



Members of the Kyogle Library's Book Discussion Group are all smiles before getting down to business at their final meeting for 2021. The Book Discussion Group meets at 10.30am on the third Tuesday of every month. All readers who enjoy chatting about the latest book they are reading are welcome to attend.

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## Council to apply for special RATE VARIATION

Kyogle Council will apply for a special rate variation for 2022-2023 to cover a budget shortfall created by the lower than expected rate peg limit.

Council voted unanimously at its 5 January Extraordinary Meeting to seek approval for a rate rise of 2.5 per cent – 1.8 percent above the 0.7 pegged rate.

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) sent a shockwave through local government late last year when it announced the rate peg limit of 0.7 percent for 2022-2023. It is the lowest increase in the rate peg in 20 years and was far lower than the majority of councils expected.

Kyogle Council had budgeted for a rate peg rise of 2.5 percent based on IPARTS own recommendations at the time.

In a report to the 5 January 2022 Extraordinary Meeting, General Manager Graham Kennett said a 0.7 percent rate increase would not cover inflationary increases, with fuel costs nearly doubling in

the past six months and the cost of building and constructions materials exploding.

“For Kyogle Council this decision (pegging the rate increase to just 0.7 per cent) means a loss of \$136,000 from next year’s budget, and a reduction in total income of \$2.13 million over the 12 years remaining in the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP), due to the compounding effect of the loss of the income from next year,” Mr Kennett said.

“This potentially puts jobs and services at risk, and even the economic stimulus projects and programs supported by other levels of government, such as the Fixing Country Bridges Program, for which Council has had to borrow in order to fund its share.”

If the 2.5 percent rate rise is approved, the average ratepayer will pay an extra 50 cents a week or \$26 a year more.

Council is seeking community input on the special rate variation and will accept submissions from the public up until 4pm Monday, 31 January. Submissions can be emailed to [council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au) or sent to Kyogle Council, PO Box 11, Kyogle, NSW, 2474.

## Councillors elect NEW MAYOR

Kyogle Council has three new Councillors as well as a new Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

The new councillors elected at the 4 December local government elections are Robert Cullen (B Ward) and Tom Cooper and James Murray (C Ward).

They will join the six re-elected Councillors: Janet Wilson, Kylie Thomas and Hayden Doolan (A Ward); John Burley and Maggie May (B Ward); and Danielle Mulholland (C Ward).

The new Council met for the first time on 5 January and elected Cr Kylie Thomas as Mayor and Cr Tom Cooper Deputy. They will serve in the positions for the next two years.

Cr Thomas replaces Cr Danielle Mulholland as Mayor. Cr Mulholland held the position since September 2013.

Cr Cooper replaces Cr John Burley as Deputy Mayor.