

Author name: D. Sheldon

Date of submission: Wednesday, 13 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

This Council and Council staff have no ethics whatsoever and are sadly lacking in organisational skills. They do not believe that the ratepayers is their customer, they think they no it all. The Mayor has told Councillors to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]", to keep their distance. The majority have heeded this and consequently the dissatisfaction within the community in not getting questions answered or issues properly addressed is extremely high. This again is why so many ratepayers do not believe Council is capable of making hard decisions to improve the bottom line. When asked questions at the community meeting re the Special rate Variation the Mayor just said - it is what it is and kept giving excuses for the financial situation. The General Manager stated that if this new SRV is given it will still not solve the problem. So ratepayers asked what strategies will Council consider to resolve the situation. No-one answered. If Council didn't meet their obligations in the last Rate Variation of 34% how can we trust them to be fiscally responsible this time?? Joe public has to live within its means so its about time Council did the same.

Dear IPART,

I wish to write to you to object to the Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposed by the Snowy Valley Council (SVC). I have read your directives on making a submission and cover how I have addressed the council about my objections and later explain why I find this SRV unfair. I thank you for accepting my submission and can only hope you as the last line of defence and the ultimate decision maker in this matter, understand how hard an extra 40% will be for me and my family to extract these funds from our small business to pay this impost on our business. My wife and I run a family farm of a little over 400ha south west of Tumbarumba.

When the SRV first came to my attention was via a letter box drop in November 2023, I was astounded. I thought it was a mistake following on from the 35.95% SRV we had just been levied with from the previous proposal granted by IPART. I thought this as the reasons and problems that it would solve for the council all sounded the same as the documents from 2021. I wrote an email/letter (see appendix 2) to all councillors on the 25 November 2023 voicing my concerns, questions and the lack of affordability. I did receive some email and phone responses from councillors. I also rang the Mayor to voice my concerns. Furthermore I attended the public meeting in Tumbarumba and spoke touching on the same subjects and mentioned to the ratepayers at the meeting that our only hope is to write to IPART as the council will vote for the SRV as they have failed to deliver the promises that the previous SRV would deliver and here we are again. Over and above IPART's recommended actions I also wrote to the Hon. Justin Clancy with a similar letter who also responded in person and has raised it with the Minister for Local Government, I have been given an update but there is no response from the Minister at this stage.

I then took it upon myself to make a submission to the SVC to speak at their Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb at the

Council Chambers in Tumut with 2 other concerned rate payers both objecting to the proposal. You may wish to watch this on YouTube on the link on the SVC website or follow the link.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/8c0puwcEPaM?si=m-fdckBX1rHeSSy9>

I was the second speaker of three.

As you are well aware this vote was passed by the council and it is now to you IPART to make the ruling on this proposal. Before I inform you of our situation I think that it would not be unreasonable for IPART or its nominee to conduct a full audit of the SVC accounts. The council told us the rate payers and you, IPART, in 2021 that the SRV would “ensure long term financial sustainability” & “manage a range of financial impacts”. This by very definition is not the case and has not been achieved. And when asked at the Tumbarumba town meeting GM Steve Pinnuk that this proposed SRV will still not solve the problems. This to me indicates there are systemic accounting or budgetary problems or both. The admission that this SRV won't fix the issue implies that the premise of the flier sent to rate payers that this SRV will fix the council problems is in fact untrue and the SVC will simply be back to IPART for another SRV in the future. You would, in my opinion, be better off finding the problems now before you agree to increasing our rates on the request of the council and its staff who are not staying within their own budgets and commitments.

### Our Perspective

I wish for you to understand where our business stands now. Our land is in what was the Tumbarumba Shire, which as you know was forcibly merged with the Tumut Shire. The time line is as follows

1. We in the old Tumbarumba Shire had to endure the “Rate Harmonisation” to bring us up to the values of Tumut Shire, this was an increase of course.
2. We had the proposed SRV, which was I sure 30%, was increased to 35.95% and then approved by IPART

3. uncontrolled by council I know the Valuer General has increased our land value by 330% but using land sales totally unrelated to ours being river flats and much more productive and desirable land than ours. Please see Appendix 1)

This has seen our rates change as follows

2020/21 \$6,908.40

2023/24 \$12,873.06. That is an 86% increase

+40% from SRV you are considering, that will be \$18,022.28

That is 260% in 5 years if you approve this SRV. In terms of our business you have gone from asking for 1.8% of turn over to 5%.

In my letter and at both meeting I pointed out that our Farm Land Rate Values have been conducted at the top of the price cycle and the request for a new SRV couldn't come at a worse time with generational highs in cost of living including interest rates. As well as what I hope is the bottom of the price cycle for farm commodities from the SVC including wool, beef, lamb, grapes and mutton. All this when the SVC announced a \$14.766m surplus! Please see their accounts.

I would also like to bring IPARTS attention to the reasons for the SRV is "operating in a high inflationary environment" which we all understand. However we have the Reserve Bank Governor of Australia asking our major retailers, insurance companies, fuel companies and others to be restrained and only pass on price increases, not price gouge. How is it fair that the SVC can increase my rates 260% on a tax that I can not seek to vary, reduce or avoid? When I asked the councillors at the EGM Councillor James Hayes later answered my question, he said "[REDACTED]". I was shocked, I was of the opinion rates were to look after their charter or waste, water, roads, parks and gardens, not empire building.

In response to my email/letter covering ability to pay date 25/11/23 I did receive a response from a [REDACTED] (see appendix 2), was a



cut and paste from the postal drop. I fail to see how this is “engaging the community feed back”. I noted when at the EGM that the response to rate payers who were objecting on the ability to pay is on page 10 of the Agenda and was covered by the “Financial Hardship Policy”, which I note council charge interest. Is this really enough community engagement? Seems like just ramming it through to me.

### Who Pays?

The rates are paid for by the 14,000 rate payers. However 46% of our land mass is covered by National Parks, \$0 collected in rates. A large portion of the SVC is covered by State Forests owned by the NSW State Government, \$0 collected in rates. The pine trees grown on this land are planted, harvested and transported to various mills and ports. The damage caused by the contractors heavy plant and equipment to our roads and bridges servicing State Forests is not paid for by state government as a normal rate payer. So in effect rates come from less than 50% of our area by land mass and we subsidise the State and Federal Governments. I have put it to the Hon. Justin Clancy and councillors that we need to stop the SRV and get special dispensation for our unique situation.

### Where does the money go?

Living at the southern end of the shire I rarely travel to Tumut, I did not go to Tumut once in 2023. I of course did attend the EGM, but understand it is out of the way for me and most of my neighbours. It does however seem to me that the majority of funds are spend on vanity projects in Tumut. I list below but a few,

- New evacuation centre/basketball court in Tumut = circa \$10m
- Extended Run way at Tumut air strip = \$1.3m and ran over budget.
- New weigh bridges at the waste transfer station is Tumut, Tumbarumba, Khancoban and Batlow. I estimate \$250,000 each = \$1m

- There is a new RFS building being proposed for Tumut. I would guess this would have to be \$5m
- Lights at the Tumut soccer fields - \$250,000

These vanity projects are often the result of grant funds from state government. But what the staff and SVC and Councillors fail to observe is the depreciation and repair and maintenance has to be paid for by the rate payers. I am led to believe that the Basketball Court and Runway extension alone added \$1m per annum to the costs in the budget alone. Who pays? The rate payer. As far as the weigh bridges go there is annual inspection fees in the order of \$3,000 to be added to the depreciation. Who asked the village of Khancoban if they need or want a weigh bridge? Why do we even need a weigh bridge in these waste transfer stations? If it is to weigh the contractor trucks taking waste away, well one in Tumut would be enough as the trucks all go through Tumut. If they say cost recovery well the council contractor charges \$17 per ¼ of a cubic metre of general waste. Surely this is enough? I wonder what the new cost of using the waste transfer station will be when the weigh bridges are commissioned?

