that Council was exploring community sentiment towards a Special Rate Variation

## Preferences of Special Rate Variation Options

Q5a. Please rank the 3 options in order of preference:

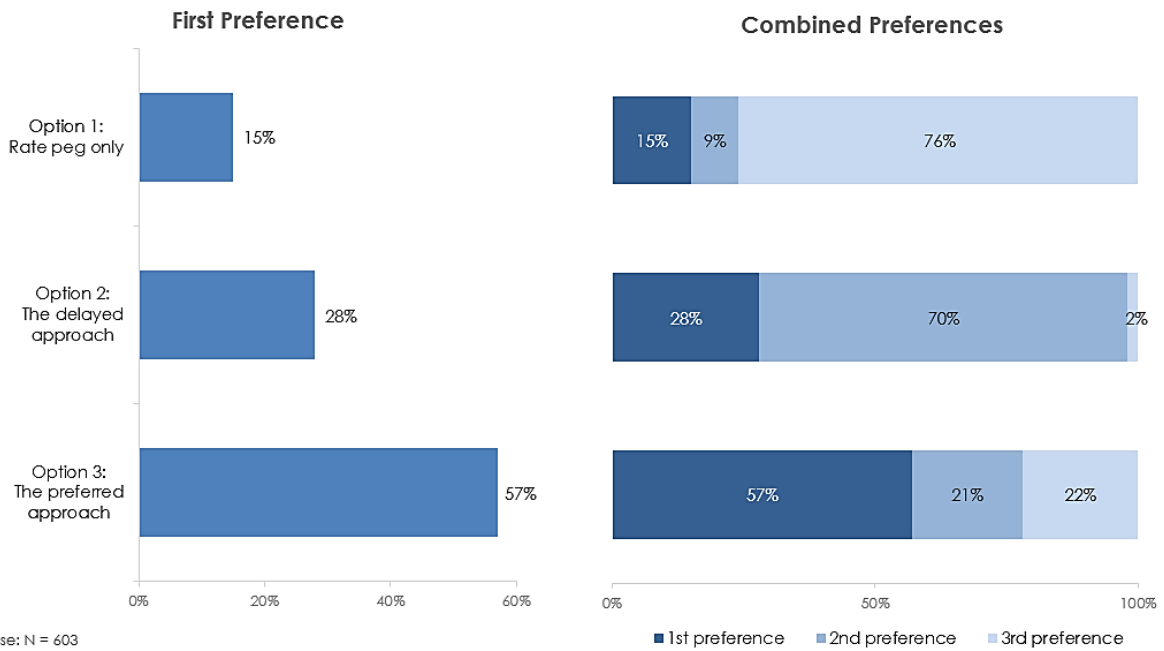


Chart: Preferences of special rate variation options.

Participants were read a concept statement explaining Council’s decision to seek community feedback on a potential Special Rate Variation and given information on the cumulative rate increase over three years of each of the options and the typical monetary increase per year for residents paying the average rate.

After explaining the options, residents were asked to indicate their order of preference for each of the options. As can be seen by the above chart, 57% of respondents – a majority and more than the other two options combined – chose Option 3 which Council calls the ‘preferred approach’ of a 19.85% cumulative increase over three years as well as borrowing \$27M.

There was little support for option 1 which is to apply for the rate peg receiving 15% first preference support.

Respondents were also asked to give a reason why they chose the option they did.

### Reasons for choosing option 1 as first preference (15%)

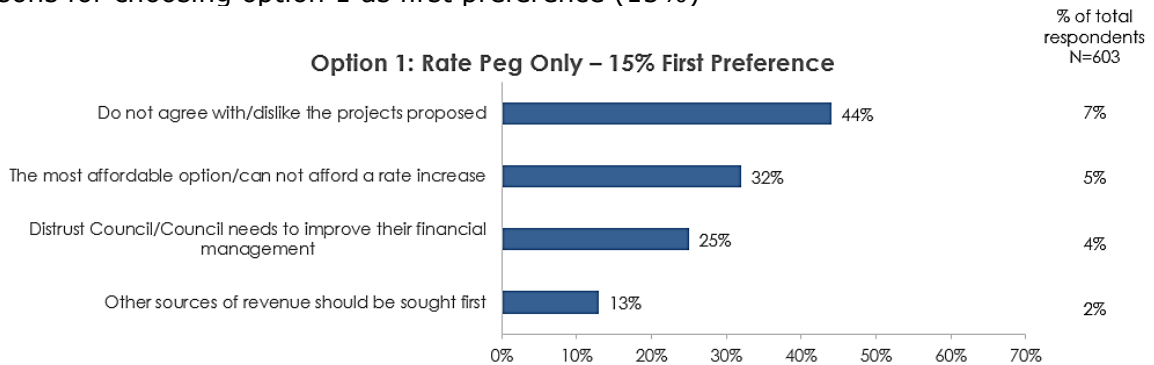


Chart: Reasons for preferring Option 1

Some of the verbatim responses of participants for preferring option 1 include:

- 'I am a pensioner and can not afford any increase'*
- 'Families are undergoing financial hardship just from the cost of living'*
- 'The community already pays enough in rates'*
- 'We do not get any value for money as it is'*
- 'Council needs to better manage the funds they already have'*
- 'Federal Government should be providing the money for terrorism'*
- 'I do not agree with the projects, there are much more urgent things needed'*
- 'Nothing will happen as always, it will be a waste of money'*

Reasons for choosing option 2 as first preference (28%)

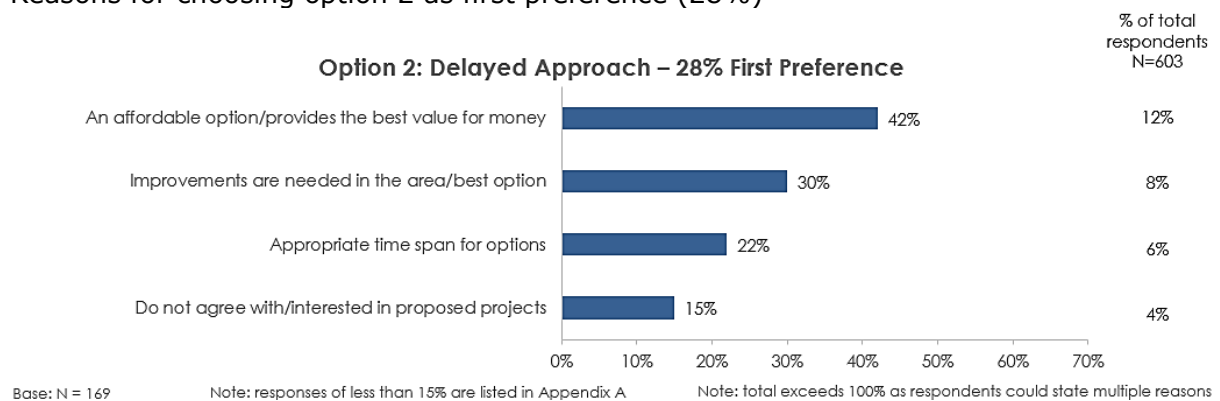


Chart: Reasons for preferring Option 2

Some of the verbatim responses of participants for preferring option 2 include:

- 'Financially we can not afford option 3, but still want projects completed'*
- 'It is the most cost effective option'*
- 'Things have to be done, which requires more funding'*
- 'Delays the increase in rates'*
- 'Disapprove with some of the projects proposed'*
- 'We need to move forward as a community, so we do not stagnate'*
- 'The projects will still get done over time'*
- 'This option does not require Council to borrow money'*

Reasons for choosing option 3 as first preference (57%)

