



# **Fit for the Future**

## **Community Engagement Summary and Outcomes**

**June 2015**

***Note: FFTF Survey Results have been  
provided as a separate attachment***



## SUMMARY OF WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED DURING PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE FIT FOR THE FUTURE OPTIONS PAPER

#	NAME	LOCATION	PREFERRED SCENARIO	KEY COMMENTS
1	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides the best opportunity to achieve sustainability into the future and avoid or delay amalgamation</li> <li>Hopes the rate increase will result in an improved level of maintenance of Marked Tree Rd reflecting the contribution of rate payers living there and the significant increase in the volume of traffic</li> </ul>
2	[REDACTED]	Bowning	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerned about the impact of limiting timber bridge loads on farm businesses, no other FFTF comments</li> </ul>
3	[REDACTED]	Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Councils should lobby against the practice of rate pegging</li> <li>Critical of Council's previous unwillingness to set rates at the appropriate level for sustainability</li> <li>Council should explore alternative means of raising revenue eg accelerate the growth of population in urban areas, provision of additional services to the community as fee for service (renewable energy, NBN, Smart Work Hub)</li> </ul>
4	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rate increase between Scenarios 1 and 2 is too much. Suggests a more gradual approach.</li> </ul>
5	[REDACTED]	Walleroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the rating formulae to address concerns of fairness and user pays. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek approval from the state govt to raise total rates by an amount equivalent to \$150 per ratepayer</li> <li>Increase the base rate by \$150 for every ratepayer who's rates include a base rate</li> <li>Increase minimum rates where applicable by \$150 and increase the ad valorem rate so that the total rates from this group increases by an amount equal to \$150 x no of such ratepayers</li> </ul> </li> <li>Undertake the promised service review, rating review, land asset review and energy audit</li> <li>Prospective new expenditures must be worthwhile and cost effective and existing activities must be scrutinised in relation to efficiency and priority (service review)</li> </ul>
6	[REDACTED]	Spring Range	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Savings should be identified through an external review</li> <li>Paid parking should be considered in Yass – user pays</li> </ul>
7	[REDACTED]	Bowning	Scenario 2 or 3 (subject to comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council should provide a commitment to how and when it would (summarised): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>deliver on the service review, rating review, land asset review and energy audit</li> <li>improve stakeholder engagement re bridges and roads</li> <li>regularly inform the community of progress on the backlog</li> <li>quantify a continuous improvement commitment</li> <li>demonstrate how the increased revenue would be used more effectively</li> <li>provide more information on revenue and works relevant to each geographic area</li> <li>lobby the state govt to get the ACT to rebalance income collected from ACT commercial buildings where Yass Valley residents are employed against such things as schooling provided by the ACT to Yass Valley kids</li> <li>review the hardship policy</li> <li>improve community understanding of Council processes and finances through more engagement</li> <li>more frequent meetings in villages (quarterly)</li> <li>identify how Council will be held to account for completing the above.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
8	[REDACTED]	Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premature to suggest rate increase before efficiencies are identified</li> <li>Farmers should be afforded leniency in regard to their share of the rate contribution</li> <li>Sale of assets is premature and too defensive</li> <li>Some improvements in infrastructure in Scenario 3 should be tied to future developments to access developer contributions</li> <li>Limited growth prospects for business will impact on ability for business to pay higher rates</li> </ul>