I am told by reliable sources the lights at the Tumut soccer field were not requested by the soccer club, and when asked to contribute toward the ongoing cost of lights the club threatened to leave this ground for another saying they don't need them. The Basketball court/emergency evacuation centre is of no use to me in a fire or a flood.

- (IPART should check into how the approval process of basketball stadium/evacuation centre, with a budget over \$5m I believe council need State Govt approval. It was granted, but why? Were councillors consulted?

I did not ask for any of these vanity items, I can't use most of these items and I certainly can't afford any of these luxuries when I look at the proposed SRV. There is little thought given to the rate payer when the opportunity to cut a ribbon appears. Whether that be as a legacy project or to puff up your CV on your way to another council job.

## Comparisons

Why is it SVC keeps coming back to IPART for SRV? What other council has asked for 2 SRV's and the GM admits this will not fix the situation? The Greater Hume Shire to our West has rates 30-40% of our rates with similar number of rate payers. Wagga Wagga City Council rate payers also enjoy much cheaper rates albeit with a bigger rate payer base, but notably more services.

## Is it fair and equitable?

In casual conversations with others in the shire it has become very obvious that those that reside in the old Tumbarumba Shire have received far greater increases in land valuations erroneously calculated by the Valuer General, those in the old Tumut Shire have seen no such increase and are remaining very quiet. When mentioned at the EGM, this was admitted and the only solution is "you'll just have to wait until it catches up with those in the north of the Shire". The Mayor admitted this was [REDACTED].

## Conclusion

I find this proposed SRV grossly unfair. I appeal to IPART to deny the second of two SRV's in 3 years. This is surely indicative of mismanagement and over spending by a council and its staff past and present. I note that IPART approved, in part or full, the last 17 SRV proposals, this is the time where IPART need to break with tradition and send a message. IPART need to have a full audit of accounts to satisfy itself that the revenue and costs are being properly accounted for, as the recent performance of SVC and its most recent SRV have been a failure. If not now will you consider this with the next SRV this council applies for? We as rate payers being hit for the wrongs of a council and its staff who have a poor track record. IPART needs to send a message to the SVC that it must be responsibly managing its budgets and not relying on IPART rubber stamping some of the

biggest and repeated SRV's in NSW to sustain its extravagances on the aforementioned. I have no doubt there is more spending planned from this council and its staff and IPART's approval of the SRV will be a signal of complicity of this style of management.

## Appendix 1.

1. Valuations from the NSW Valuer General of 234 Munderoo – Ournie Rd have leapt from (a) \$2,280,000 in 2019 to (b)\$7,690,000 in 2023.
2. The comparative sales used to substantiate this extraordinary leap in values are at on the best for the Upper Murray River flats at Greg Greg in part or whole and similar country on the banks for the Tumut River at Gocup. I fail to see how this analysis is relevant to our property.



Valuer General

l.a.

NEW SOUTH WALES VALUER GENERAL - LAND VALUE SEARCH

PROPERTY NO: [REDACTED]

LGA: SNOWY VALLEYS

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: [REDACTED]

DESCRIPTION OF LAND: [REDACTED]

PROPERTY AREA: [REDACTED]

PROPERTY DIMENSIONS: NOT AVAILABLE

VALUING YEAR: 01/07/2019      DATE VALUATION WAS MADE: 21/08/2019

ZONING USED FOR VALUATION: PRIMARY PRODUCTION

LAND VALUE AUTHORITY: 14A(1) - ANNUAL REVALUATION

GROSS LAND VALUE: \$2,280,000

DIVISION 3 AND 4 ALLOWANCES: NOT APPLICABLE

NET LAND VALUE: \$2,280,000

LAND VALUE BASIS: 6A(1) - THE LAND VALUE IS THE FREEHOLD VALUE OF THE LAND EXCLUDING ANY STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS

OTHER ALLOWANCES/CONCESSIONS: NOT APPLICABLE

THE CURRENT LAND VALUE FOR RATING PURPOSES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF SNOWY VALLEYS IS THE VALUE AT 1 JULY 2022.

PRODUCED: 31 JANUARY 2024 21:51:51      PROPERTY STATUS AT THIS DATE: CURRENT

THIS LAND VALUE SEARCH DOES NOT CONVEY A RIGHT OF OBJECTION TO THE LAND VALUE.

THE VALUES SHOWN ARE CURRENT FOR THE VALUING YEAR AS AT TODAY'S DATE. THE VALUER GENERAL CONDUCTS ONGOING REVIEWS OF LAND VALUES AND THEREFORE THE VALUES SHOWN MAY CHANGE.

THE LAND VALUE RECORDED ON THIS LAND VALUE SEARCH HAS BEEN DETERMINED UNDER THE VALUATION OF LAND ACT 1916 (AND THE HERITAGE ACT 1977; WHERE APPLICABLE) FOR RATING AND TAXING PURPOSES. LAND VALUES HAVE REGARD TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF RATING AND TAXING LEGISLATION AND SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE WITHOUT THE SPECIFIC AGREEMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL.

\*\*\* END OF SEARCH \*\*\*





Valuer  
General

1.6.

NEW SOUTH WALES VALUER GENERAL - LAND VALUE SEARCH

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PROPERTY NO: [REDACTED]

LGA: SNOWY VALLEYS

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: [REDACTED]

DESCRIPTION OF LAND: [REDACTED]

PROPERTY AREA: [REDACTED]

PROPERTY DIMENSIONS: NOT AVAILABLE

VALUING YEAR: 01/07/2022      DATE VALUATION WAS MADE: 09/09/2022

ZONING USED FOR VALUATION: PRIMARY PRODUCTION

LAND VALUE AUTHORITY: 14A(1) - ANNUAL REVALUATION

GROSS LAND VALUE: [REDACTED]

DIVISION 3 AND 4 ALLOWANCES: NOT APPLICABLE

NET LAND VALUE: [REDACTED]

LAND VALUE BASIS: 6A(1) - THE LAND VALUE IS THE FREEHOLD VALUE OF THE LAND EXCLUDING ANY STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS

OTHER ALLOWANCES/CONCESSIONS: NOT APPLICABLE

THE CURRENT LAND VALUE FOR RATING PURPOSES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF SNOWY VALLEYS IS THE VALUE AT 1 JULY 2022.

PRODUCED: 31 JANUARY 2024 21:29:52      PROPERTY STATUS AT THIS DATE: CURRENT

THIS LAND VALUE SEARCH DOES NOT CONVEY A RIGHT OF OBJECTION TO THE LAND VALUE.

THE VALUES SHOWN ARE CURRENT FOR THE VALUING YEAR AS AT TODAY'S DATE. THE VALUER GENERAL CONDUCTS ONGOING REVIEWS OF LAND VALUES AND THEREFORE THE VALUES SHOWN MAY CHANGE.

THE LAND VALUE RECORDED ON THIS LAND VALUE SEARCH HAS BEEN DETERMINED UNDER THE VALUATION OF LAND ACT 1916 (AND THE HERITAGE ACT 1977, WHERE APPLICABLE) FOR RATING AND TAXING PURPOSES. LAND VALUES HAVE REGARD TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF RATING AND TAXING LEGISLATION AND SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE WITHOUT THE SPECIFIC AGREEMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL.