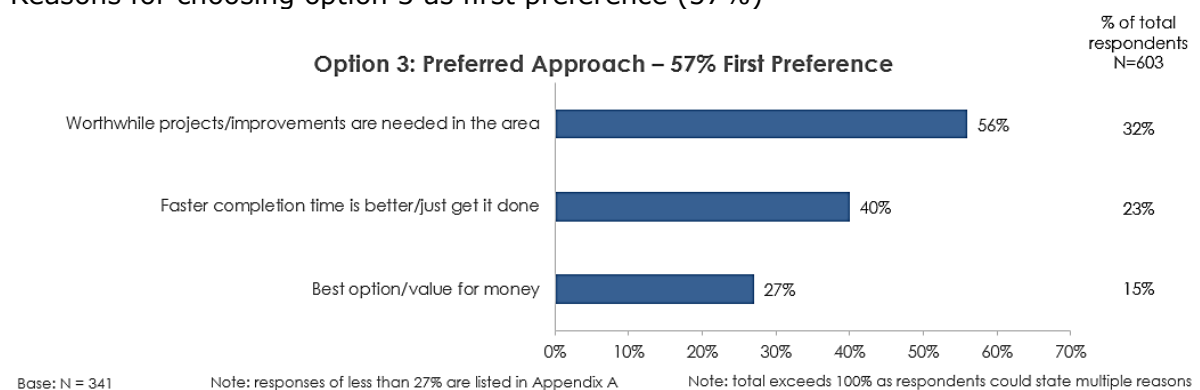


Chart: Reasons for preferring Option 3

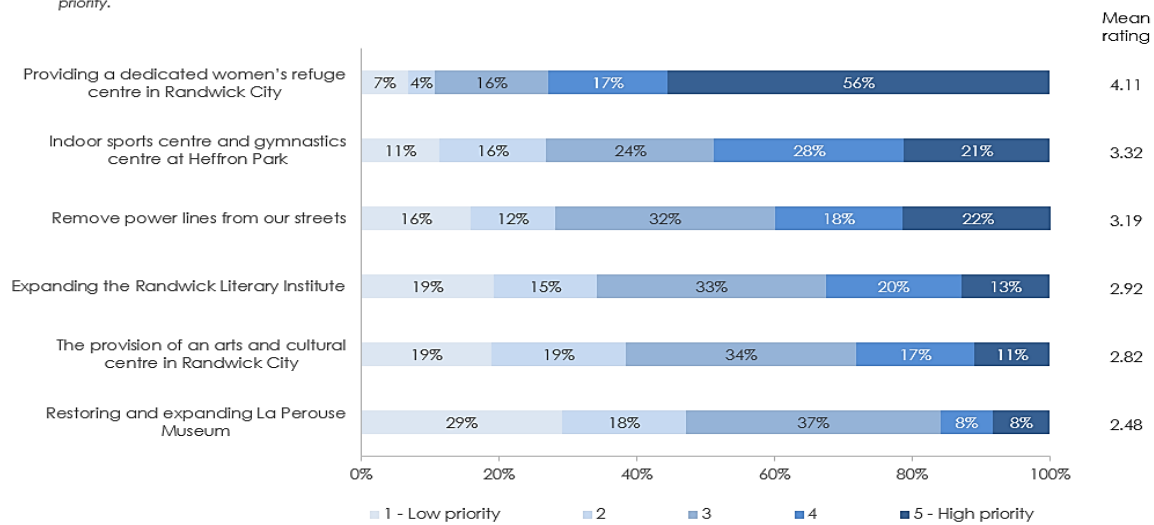
Some of the verbatim responses of participants for preferring option 3 include:

- 'Better time scale for projects to get done'*
- 'Happy to pay for these projects to be done quickly and efficiently'*
- 'The amount of money per household is low'*
- 'Let's just get it done'*
- 'It needs to get done and someone has to pay for it'*
- 'The projects need to be done, there is no point stretching it out over 13 years'*

*'Confident in Council's ability to deliver'  
 'Need to do these things to more forward'*

**Priority of major projects**

Q5c. Thinking of the projects identified, please rate the following major projects in terms of priority on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being low priority and 5 being high priority.



Base: N = 603

Scale: 1 = low priority, 5 = high priority

Note: 1 respondent refused to rate priority for 'providing a dedicated women's refuge centre in Randwick City'

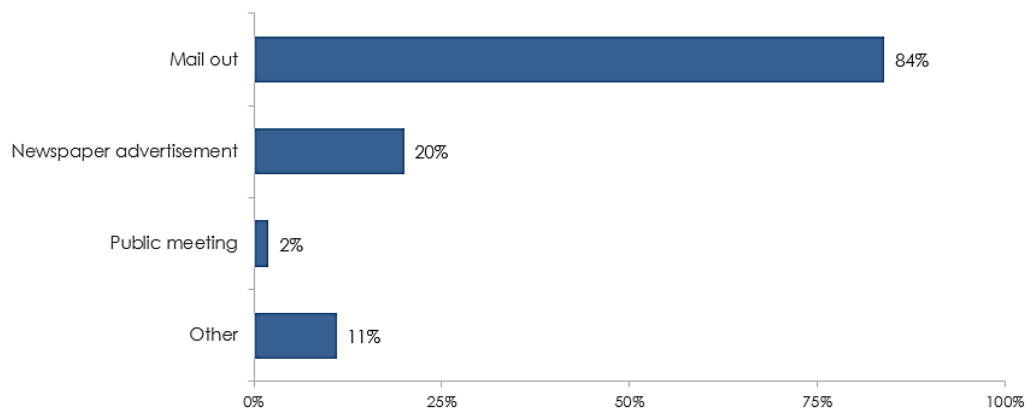
**Chart: Priority of major projects**

Participants were asked for their feedback on the priority of some of the projects Council is proposing to fund as part of the SRV. The above table helps show relative priority. All projects received a level of support, however addressing domestic violence through the provision of a women's refuge or other means, building a new indoor sports centre and underground powerlines to enable more street tree planting is a high priority for the community.

The lowest prioritised project 'Restoring and expanding the La Perouse Museum' received a mean rating of 2.48 (out of 5) but still had a level of support with 53% scoring it a 3, 4 or 5 priority.