#	NAME	LOCATION	PREFERRED SCENARIO	KEY COMMENTS
9	[REDACTED]	Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate system based on property value is inequitable, farmers are subsidising those who live in town</li> <li>• Council should get government grants to fix the bridges</li> <li>• Concerned they will be forced off their property if rates increase – special consideration should be given</li> </ul>
10	[REDACTED]	Sutton	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options Paper is an excellent overview of the issues facing Council and options for the future</li> </ul>
11	[REDACTED]	Walleroo	Scenario 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for efficiencies rather than make budget cuts</li> <li>• Generate more income by charging ACT rates and a road maintenance levy to those who are buying rural property and starting business to escape paying higher rates in the ACT</li> </ul>
12	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission does not provide any comment on the options, only on additional information that could be included in the final FFTF submission</li> </ul>
13	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Rejects all scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would have preferred an option of scenarios 2 and/or 3 without the rate increase</li> <li>• Council has lost money in risky investments so should not ask ratepayers for more money</li> <li>• Council should “shoulder the onus of their own budget recovery”</li> </ul>
14	[REDACTED]	Wee Jasper	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenario 3 is a bit of a shock</li> <li>• Council should not be investing in land, esp. if borrowing while there is a backlog in maintenance and infrastructure work</li> <li>• Performance standards focussing on client service should be in place and communicated to the community</li> <li>• Support the productivity and efficiency improvements detailed in the Options Paper.</li> <li>• Community consultation should continue</li> </ul>
15	[REDACTED]	Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find efficiencies through regional procurement with other Councils while still remaining separate entities</li> </ul>
16	[REDACTED]	Binalong	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports a rate increase for the upgrade of facilities and infrastructure, but not maintenance</li> </ul>
17	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not want an increase in rates to fund council employment and non-essential services</li> <li>• Concern re disproportionate provision of services to Yass at the expense of the rural community</li> <li>• Rewrite Scenario 1 to list specific reductions in Council expenses, council employment and services which are less than essential.</li> </ul>
18	[REDACTED]	Wee Jasper	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased rates does not equal financial sustainability for Council as it subjects ratepayers to more pressure</li> <li>• Essential services should be the prime target for Council focus</li> <li>• Council should look to solutions that do not include increasing rates</li> <li>• Efficient implementation of all operations is a high priority, not property speculation and opportunistic investment of ratepayers funds</li> </ul>
19	[REDACTED]	Yass	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further review of Council’s expenses and income should be undertaken to achieve more savings, make Council more productive and achieve a balanced budget</li> </ul>
20	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only responsible course for Council, to do otherwise would be reckless and not in the best interests of the community</li> <li>• This is not about short term individual or collective popularity but sustainability and our future</li> </ul>
21	[REDACTED]	Walleroo	Scenario 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenario 1 is not an option if Yass Valley is to survive as a single entity, Scenario 3 is not affordable</li> <li>• Review of rating system is important to ensure equity</li> </ul>
22	[REDACTED]	Sutton	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Premature to suggest rate increase before service reviews and new LG Act</li> <li>• Review what services Council provides that should be state and federal responsibilities</li> <li>• Council should live within its means</li> <li>• Favours one off contribution of \$50-\$150 per ratepayer to allow service reviews</li> </ul>

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23	[REDACTED]	Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doesn't seem to be a system to ensure the maintenance backlog does accumulate again once caught up</li> <li>Concerns about affordability re elderly and young families</li> <li>Assess where things have gone wrong and create systems to prevent them being repeated rather than raising rates for less services</li> </ul>
24	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dismay at proposed increase to rates</li> </ul>
25	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Scenario 3 (subject to comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports increases in rates to support a properly evaluated program of works benefitting the community</li> <li>Would like to see more information published on the criteria used to classify roads into the 5 road categories used for maintenance scheduling to ensure that any rate increase provides good value for rural ratepayers.</li> </ul>
26	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not support amalgamation</li> <li>Would also like a sliding scale considered to reduce the value of the increase for rural land holders esp of &gt; 80ha</li> </ul>
27	[REDACTED]	Marchmont	Somewhere between Scenarios 2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not favour any consideration of a merger</li> <li>Questions the viability of continuing to service Gundaroo and Sutton and boundary realignment with Upper Lachlan and/or Palerang should be looked at</li> <li>Suggests increasing rates by 5-6% pa for 8-10 years</li> </ul>
28	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best option to take Council forward and begin making improvements</li> <li>Council should also critically examine operating costs</li> <li>Council should examine its assets to determine whether they would be better held or disposed of</li> </ul>
29	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opposes any amalgamation</li> <li>Efficiencies must be sought in all areas and attention paid to administration, IT and nebulous operations which do not provide benefits to ratepayers must not be undertaken</li> </ul>
30	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not support any rate increases</li> <li>Concerns about how the additional rates would be spent</li> <li>Wants to see a submission showing how Council will initiate efficiency measures, reduce waste, reset priorities and achievable targets making it FFTF by better management</li> </ul>
31	[REDACTED]	Binalong	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oppose rate increases</li> <li>Council should look at efficiencies, review all programs, introduce TQM, best practice and performance targets and utilise staff entrepreneurial skills</li> </ul>
32	[REDACTED]	Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-funded retiree – he must change the way he does things to fit within his income, Council should do the same</li> </ul>
33	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rate pegging has set up local councils to fail.</li> <li>Rate pegging and the additional demands of State and Federal legislation have hampered Council's ability to manage its affairs sustainably and led to the slow attrition of resources</li> <li>Council needs to be properly resourced</li> <li>Alternative would result in "economic stagnation, further amalgamations and the death of small vibrant communities like Gundaroo"</li> </ul>
34	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerned that Council is treating everyone in Yass Valley equally when provision of services is not equal</li> <li>Base rate increases on a user pays system</li> <li>Increase rates for rural residential and residential by 7%, leave anyone on 100 acres + on the rate peg</li> <li>Road trains – impose limits, make users purchase a permit or apply a levy</li> <li>Levy more developer charges on new subdivisions</li> </ul>