\*\*\* END OF SEARCH \*\*\*

## Valuation sales report

Property Number

Address

Local Government Area SNOWY VALLEYS

Sales analysed as at 1 July 2022

### This report shows some sales valuers considered during the valuation process

Property sales are the most important factor valuers consider when valuing land. They look at a broad range of sales evidence, including sales of both vacant land and improved properties. This report shows some sales valuers considered during the valuation process.

Valuers determine a property's adjusted land value by:

- removing the added value of any improvements
- adjusting the sale price to reflect the property market as at 1 July in the valuing year.

### This report is not specific to your property

This report may include properties that do not directly compare to yours. It is not:

- specific to your property
- a complete list of sales for your area.

### You can use sales from this report to support an objection

You can use sales from this report to support an objection, or reference other sales evidence. To find sales information from across NSW, visit [valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au](http://valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au).

Address	Area	Purchase price	Adjusted
Lot description	Zone	Contract date	land value



## Appendix 2

1. - My letter emailed on Saturday 25 November to Councillor Hayes. Each of you should have received the same letter from my email address on or about this date. You will note my 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph on "Ability to Pay".
  - You will note in my letter under the heading "The Results" I refer to the building and maintaining of council assets.
2. You will note an email response from [REDACTED] on Wed 20 December 2023. I hardly think this "cut and paste" email is a response to the subjects raised and certainly not as it is tabled in today's meeting Agenda on pages 10 and 11.
3. Pages 10 and 11 of today's Agenda. "comments" and "responses"

I also note the Financial Hardship Policy for SRV charges interest on unpaid balances so is of little relief to those who find themselves in an unfortunate situation and adds more pressure.



## Proposed Special Rate Variation

4 messages

Sat, Nov 25, 2023 at  
11:50 AM

Dear Councillor Hayes

I wish to raise with you your proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) for the Snowy Valley Council in the coming 2 - 3 years depending on your proposed option. I find these proposals an objectionable impost on our business. HOW? How can you request or demand yet another circa 40% from rate payers after slugging us with the recent 35.95% SRV? Now you request a further circa 40% increase to our rates and to cause insult to injury, you the Snowy Valley Council, have just recorded a surplus/profit in the most recent financial statement posted a \$14.766 Million Surplus/Profit or as you like to record it a \$187,000 surplus profit before grants.

Let me tell you about things from our perspective. Before the unrequested merger by the Baird NSW Liberal Government where Tumbarumba had a financial surplus and Tumut a deficit caused chiefly by Tumut Shire Council mismanagement we had modest rates with modest expectations from our council. We are forcibly merged to fix Tumut Shire Councils losses on US financial markets in the GFC to fix the deficit. Then the newly merged Snowy Valley Council now head quartered from Tumut need to "harmonise" our rates to bring us in line with Tumut Shire Council rates. On top of that we are told a SRV is needed. We are shown SRV options in September 2021 of between 15 - 30%. Remarkably this is increased at the 11th hour to 35.95% and all agreed to by IPART.

### The Cost

From our family perspective our ordinary Farmland Rates excluding other charges are as follows

2020/21 - 6,908.40

2023/24 - \$12,873.06

that is a 86% increase

+40% that will be \$18,022.28

That is a 260% increase in 5 years. In our business you have gone from asking for 1.8% of turn over to 5.5% of turnover

### The Ability to Pay

Now onto our ability to pay your demands; land valuations were completed at the top of the property and commodity cycle. Many in primary production are now closer to the bottom of the commodity cycle, I hope. Wool, lambs, mutton, grapes and beef are at historic lows. Input prices have increased as you have observed and interest rates have doubled. We know you don't get rates from NSW Forestry or National Parks so we are lumbered with their share or rates. I would suggest many of your primary producers (read those who pay as rates opposed those who don't), will post a loss. We will not post a



\$14.766 Million profit and we can not pass our loss on. On my readings of council pamphlets and the IPART website they seem to care little about rate payers ability to pay and more for legislated covenants of surplus funds held. Well that is just unacceptable when those levied can't afford it and I suggest something has to change.

### The Results

As we are 80km from Tumut and would average one visit per year to the town, we feel violated and used. We feel we are drained of funds via rate harmonisation and SRV in order to pay this we don't want, don't ask for, never use and can't afford. We don't want vanity projects in Tumut that we don't use. We didn't ask for the new evacuation centre to be built in Tumut that we couldn't use in the event of a fire/disaster and we can't afford the depreciation and upkeep on this asset. In short you might find this acceptable as a town rate payer in Tumut not so if you are at the other end of the shire.

### Suggestions

As you well know items like the above mentioned and the new RFS building proposed for Tumut are added to to you depreciation schedule and we, the rate payers, pay for it. I suggest you do not go ahead with the proposed RFS building and hangar in order to contain costs and our rates. What will this RFS development cost us as rate payers year on year? I suggest that we need a change to accounting, we need many or most of your assets that we pay for put in some sort of trust that Council is not required to pay the depreciation on. Further more I am led to believe that the Metropolitan and town fire brigades are not part of any Councils asset pool and there for not depreciated by council and paid for by rate payers. Why? We need to have a "harmonisation" and move these assets that are paid for by the State Government away from Council inline with our metropolitan equivalents.

### Perception

It feels to me like there are those on staff in the SVC that have an interest in amassing more assets to manage and ribbons to cut which improves their CV credentials for their next professional move while we pay for these assets for the rest of time. I note of the last 17 IPART submissions made all 17 were approved in part or full. This to me feels like we will be rail roaded in to this SRV unless you the Councillors stand up for us, your constituents. The recent circular makes mention of covering "unexpected new service deliveries as was the case during Covid-19". What exactly did Covid-19 service deliveries directly cost the council? The circular also justifies the proposed SRV to "long-term allow Council to invest responsible in infrastructure and avoid burdening future generations with excessive costs or excessive reductions to services". I would make the comment this sounds similar to the justification of the previous SRV and based on a poor track record of responsible investment what is to say the SVC will not be simply be back in two years time asking for another 40% emboldened by previous successes with the rubber stamping from IPART? Based on history and rate peg rules, none.

In conclusion I feel I speak for many in our district that we as Farmland Rate Payers are struggling to pay your most recent harmonisation and SRV and it seems unfair that we have been forcibly merged with a larger poorly run council that has higher aspirations for which we have to pay and receive little. Often these aspirations and assets are unaffordable, out of our reach and non essential. All this in the face of a very testing economic environment while the council recorded a profit/surplus but is requesting yet another SRV completely out of kilter with any other Local Council . It's time for the SVC to tighten its belt, reduce costs and services, ask more from the State Government whether it be broadening its revenue base, changing accounting or simply more grants and funding.





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## Special Rate Variation (SRV) Submission

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Snowy Valleys Council <Info@svc.nsw.gov.au>

Wed, Dec 20, 2023 at 3:11 PM

Dear Resident,

I refer to your correspondence to Council in relation to the SRV proposal and thank you for your participation in providing feedback on this topic.

All submissions received in relation to the SRV by our community will be reviewed and considered as part of Snowy Valleys Council's IPART Application.