## Source of information on a Special Rate Variation

Q6a. Prior to this call, were you aware that Council was exploring community sentiment towards a Special Rate Variation?  
 Q6b. [If yes in Q6a] How were you informed of the Special Rate Variation?



Other- specified	Count
Word of mouth	9
Email	8
Social media	2
Online news website	1
Council's website	1

Chart: How people became aware of SRV

Of those surveyed, 30% were aware Council was seeking a Special Rate Variation and the above chart shows how people became aware.

Of note, is that 92% of respondents were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with the overall performance of Council in the last 12 months. This is a strong result in the context of a telephone survey seeking feedback on a rate variation and suggests an ongoing level of trust and support for the services and projects delivered by Council in the past.

### Ratepayer Survey

Randwick Council developed a specific ratepayer mailout designed to inform Randwick City ratepayers (a significant audience identified in the consultation strategy) about Council's proposal for a Special Rate Variation and to seek their views.

In early January 2018 the mailout was undertaken using standard Australia Post mail which included a covering explanatory letter from the Mayor, a paper survey, reply paid envelope and an 8-page Information Booklet. The covering letter also provided the option for people to complete the survey online and provided a unique ID and password. This mailout was sent to the nominated postal address of 41,803 ratepaying properties.

Council identified an additional 9,546 ratepaying properties where the nominated postal address was a real estate agent. This suggests the property is most likely an investment property. As many local real estate agents manage dozen and sometimes hundreds of properties, Council decided to make it easier for investors to take part by sending one unique letter to each real estate agent with a list of property addresses that they managed and asked them to scan and email details of a survey website to their landlords. This meant real estate agents weren't getting dozens and hundreds of letters in the post.

Ratepayers had until 5pm 1 February 2018 to return the survey or complete it online.

Total surveys sent:	51,349	
Hard copy surveys received:	4,642	(9.04%)
Online surveys received:	1,071	(2.09%)
Total surveys received:	5,713	(11.13%)

The Ratepayer Survey results reflect the attitudes of those ratepayers who chose to respond. This is an important distinction to the Telephone Survey. The Ratepayer Survey is not random, weighted or representative. However for a sample size as large as this, Council can have reasonable confidence that it is a general view of the average ratepayer. For example if you applied a statistical error margin analysis to the sample size over the population with a 95% confidence level, the margin of error would be low at just 1.22%. Comparison with the Telephone Survey shows the outcomes and trends are consistent.

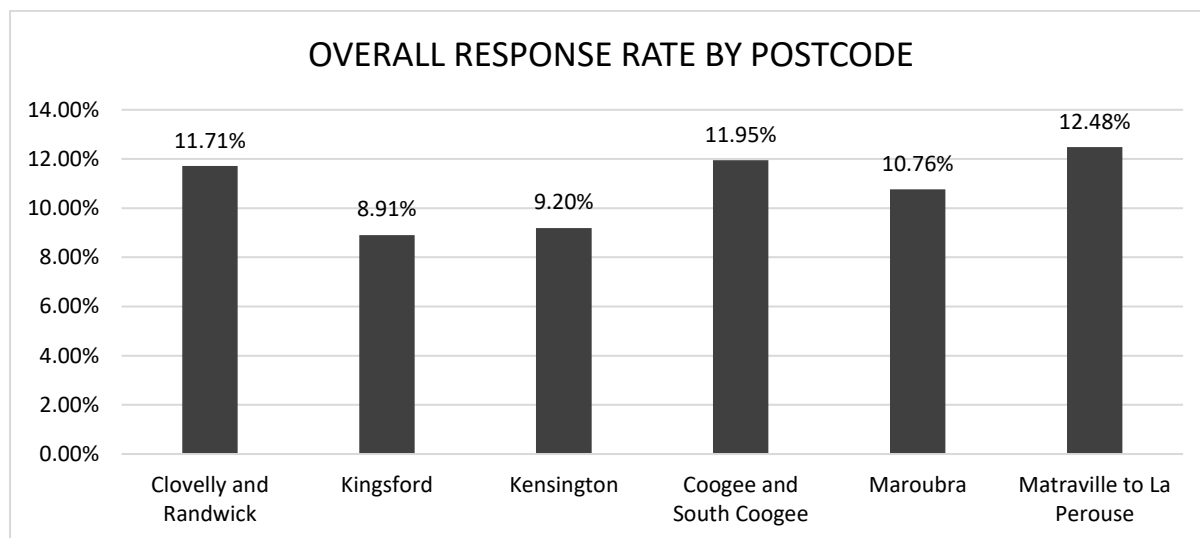


Chart: Response rate by post code as a percentage of surveys issued

There is a slightly higher response rate in the 2036 postcode (Matraville to La Perouse) and 2034 (Coogee and South Coogee) and 2031 (Randwick and Clovelly). It is possible that a higher level of investor owned properties in the Kingsford and Kensington areas is a contributing factor to the lower relative response rate.