#	NAME	LOCATION	PREFERRED SCENARIO	KEY COMMENTS
35	[REDACTED]	Binalong	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service review is fundamental</li> </ul>
36	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main reason for not supporting other scenarios is no detail on accountability to ensure revenue raised will be used on assets</li> <li>• Looking for an element of proportionality between revenue raising and cost savings</li> <li>• Merging is a viable option - Council 's desire for self-preservation should not outweigh the benefits of a merger</li> </ul>
37	[REDACTED]	Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not support rate increases</li> <li>• Council has publicly focussed on financial sustainability, not the other required criteria</li> <li>• No other income generating options such as business development or sale of assets(??) have been considered and Council has declared there is limited scope for efficiencies</li> <li>• Doubts Council's Capacity to effectively manage infrastructure and service delivery across the LGA</li> <li>• Council is ineffective in managing funds, infrastructure and maintenance programs</li> <li>• Further tendering and outsourcing should be considered</li> </ul>
38	[REDACTED]	Murrumbateman	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council structure is too top heavy for its size</li> <li>• Council should reduce staff salaries eg share senior roles with other Councils</li> <li>• Discourage development on unsealed roads to reduce need for maintenance</li> <li>• Rezone to encourage more development near ACT border</li> <li>• Increase tourism activities</li> <li>• Amalgamate with Palerang and Queanbeyan</li> <li>• ACT Govt should contribute to Council revenues</li> </ul>
39	[REDACTED]	Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No to any rate rise and proposes a \$100 one off levy</li> <li>• Council wastes money and is not transparent (summarised)</li> </ul>

*Note: Where submissions included feedback on issues other than FFTF, only FFTF has been included above*

**FEEDBACK FROM YASS AND MURRUMBATEMAN MARKETS DURING PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE FIT FOR THE FUTURE OPTIONS PAPER**

LOCATION	STAFF	NO OF COMMUNITY ATTENDEES	KEY COMMENTS
Yass Farmers Markets	David Rowe General Manager  Sheri Norton Director Corporate and Community	41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many people who approached the stand (50%+) had some knowledge of Fit for the Future, primarily from the mailout to all ratepayers</li> <li>• 3 people were strongly opposed to a rate increase for any reason</li> <li>• A number of people wanted to ask questions, listened to our explanation of the options and said they would take the full Options Paper away to consider it</li> </ul>
Murrumbateman Farmers Markets	David Rowe General Manager  Sheri Norton Director Corporate and Community	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many were supportive of the need for a rate rise as long as it was for specific infrastructure maintenance and improvements</li> <li>• A number were aware of rate pegging and the impact on Council</li> <li>• A significant proportion said that they understood the need for an increase in rates and they were happy to pay for it as long as services were maintained and improved</li> <li>• A number of people we spoke to had moved to the area in the past 12 months and commented that our rates were lower than they had expected</li> </ul>

## FIT FOR THE FUTURE YASS VALLEY CONNECT FORUMS

LOCATION	NO OF ATTENDEES (incl. CWG)	IN ATTENDANCE		
		COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP	EXECUTIVE	COUNCILLORS
<b>GUNDAROO</b>	29	Mike Gilligan	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess David Needham Greg Butler Geoff Frost Jasmin Jones
<b>YASS</b>	25	Touie Smith Brian Millett Bernie Johnson	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Ann Daniel Geoff Frost
<b>MURRUMBATEMAN</b>	32	Briony Barac Mike Gilligan Sarah McClintock Jackie Wilson Margaret Head Anthony Reid Chris Smith	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Ann Daniel Geoff Frost
<b>WEE JASPER</b>	19	Mike Carey Ian Longley	David Rowe Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Geoff Frost
<b>BOOKHAM</b>	12	Elizabeth Goodfellow Touie Smith Hansie Armour	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Geoff Frost
<b>WALLAROO</b>	15	Nil	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Geoff Frost
<b>BINALONG</b>	20	Touie Smith Libby Elliott	David Rowe Chris Berry Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Geoff Frost
<b>BOWNING</b>	34	John Carr Elizabeth Goodfellow Touie Smith Kathleen Brigdale Connie Elliott	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Ann Daniel Geoff Frost Jasmin Jones - part only
<b>SUTTON</b>	12	Elizabeth Goodfellow	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler David Needham
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