As you may be aware, Council's financial sustainability has been faced with ongoing challenges particularly:

- Operating in a high inflationary environment
- Increasingly competitive employment market – post COVID-19
- Natural disasters
- Cost shifting from the State Government – resulting in substantial increases in the Emergency Services Levy

In addition to the SRV, Council is continually identifying opportunities to increase income streams, reduce expenditure, reviewing under-utilised assets and reviewing how services can be provided more efficiently.

A report will be prepared for Council's Extraordinary Meeting of 1 February 2024 where the outcome of the community engagement will be presented and a final review of Council's IPART application tabled. If Council resolves to proceed, the closing date to submit Council's application to IPART is 5 February 2024.

IPART will then undertake an assessment of the application during February/March 2024, with a decision released in late May 2024.

Regards





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No.	Comments	Response
1.	Has Council made any cost savings?	<p>In 2020, Council initiated and adopted a <i>Road to Sustainability Plan</i>. A revised version, known as <i>Road to Sustainability Plan (V2)</i>, was adopted on June 17, 2021, alongside the 2021/2022 Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&amp;R) documents, following a comprehensive community consultation process. This plan is a crucial component of Council's overarching objective to attain financial sustainability in the medium- to long-term, aligning with its commitment to deliver sustainable best value to the community. It outlines organisational actions aimed at fostering financial sustainability and delivering optimal value to the community.</p> <p>Since the introduction of the plan, Council has realised substantial savings amounting to approximately \$1.4 million. The plan was reviewed and updated in 2023 to ensure its relevance and Council remains committed to the initiatives contained within the plan and continues to explore and assess additional opportunities for productivity savings. This includes evaluating overtime and vacancy scenarios where services and community safety remain uncompromised.</p>
2.	Council has already implemented a Special Rate Variation over the last two years (2022/2023 & 2023/2024). Why didn't that rate increase fix the council's financial problems?	<p>Council applied to IPART to increase its general income through a special variation of 35.95% (inclusive of the rate peg) over 2022/2023 to 2023/2024 with the aim of increasing the long-term financial sustainability of Council and addressing ongoing deficits in the General Fund before Capital grants and contributions. Unfortunately, current cost pressures have been exacerbated by the high inflation environment and the competitive employment market that has occurred post COVID-19. Cost shifting by the State Government, like the recently announced increase to the Emergency Service Levy, a ceiling placed on rates, and increased governance expectations have also had a significant impact. Modelling and assumptions conducted through the 2023-2033 Long-Term Financial Plan indicate that the special rate variation of 35.95% has not been sufficient to address the ongoing deficit trend in Council's General Fund between recurrent revenues and expenses.</p>
3.	I won't be able to afford another rate rise in the current cost of living environment.	<p>Council has a <b>Financial Hardship Policy</b> to assist the most vulnerable in our community to have the means and the support they need in times that are challenging. Eligible Pensioner and Concession card holders will continue to receive rebates.</p>
4.	Council should de-merge immediately.	<p>Council has submitted its de-merger business case to the Boundaries Commission. Unfortunately, the de-merger alone is unlikely to resolve Council's ongoing financial issues. In fact, if the de-merger proposal was</p>



No.	Comments	Response
		to proceed, expenditure is likely to increase in the short term.
5.	Why does Council apply for or accept grant funding to build assets that they cannot afford to run or maintain?	Council balances requests for improved or new facilities from the community and general upgrade needs against the ongoing long-term costs (whole of life) and benefits to the community and tourism industry.

Overall, the engagement strategy was effective as it allowed Council to collect feedback and opinions regarding the SRV and preferred scenarios which enabled the community in decision-making in accordance with Council's consultation strategy.

### Impact on ratepayers

Council's Capacity to Pay report (Attachment 3) conducts an assessment of relative wealth and financial capacity within the Snowy Valley's Local Government Area (LGA), examining the financial vulnerability and exposure of different community groups including:

- Regions of social disadvantage
- Vulnerable groups of individuals
- Patterns of household expenditure

A review of the demographics and statistics indicates that there is a distinct imbalance throughout the LGA which impacts the community's capacity and willingness to pay rates.

Overall, the employment rate of 4.2% is lower than the regional average of 4.6% with 95.8% of the population employed on a full- or part- time basis. Housing tenure statistics shows that there is a larger proportion of households who own their dwelling (40.1%) compared to the regional average (36.3%). Median household income is also in line with regional NSW averages.

However, there are certain areas of the community that are disadvantaged and are experiencing levels of stress regarding cost-of-living expenses. There is a small portion of properties in Tumut where mortgage repayments are 30% of weekly income indicating mortgage stress. Batlow also has the highest proportion of low-income earners in the LGA who are also experiencing a certain degree of housing stress. It should be noted that these levels are below the regional NSW and Australian percentiles.

### Exhibition and Adoption of IP&R Documents

Council's IP&R documentation plays an important role in informing Council's decision to apply for a special rate variation. In accordance with the IP&R guidelines, Council has exhibited and adopted a Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program (including Operational Plan) and Long-Term Financial Plan.

The Operational Plan in particular, was designed to enable a better understanding of the costs of Council services and how well Council delivers the projects and services it is responsible for. To do this, the Operational Plan has been divided into service areas of Council. Council's Long Term Financial Plan sets out the need for, and purpose of, a different revenue path for Council's General Fund via a baseline scenario and two (2) special rate variation scenarios.

### Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies

Council's Road to Sustainability Plan was approved in February 2020 and has since been reviewed and updated in 2023. It forms an integral part of Council's goal to achieve financial sustainability in the medium- to long-term and to achieve the objective of delivering sustainable best value to the community. The Plan outlines a range of initiatives and opportunities which aims to improve Council's financial position, including:

- pursuing efficiency gains and capturing savings to reduce costs

Author name: B. Wilkinson

Date of submission: Thursday, 14 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

This council was successful with 35% SRV in 2022 for sustainability -which was a fabrication . They now require another 45% just to stay afloat and have stated that increased charges are also needed These two SRVs have already on top of "harmonisation" will make small-scale farming very difficult. Surely a limitation must be put on inefficiency. If this is granted it is obvious that more requests will be made within a couple of years as there has been limited attempts made to control waste.



## **RATEPAYER SUBMISSION RE SNOWY VALLEYS COUNCIL PROPOSED 2023 SPECIAL RATE VARIATION.**

I refer to the current (2024) SVC proposal to introduce a further SRV and submit the following which is my submission to IPART:

From the outset I make clear my objection to the proposed SRV, or any further SRV. Since Rates Harmonisation was implemented in 2021 my council rates will have increased by 89% with the proposed SRV. In return there has been no improvement in services that I receive and I see no evidence that council is seriously addressing itself to its out of control costs. Council continues to support councillor vanity projects including the Tumut basketball stadium/evacuation centre, the Tumut airport and the Brindabella Road pipedream. None of these have widespread benefit to the community and none have widespread community support, yet will place a substantial financial drain on council for decades. Council needs to stop these projects.

We were told the current SRV of 35.95% (granted by IPART May 2022) would return financial sustainability to SVC, yet halfway into its implementation we are expected to accept that it has made no impact and a further SRV is needed. Yet council seems to have been able to produce a small surplus in 2022/23 (nett operating result before capital grants) with only half of the current SRV in place.

Appendix 1, from the SVC submission to IPART Jan 2022 shows that under its then SRV proposal (that currently approved by IPART) there would be a projected deficit in 2022/23 of \$1.666million and then increasing surpluses from 2024/25 onwards. On this basis council is tracking better than those projections by about \$2million based on its 2022/23 annual statement. Council has failed to clearly provide detailed evidence and data supporting why it now believes it needs a further substantial SRV, given it is running ahead of the projections it submitted to IPART to justify the current SRV that it claimed, and that it demonstrated to IPART's satisfaction would return it to financial sustainability. Council needs to provide detailed evidence of what has changed.