Interestingly, a majority 81% of people decided to complete the paper survey and return it via mail despite Council providing an online option.

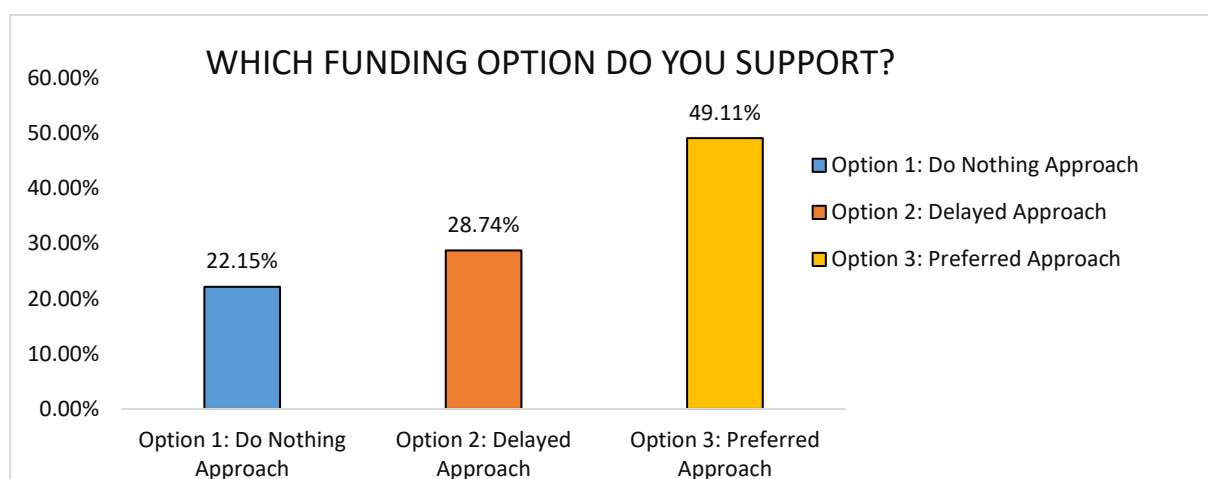


Chart: Response to Q2 of Ratepayer Survey, n=5,337

The above chart shows of the completed survey responses received, a majority (49%) of respondents indicated they supported option 3. This is consistent with the results of the Telephone Survey. Note the above chart excludes 376 survey responses that did not complete Q2.

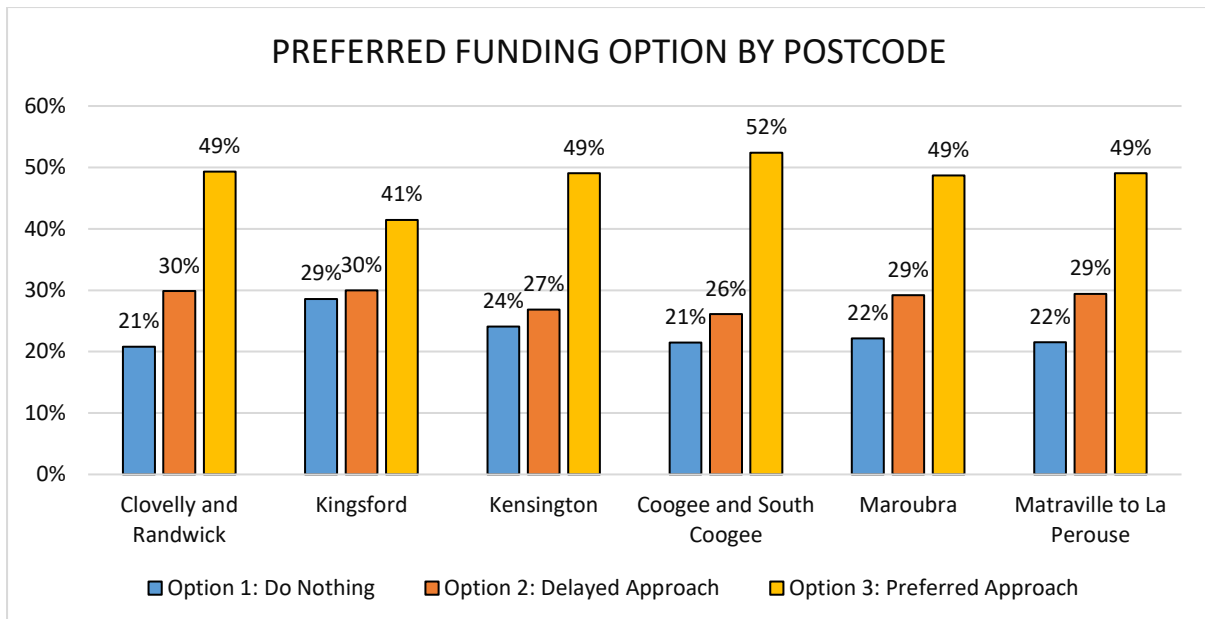


Chart: Response to Q2 of Ratepayer Survey grouped by postcode, n=5,337

The above chart shows there's a consistency in views across all postcodes of Randwick City. Some minor variances exist with slightly more support for option 3 in Coogee and South Coogee compared with the average. In Kingsford there is slightly more support for option 1 when compared with the average trend, however option 3 still remains by far the most supported option in Kingsford.

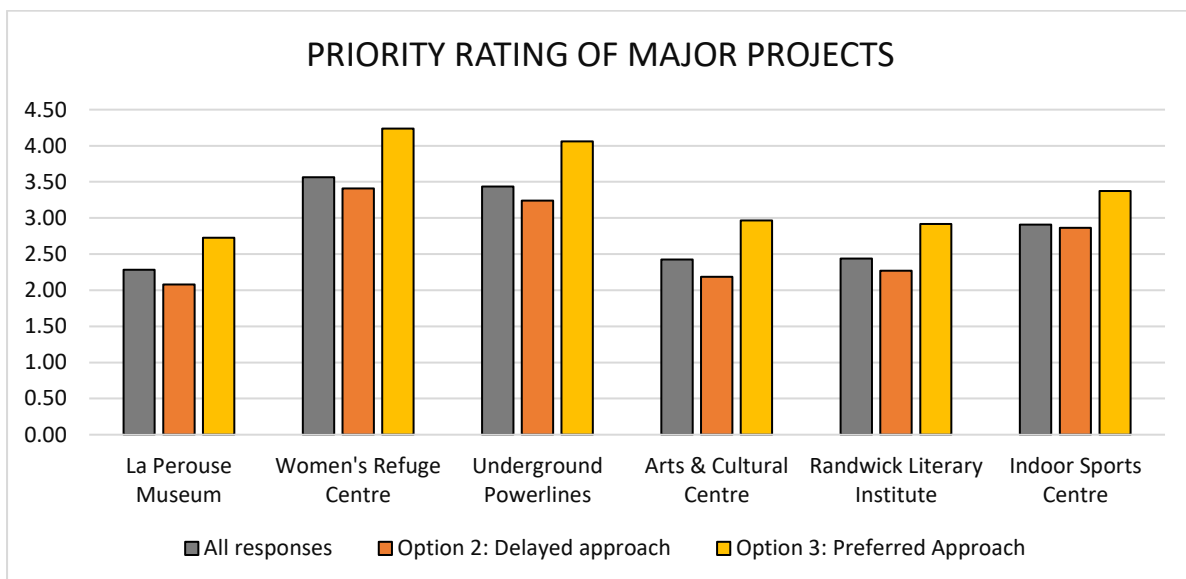


Chart: Mean average ratings of responses to Q1 of Ratepayer Survey grouped

#### Funding Option Preference, n=varies

It's clear from the response to the proposed major projects that all projects carry a level of support from the community. On a relative scale, two projects were more supported being the Women's Refuge Centre and Undergrounding powerlines. The above chart shows the mean average ratings for all responses grouped by funding option preference.



## Information sessions

Council hosted two information sessions at Randwick Town Hall on Wednesday 13 December 2017, 6pm to 7pm and Saturday 16 December 2017, 11am to midday. The sessions were open to all Randwick City residents and advertised in the local newspaper (The Southern Courier), on the YourSay Randwick website, via direct email to registered users of Your Say Randwick and via social media.

A total of 21 residents attended the two information sessions which were designed to inform residents about Our Community Our Future. Specifically, Council staff presented on why we are consulting, the key projects Council wants to deliver, and how Council proposes paying for the projects while maintaining our essential services; including our proposal to apply for a special rate variation.

Following an explanation of each key project, the three funding options were explained in the context of how Council is performing financially and how each option would impact the average resident annual rate.

At the conclusion of the presentation, residents were invited to come and chat to the Council staff about any projects or to ask a question. At both sessions, a number of residents stayed behind for about 30 minutes and spoke one on one with about six Council staff who were present. The discussions provided residents with the ability to speak directly with relevant staff who could answer questions and discuss the issue in more detail. On more than one occasion residents thanked Council staff for their time and commitment.