Council needs to provide substantial and substantiated data around its proposed SRV. I can find no information let alone data on what if any cost saving and financial measures council is proposing to manage its expenditure and control its cost base. We are simply expected to believe the LTFP documents put forward by council without any basis on which to analyse and assess its projections. We know from previous experience that council's LTFPs are largely works of fiction constructed to suit the outcomes it wishes to achieve, but which are not realised over time.

Council needs to properly and fully inform its ratepayers of all the issues and detail relevant to the proposed SRV. To date Council has made little effort to properly and fully inform its ratepayers of all the issues and detail relevant to the proposed SRV and upon which a reasonable ratepayer would expect to be able to make an informed decision.

Council needs to properly and genuinely engage with its community. It has not advised the community how it will engage with it and gather community input other than very rudimentary and wholly unsatisfactory "Pop Up" sessions comprising just a single session midweek and midday for 2 hours in each centre, and single community information sessions. There is no information informing ratepayers how to make a submission other than on-line or what its proposed timelines are for gathering such inputs.

Council needs to communicate fully with its ratepayer base and the community at large. Its communication has been totally inadequate.

I see no evidence that council has made any attempts to rein in its continued profligate expenditure or to implement any substantive measures to return to financial sustainability other than the proposed SRV, yet this is an area Professor Drew focused many of his recommendations on.

It has not provided any evidence that it has acted on any of the 50 odd recommended actions proposed by Professor Drew in his report commissioned by council at a cost to ratepayers of \$100,000, other than imposing a further SRV (and that Drew suggested would need to be around 15% to 30%, not the 40% to 42% SVC now proposes). Without acting on those recommendations council is failing to put in place very important initiatives to improve its financial performance, its capacity to control costs, its accountability, its engagement with the community and most importantly to rigorously assess its various expenditure proposals as to the financial viability of them, the community's support for them, or to identify, articulate and implement cost savings measures and the actual outcomes of past cost savings proposals. The only mention of such savings is a single sentence in council's submission to IPART that it "...has made productivity savings of \$1.4million since 2020..."

Furthermore, Drew is very clear that SVC needs to demerger and that it needs to move to do so with some urgency. That is what council has unanimously resolved to progress, and it is clearly what the community wants and needs.

Rather than waste resources on a SRV proposal, Council would be well advised to focus its limited resources on progressing its demerger proposal to Government by rectifying the significant shortcomings it allowed in Professor Drew's review by putting together detailed assessments of the likely cost of a demerger and the likely financial viability of the 2 emerging councils. Council has been provided a detailed plan showing a new Tumbarumba can be viable from the outset, it needs to do the same for a future Tumut council. These assessments are sorely missing from the Drew review and clearly important elements to persuade the new Local Government Minister.

Appendix 2 to this submission is the Appendix 2 to Drew's report with the complete set of recommended actions proposed by Professor Drew.

Council needs to provide the community a detailed response to how it proposes to act on these recommendations.

Council's submission to IPART with regard to Capacity to Pay fails outright to consider or address current factors and pressures on ratepayers' capacity to pay.

The document submitted by council to IPART is largely a "cut and paste" of its previous submission for the previous SRV (Morrison Low 2021). Much of the text and virtually all of the analyses are based on data from 2021 or earlier and thus prior to the current major upturn in cost-of-living pressures, and much of the impacts of Covid.

Council's attempt at overcoming this major failure in its analyses is to draw on meagre data from its Hardship Policy yet that data confirms a doubling of active payment relief plans from 2022/23 to 2023/24, not 68% as council's submission states. In any case a reliance on such data is superficial and unlikely to be a reliable guide as to the extent of rate induced hardship. Rate induced hardship is most likely to be felt by renters in lower socio economic circumstances, whose rents are increased by increased rates, not the owners of the houses which they rent.

In summary, my view is that council has not made out a case, let alone a compelling case for a SRV as proposed. It would need to do much more to provide a convincing argument, if it indeed it is able to do so.

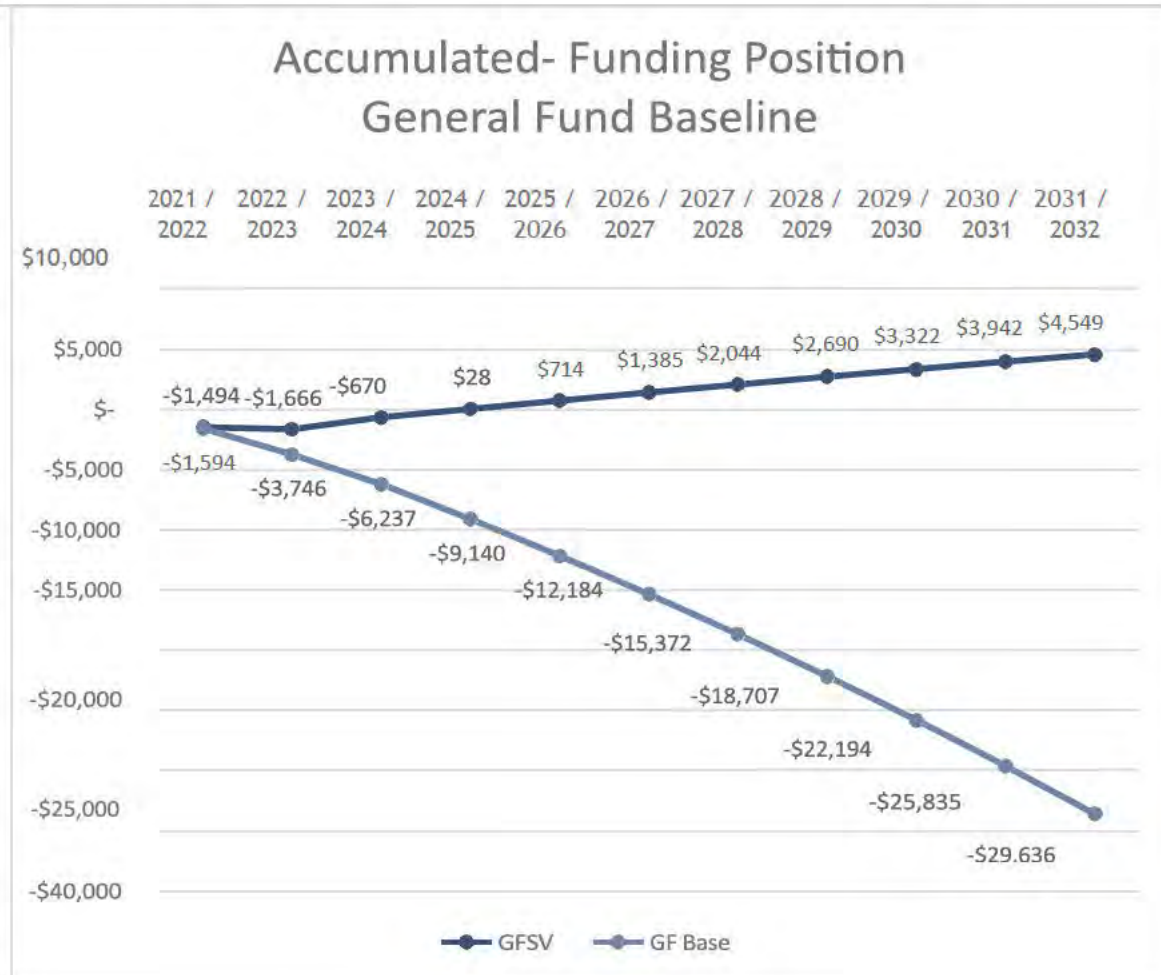
IPART should reject the SRV application outright.

Sincerely

Douglas Gee, resident and ratepayer.

13 March 2024

“The proposed SRV has a positive impact on Council’s financial sustainability as illustrated in the following graph, noting \$100,000 if the \$600,000 improvement is achieved in 2021/22 and the full \$600,000 from 2022/23 onwards”.



## Appendix 2 – Financial Sustainability Measures That Should be Implemented at SVC

We were commissioned to provide advice to Council regarding the advantages and disadvantages of a potential de-amalgamation. However, during the course of our work it became apparent that SVC faces some serious challenges and would require significant mitigation works in the event that it was not de-amalgamated. Moreover, our extensive experience working with councils in distressed conditions suggest to us that it would be prudent to start to redress some of the problems at SRV, as soon as possible – even if Council elects to pursue a de-amalgamation. Indeed, the quicker Council acts, the less pain that is likely to be felt by the community.

The following are dot points of the most important matters that need to be redressed, organised according to the topics of (i) special rate variation, (ii) capital expenditure program, (iii) financial sustainability plan, (iv) staffing, (v) financial information, and (vi) communication. Professor Drew will elaborate on these matters in his extensive workshop with Councillors on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April.

We stress that the following is a value-add service that we have elected to provide in view of the pressing problems confronting SVC. It is not meant to take the place of a dedicated analysis of financial sustainability and further recommendations may be warranted should additional investigations occur. We also underline the importance of exerting maximum effort to redress perceived problems as quickly as possible – irrespective of what happens on the de-amalgamation question. Some of these matters are very serious and simply cannot be allowed to continue unchecked.

### (i) *Special Rate Variation (SRV)*

- It is important to realise that the cost-base of Council has been increased permanently.
- By our estimate an SRV for an *additional* 15-30% above the cap will be required shortly (this is on top of the SRV that has already been approved by IPART). Indeed, even more rate increases may ultimately be required. Unfortunately, we were unable to obtain sufficiently robust accounting data which would be required to be more precise (especially an updated and plausible long term financial plan). {We would also need to thoroughly assess capacity to pay (especially the econometric estimation of same), assess debt capacity (through econometric estimation), and know what decisions Councillors have made with respect to de-amalgamation as well as regarding the matters that follow}.
- We believe that Council should seriously consider applying for a SRV in the next round, which commences November 2023.
- It is important to understand that the existing SRV has also probably permanently altered the location decision calculus of prospective residents. A future SRV will do likewise. Thus, spending to improve the liveability of the region – and hence attract population growth – is offset, at least in part, by the rise that it brings about to shelter costs.

### (ii) *Capital Expenditure Program*

- The capital expenditure program needs to be revisited and scaled back wherever possible. It is simply too large for a council of this size and has been distracting staff from key tasks that now stand in need of urgent redress.

- Indeed, Councillors may be well advised to take a much more critical view of potential grants for works of a discretionary nature in the future. It is sometimes appropriate to say ‘no’ to opportunities – especially when faced with pressing financial sustainability concerns or an over-stretched staff.
- Whole-of-life project costing needs to be adopted in the future. Notably maintenance, staffing and ultimate replacement costs are usually not covered by grants. These substantial costs may not have been considered carefully in the past.
- Furthermore, the willingness to pay (WTP) of the community must be assessed rigorously. This is best done through the use of sufficiently large, *randomised* surveys that cite the whole-of life cost for the asset, as well as the average cost to each individual ratepayer. Failure to robustly assess WTP can lead to entrenched fiscal illusion and hence significant financial sustainability challenges.
- More extensive and comprehensive community engagement needs to occur for large infrastructure spending with reference to whole-of-life cost and WTP. It has become clear to us that many in the community feel that some projects in the past were not consistent with the preferences of residents.
- All new programs and capex decisions should make reference to the long-term financial plan (LTFP) – specifically where surplus funds can be found in the LTFP, or alternatively, specific expenditure cuts or additional revenue streams that will be executed.
- Since amalgamation there has been greater attention given to the villages. However, it is not always clear that the level of services provided have been commensurate with the population size and needs of the said villages. Council may need to better manage the expectation of the villages or better convey the cost of providing higher-than-normal levels of services to some of these areas.
- More focus needs to be had on maintaining current infrastructure rather than new construction – especially in the Tumut area. When one travels around Tumut it is clear that there is a considerable maintenance deficit that needs to be addressed. It is possible that the large program of new capital expenditure in Tumut, in particular, has resulted in less attention being given to the state of the existing asset base.
- The robustness and detail of asset management and construction plans could be improved. Council should prioritise a better appreciation of asset conditions and also better understand the impact that this will have on the LTFP and financial sustainability.
- It appears that Council might benefit from hearing more often from the manager-level staff. It is our contention that most of the middle management are well-aware of the problems facing Council and could offer excellent advice on the way forward. However, for them to feel comfortable enough to provide sage counsel they need to feel that they are being listened too, and understand the high respect that Councillors have for their wealth of experience.
- Budgeting practice needs to improve considerably at SVC – please see the finance information section for more detail.

(iii) *Financial Sustainability*

- On the whole it would be fair to say that the extant Financial Sustainability Plan is inadequate and misguided on several matters.

- For instance, it recommends price benchmarking. This is the incorrect strategy in most cases. Council is urged to instead practice long-run marginal cost pricing<sup>1</sup> for most discretionary prices. Discretionary prices should be allocated to one of four years and each price reviewed on a revolving four-year cycle. In inter-cycle years prices should, in most cases, be increased by the relevant sub-index of the Producer Price Index (PPI) – the Consumer Price Index (CPI) should only be used for items where capacity to pay (rather than cost recovery) is the main concern.
- The financial sustainability focus needs to be far broader than the two ratios mentioned in the Financial Sustainability Plan. In particular, there needs to be a much stronger focus on the adequacy of reserves (and trends in reserves), the accuracy of budgets, and the plausibility of the LTFP. In this regard Council should expect the ARIC to closely monitor a broad suite of metrics consistent with those presented in this report.
- Care needs to be taken with respect to the assumption that shared services will definitely result in savings and efficiencies. Indeed, research by Drew et al. (2019) has shown that shared services often result in higher unit costs. However, if designed well collaborative arrangements can result in savings and in this regard, readers are referred to the guidelines in Drew (2020), pages 87-102.
- There seems to be a need for greater accountability regarding budget over-runs.
- Rigorous monthly budget reconciliations should be re-instated as soon as practical.
- It is important for Council to make subsidies both more rigorous and also more transparent. For each subsidised good or service Council ought to articulate in a publicly available document: (i) the virtue or positive externality that the subsidy addresses, (ii) the target group for the subsidy, (iii) the measurable goal for assessing the success of the subsidy, (iv) the minimum rate necessary to achieve this goal (as well as the discretionary pricing or survey evidence to support this contention), (v) how the subsidy will be clearly communicated to both donors and beneficiaries, (vi) the date that the subsidy will be reviewed (this should occur at least every four years). It is particularly important to send clear price signals in order to combat fiscal illusion. Thus, receipts for subsidised services should prominently display the quantum of the subsidy provided by the wider body of taxpayers.
- Indeed, all discretionary goods and services should be reviewed each Council term. The best approach to this is to divide the current list of discretionary projects into four equal portions and have Councillors confirm that the discretionary items are still appropriate each cycle. This decision-making should be informed by (i) the cost of the service, (ii) the measured success of the service, and (iii) Council's current financial sustainability position. Unfortunately, services of a discretionary nature are often implemented to meet a particular need but continue to be funded even when the need no longer exists, or where the service has failed to address the need (Friedman, 1993).
- Community grants should require annual applications which ask applicants to explain (i) the value, facilitated by the grant, that they will provide to the wider community, (ii) the measures the organisation is implementing to reduce grant dependency in the future, (iii) the contributions made by the members of the organisation (both financial and in-kind), (iv) what other options the organisation explored to meet their needs (such as community donations or grants from other bodies). These completed applications should be publicly available.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the cost of producing just one more item taking into account overheads, capital replacement costs, maintenance and the like.