## Workshops

Council facilitated two workshops on Our Community Our Future with the overall aim of engaging face to face with a sample of Randwick City residents and inform them on Council's review of the Randwick City Plan, particularly the proposed projects Council wants to deliver and how we propose to fund them.

Held from 6-8pm on Thursday 18 January and Thursday 24 January 2018, the workshops were open to all Randwick City residents and advertised in the local newspaper (*The Southern Courier*), on the Your Say Randwick website, via direct email to registered users of Your Say Randwick and via social media.

A total of 30 residents attended both the workshops, which were designed to:

- Measure the level of community support for the proposed projects by asking participants to rate how important each project is to them using a live online voting system
- Present the proposed funding models and obtain in-depth feedback from the group about their willingness to pay for defined levels of services and proposed projects
- To provide participants with the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to Our Community Our Future

<b>Project:</b>	<b>Importance rating:</b>
Building a women's refuge	3.7
Restoring the Randwick Literary Institute	3.3
Restoring the La Perouse Museum	3.2
Building an indoor sports and gymnastics centre	3
Underground powerlines	2.8
Providing an Arts and Cultural Centre	2.5

This table shows the results of an interactive session where the 30 participants were asked to give each project an importance rating out of 5. It shows that addressing domestic violence was considered to be one of the more important projects. Note these figures are

representative of those attending the workshops and the sample size is not large enough to be reflective of general community attitudes.

When discussing the funding options, some of the comments and questions included:

- How will Council pay for the debt from Option 3 after the 3 year SRV?
- Suggestion for Council to take more of a user pays approach rather than ratepayers covering costs
- The Port Botany rate increase should be added to option 1
- Hard to make a choice without the whole picture, that is, what projects will cost
- Don't like debt
- Put the money into better projects, not toilets, but things like sustainable transport/bike paths etc.
- Where else can Council get money for projects? Need to look at other income options, not just rates.

#### Dedicated consultation website

A dedicated Your Say Randwick webpage was created for *Our Community Our Future* to help inform residents of the consultation and all the ways they could be involved and have their say: [www.yoursayrandwick.com.au/OurCommunityOurFuture](http://www.yoursayrandwick.com.au/OurCommunityOurFuture)

All the key documents related to the City Plan Review were available on the website to download and residents could make a submission via the webpage.

The webpage was launched on 30 November 2017 and was open for 65 days, closing at 9am on 2 February 2018. During this time, the site experienced the following:

- 2,620 visits to the YourSay Randwick webpage
- 241 submissions
- 1,343 document downloads

Table 1: Summary of documents downloaded

<b>Document</b>	<b>Downloads/views</b>
Information Booklet - Our Community Our Future	479
Funding Options - Our Community Our Future	408
Future Major Projects list	150
Draft Randwick City Plan	86
Business Paper 2018-21 Financial Strategy	27
Draft Resourcing Strategy Digital Strategy 2018-28	30
Draft Executive Summary 2018-28 Resourcing Strategy	30
Draft Resourcing Strategy Long Term Financial Plan	36
Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan 2018-28	24
Draft Workforce Plan 2018-28 Resourcing Strategy	19
Draft Asset Management Strategy 2018-28 Resourcing Strategy	13
Draft Open Space Asset Management Plan 2018-28	13
Draft Footpaths Asset Management Plan 2018-28	9
Draft Stormwater Drainage Asset Management Plan 2018-28	5
Draft Kerb and Gutter Asset Management Plan 2018-28	6
Draft Road Pavement Asset Management Plan 2018-28	4

The website was the main means people registered to take part in the workshops and provided a submission function.

### Submissions

Randwick Council received a number of submissions through a variety of sources. All submissions were acknowledged and the issues were considered by the relevant council staff.

A total of 241 submissions were received, of which 202 were lodged Online via the YourSay Randwick website. In addition 2,626 Ratepayer comments were received online or reply-paid survey.

The content of the submissions received have been supplied to Councillors.

15 of the submissions received were from local groups, businesses and organisations and are summarised in the following table:

Table 2: Summary of organisation submissions

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Bunnerong Gymnastics Association</b>	Support for gymnastics centre at Heffron Park
<b>Gymnastics NSW</b>	Support for gymnastics centre at Heffron Park
<b>Gymnastics Australia</b>	Support for gymnastics centre at Heffron Park
<b>Football NSW</b>	Request to increase and improve sporting facilities and grounds (including flood lighting, surfacing and more fields)
<b>BIKEast</b>	Support for development of facilities and programs to promote 'active transport' (walking and cycling)
<b>Maroubra Seals Winter Swimming Club</b>	Objecting to proposed café at Mahon Pool. As of 28 January, 201 signed petitions had been received by Council opposing café. An additional 126 petitions were received on 5 February. Council advised that as of 4.38 pm on 5 February, 409 people had signed an online petition.
<b>Port Botany (NSW Ports)</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.
<b>Origin Energy LPG</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.
<b>AST Services</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.
<b>Vopak Australia, Pty Ltd</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.
<b>Qenos Australia</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.