- Council would be well advised to conduct some targeted education of staff regarding (i) financial sustainability (as a general concept), (ii) the financial sustainability position of SVC, and (iii) an improved financial sustainability plan. Staff should also be asked for their suggestions for improving efficiency and generating savings. A number of councils run appropriately incentivised schemes of this kind with great success.
- Council would be well advised to better educate the community regarding the financial sustainability challenge faced by Council. At a minimum, Council should clearly display on rates notices: (i) a chart of total debt over the last 5 years, (ii) a chart of operating results over the last five years, (iii) a pie chart showing sources of revenue, and (iv) a pie chart showing expenditure destinations. Regular information of this kind is essential to dispelling fiscal illusion.
- It may be appropriate to institute a capital advisory committee for major infrastructure projects. A committee of this kind should include people with local knowledge, decision-makers, and also staff skilled in the particular area. Committees of this kind have been implemented with great success elsewhere and have reduced budget over-runs as well as improving the utility of the infrastructure constructed.
- A service level review, heavily informed by *randomised* survey input, would seem to be in order.
- The LTFP needs to be scrutinised much more rigorously by ARIC and the Councillors. We do not believe that the current LTFP is plausible. Constructing a plausible LTFP is key to decision-making regarding assets and financial sustainability and thus should be viewed as a matter of priority.
- Consideration should be given to financial sustainability training for senior staff, Councillors, and perhaps members of ARIC.
- Consideration should be given to investigating the potential for new revenue streams associated with the green energy transition.

(iv) Staffing

- In general, there are limited further savings available in the area of staffing.
- However, it is clear that overtime has increased significantly in recent years and risks being permanently imputed into the personal budgets of some staff. Savings in the order of 40% may be indicated in this particular area.
- There are some minor savings that might be realised with respect to untaken leave, especially in the works area.
- There is an emerging training deficit that should be monitored carefully and redressed where appropriate.
- Staff turnover is a significant problem for SVC. High staff turnover results in a loss of institutional memory and may also damage the SVC brand with respect to future recruiting. In addition, it should be acknowledged that staff recruited from areas outside of the region will take time to understand the tastes and preferences of the community, and hence delay the necessary task of improving efficiency. Indeed, staff recruited from outside of the area often do not have the same kinds of social and family roots, and therefore may presage even more rotation in the future. For this reason, it would be wise to identify existing staff who – with appropriate training, mentoring, and opportunity – might be suitable for promotion in the future.

- There is a high likelihood that problems recruiting and retaining staff are likely to result in higher costs in the future. For this reason, it would be prudent to also establish a staff retention strategy.

(v) Finance Information

- We hold some concerns about what finance data could be accessed and the accuracy of the data. This statement should not be interpreted as a comment on the current Manager of Finance who has recently come to the organisation and is doing his best to identify and resolve problems which stretch back to the original amalgamation as well as the extensive period when the duties were apparently performed by a consultant.
- It is imperative that Councillors and the community can have absolute faith in the rigour of accounting information. Recent events – as well as our own experience – suggest that this may not be completely the case at present. Accordingly, it might be prudent for Council to appoint an experienced local government accountant with the sole task of identify and mitigating problems in the extant system. To be clear we are not talking about a consulting firm, but instead a suitably qualified and experienced person – possibly recently retired – on a six-month contract (with an option to extend for a further six months).
- It appears that there may be some gaps in the internal audit processes. This matter should be investigated and rectified as soon as possible.
- There may be some reason to believe that ARIC is not providing comprehensive advice to Council – particularly with respect to internal audit, financial sustainability, and performance improvement elements of their remit. This perception should be investigated, and measures taken to improve matters if necessary.
- Monthly budgeting reviews need to be conducted promptly, comprehensively and rigorously. Past performance with respect to budgeting suggests that redress of monthly budget reviews should be prioritised. Moreover, in view of the high turnover of staff it is important for monthly budget reviews to be documented in detail.
- As we have already noted the LTFP needs to be reviewed and revised as a matter of urgency.

(vi) Communication

- *Random* surveys need to be used to find out local priorities including the possibility that people are happy with existing infrastructure and services (and instead want downward pressure on rates).
- There is clearly a case for improving the communication between Council and the community. We have already suggested some measures relating to price signals and the like. We acknowledge that matters are difficult because of some ill-will relating to past events.
- Better communication needs to occur with staff – specifically, the impression of senior management sometimes seems to be at odds with an important portion of the staff. There also appears to be an element of fear amongst some staff (regarding the likelihood of retribution for speaking out) as well as a feeling that staff haven't always been listened to or genuinely consulted with. We make no judgement regarding whether these fears and feelings are indeed warranted. Better communication should reduce the likelihood of further losses of staff and also improve perceptions amongst potential recruits.



- If SVC were to remain amalgamated then there would be a strong case for increasing the numbers of Councillors, especially to facilitate greater voice in the villages who may feel somewhat disenfranchised. Unfortunately, as we showed earlier, the original boundary inquiry – and the Minister’s Proposal – failed to rigorously engage with s263(3)(e) the Act (1993; NSW).

Author name: G. Greenhalgh

Date of submission: Monday, 18 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