<b>DP World Australia</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.
<b>Elgas</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.
<b>Terminals Australia</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.
<b>Associated Customs &amp; Forwarding Services</b>	Objection to proposal to create a special rates sub-category for the port and objecting to any increase over and above the rate peg.

Ratepayer comments via online or reply paid survey

Council received 2,626 free text comments from ratepayers completing the Ratepayer Survey online or via reply paid mail. Council staff have had limited time to review the large number of comments given the consultation closed on 1 February 2018. However the comments can largely be grouped into four categories:

1. Clarification/justification on the respondent's choice of preferred funding option
2. Specific comments on major projects
3. Questions regarding Our Community Our Future
4. Operational matters or general comments that largely fall outside the scope of this project

Of note, those who chose "Option 3: Preferred Approach" as their supported funding option were almost twice as likely to make a written comment as those who chose option 1 or 2.

Council staff will incorporate the feedback from the ratepayers into future planning and operational budgets where possible.

Some verbatim responses of those who chose Option 1:

*Anti-terrorism proposals are rubbish and are not needed.  
 Appreciate the opportunity to be heard. Thanks for consulting the community.  
 As pensioners we already pay enough and when will I be using the indoor sports or women's refuge? Think about the elderly!  
 Council are already benefitting from the rapid appreciation of land values which determines the rates we pay to Council.  
 Council should cut costs elsewhere.  
 Do not raise rates!! Stop spending my rates money on non-necessary services like a refuge.  
 I do not support any of the 'major projects' - priorities wrong.  
 Most people are already having difficulty affording daily expenses.  
 Rate increases for any of the above is unnecessary currently. Our rates should cover underground power lines and other community initiatives.  
 These project appear to me to me beyond what I would expect should be funded by a local council.  
 We don't know where you got the average rates as \$1,186 because ours are \$1,800pa. How can we pay more when we are on a pension?  
 We would like the rest of the footpaths finished.*

Some verbatim responses of those who chose Option 2:

*Getting feedback is good but you need a representative sample to make it worthwhile.  
 Great to have the opportunity to input. Thank you.*

*I believe that the present council rates are sufficient enough to manage whatever needs to be done for the community.*

*I do not think that local government should be borrowing significant money and you should have agreed to merge!!*

*We have a large indigenous population at La Perouse so the museum is important.*

*In my view refuse to pay for anti-terrorism measures as terrorism is a issue for the Federal Government and terrorist level is influenced by Federal Government policies and decisions.*

*I am very impressed by all your plans - it seems you have a great crew at the council!*

*Is it the council's responsibility to build women's refuges or the state government!*

*Live within our means. Don't pass debt onto future generations.*

*A steady as it goes approach is best. Without a loan is better.*

*Please complete Lurline Bay section of coastal walk way.*

Some verbatim responses of those who chose Option 3:

*Do it now - don't wait.*

*Focus on natural environment, arts and indigenous culture and people in need would help our community thrive. Thanks for the survey.*

*Full marks to Council for this important consultation initiative and for all the great work it has done in recent years.*

*Gutters and drains should be cleaned all the time.*

*How about your operating costs? Consider reducing employee and running costs.*

*I am a male and I regard a Women's Refuge Centre as a massive priority.*

*Domestic violence is often more hidden in, well to do suburbs like Sydney often because women don't have options. I hope it is perceived as high by Council also.*

*I am, and will remain disappointed in the Inglis development.*

*I support investing in our beautiful area and projects to strengthen our community. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.*

*No amalgamation. Underground powerlines. More street trees.*

*Please prioritise issue of stormwater/sewerage pollution at Coogee Beach and all beaches in the municipality.*

*The sooner the proposed works and upgrades are completed, the better our life standard will be in this Council Area.*

#### Summary of community submissions

From the submissions received a number of key themes emerged which focussed on Council's planning and the setting of priorities, rate setting, delivery of services with other levels of government, hardship caused by rate increases, and financial matters such as concern with Council borrowing.

A similar volume of broad ranging submissions relating to initiatives to encourage active transport and protecting the environment were received.

A number of group based submissions were received including:

- a petition noting concern with a proposal to include a café in the Mahon Pool amenities upgrade;
- submissions from affected businesses concerned about the proposed sub categorisation of rates in Port Botany; and
- submissions supporting public housing and low rise developments around schools.