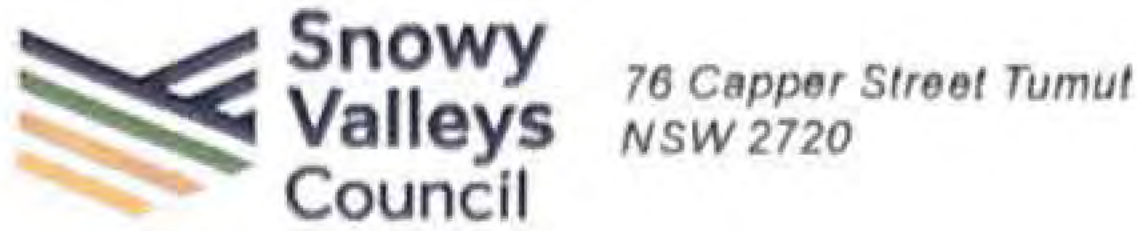
Thankyou for facilitating the ratepayers to put forward our submissions to enable objective oversight. We run a substantial family farming enterprise in the southern area of the snowy council. We have been purchasing land in this area over the last 20 years ( our last purchase was in 2019 ). We have enjoyed substantial capital revaluations of our land over the last few years in particular. We understand local government rate bases come from the VGs valuation and this has been part of our investment calculations that as land is revalued we will both pay more \$s in rates but will also long term obtain a capital gain either realized or unrealized ( we have a longer term strategy and so dont expect the realization of this capital gain within my lifetime ) This financial year our rates ( based only on fam land rating ( not other charges ) were Appx \$52,500. This made up Appx 8% of our overhead costs within our business ( I have exclude wages, interest and insurance) A proposed increase of 38-40% would add \$21,000 to our annual cost of running our business. Or effectively increase our over head costs by 3% on 1 ledger line. We would have no opportunity to reduces this cost. Unlike most of our other cost lines in our business were are able to manage them, eg:increased power cost we reduce day time power usage and are looking to invest in solar to reduce our opex. Fuel we have upgrade our vehicle fleet to run more fuel efficient farm vehicles or improved efficiency on transport to reduce unit costs. We used to use contractors but to reduce costs we have employed more staff and invested in equipment to reduce our opex to remain competitive. To be subject to a cost burden that is the result of an external business ( snowy council ) being either unable or unwilling to manage costs to reduce the ultimate cost of doing business and expect to just push this back to the ratepayers feels substantially unfair. The farming and other businesss in the shire do our best to employ people and generate commercial activity in the region. We have a shop locally policy in our business and we direct all procurement where possible to local family businesses that will employ locals and stimulate our community so there is also hopefully a prosperous group of towns that also can contribute to the councils rate base. We are currently in a historically high part of the agricultural cycle and have been fortunate, we will not go broke because of a \$21,000 increase in our rates. However to face a cost increase like this and have nothing we can do about it as a business owner feels unfair and we and our communities will be worse off if this is allowed to proceed un checked. The council needs like all businesses to cut its cloth and live within the means of its rate paying base. Drive efficiency and productivity into its operations take long term decision to deliver long term services to the community. Not just get rewarded for poor practices. There have been many people far more qualified than me who have said that the council is being poorly managed and the current financial issues would suggest they are correct. We all need help to be good at running the businesss we are responsible for, we dont just need people yelling saying fix it and we dont need money just filling a leaking bucket, our council needs to be reshaped and rebuilt so that it can deliver basic services to the vast area it has responsibilities for in a efficient and economically sustainable way. All rate payers will be worse off under this proposal and this will not create any long term fix. As council has shown previously they get a rate increase say it will be fine and a few years later they are back needing more. Please assist us by ensuring this rate increase is rejected and the council and rate payers deal with the consequences of rebuilding and reshaping our council with realistic and affordable services to the region. Thankyou for the opportunity Graham Greenhalgh ( [REDACTED] )



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RATES ANNUAL NOTICE  
1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

Snowy Valleys Council  
ABN 53 658 891 887  
Phone: 1300 ASK SVC (1300 275 782)  
Email: info@svc.nsw.gov.au

Tumut Office  
76 Capper Street, Tumut NSW 2720

Tumbarumba Office  
Cnr Bridge and Winton Street, Tumbarumba NSW 2653

PLEASE NOTIFY THE COUNCIL IF THIS MAILING ADDRESS IS INCORRECT



016  
1000394  
R1\_959

PROPERTY NUMBER
[Redacted]

ISSUE DATE
20/07/2023

DUE DATE
31/08/2023

DESCRIPTION & LOCATION OF PROPERTY
[Redacted]
3/109151 1/180044 47/651891 6/664077 137/727306 10 11 16 36 38 40 54 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 76 80 81 83 85 97 102 103

VALUATION	VALUATION DATE	AREA	CLASS
22,800,000	01/07/2022	2840.0000 Ha	Farmland

DESCRIPTION	UNITS	RATE / CHARGE	AMOUNT
Ordinary Farmland Rate	22800000	.1674 c/\$	\$38,167.20
Ordinary Farmland Rate Base		\$461.24	\$461.24
On-site Sewer Management Annual Charge	1	\$37.00	\$37.00
Waste Only - Domestic (additional bin)	2	\$201.00	\$402.00
Domestic Waste	1	\$526.00	\$526.00
Special Recycling Only - Domestic	2	\$122.00	\$244.00
* Waste Access Charge	1	\$64.00	\$64.00
Goods & Service Tax - \$5.82			

1ST INSTALMENT	2ND INSTALMENT	3RD INSTALMENT	4TH INSTALMENT	DEDUCT PAYMENTS SINCE	NETT PAYABLE
\$9,976.44 31/08/2023	\$9,975.00 30/11/2023	\$9,975.00 28/02/2024	\$9,975.00 31/05/2024	19/07/2023	\$39,901.44

Simple daily interest is charged at 9% on overdue amounts.

[Redacted] GENERAL MANAGER

Name [Redacted]

Property Number [Redacted]

Total Due \$9,976.44


Due Date 31/08/2023

Post Billpay Pay in person at any post office



Scan here to pay





BPAY® this payment via Internet or phone banking.  
BPAY View® - View and pay this bill using internet banking.  
BPAY View Registration No.: [Redacted]

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Tumbarumba Office Cnr Bridge and Winton Street, Tumbarumba NSW 2653

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016 R1\_839

PROPERTY NUMBER table with redacted value

ISSUE DATE table with value 20/07/2023

DUE DATE table with value 31/08/2023

DESCRIPTION & LOCATION OF PROPERTY table with redacted content

VALUATION table with columns VALUATION, VALUATION DATE, AREA, CLASS

DESCRIPTION table with columns DESCRIPTION, UNITS, RATE / CHARGE, AMOUNT

Instalment table with columns 1ST INSTALMENT, 2ND INSTALMENT, 3RD INSTALMENT, 4TH INSTALMENT, DEDUCT PAYMENTS SINCE, NETT PAYABLE

Simple daily interest is charged at 9% on overdue amounts.

GENERAL MANAGER

Name [Redacted]

Property Number [Redacted]

Total Due \$2,288.86

Due Date 31/08/2023

Post Billpay Pay in person at any post office



Scan here to pay



BPAY PAY box containing Biller Code, Ref, and registration details

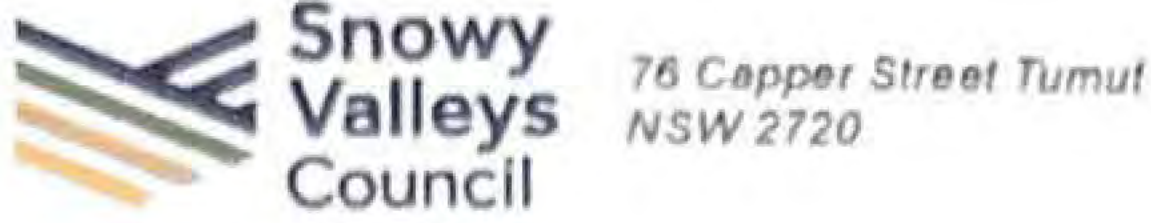
See reverse for more details



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**Tumut Office**  
76 Capper Street, Tumut NSW 2720  
**Tumbarumba Office**  
Cnr Bridge and Winton Street, Tumbarumba NSW 2653

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016  
R1\_841

PROPERTY NUMBER
[Redacted]

ISSUE DATE
20/07/2023

DUE DATE
31/08/2023

DESCRIPTION & LOCATION OF PROPERTY
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

VALUATION	VALUATION DATE	AREA	CLASS
2,000,000	01/07/2022	104.6000 Ha	Farmland
DESCRIPTION	UNITS	RATE / CHARGE	AMOUNT
Ordinary Farmland Rate	2000000	.1674 c/\$	\$3,348.00
Ordinary Farmland Rate Base		\$461.24	\$461.24
On-site Sewer Management Annual Charge	1	\$37.00	\$37.00
Domestic Waste	1	\$526.00	\$526.00
* Waste Access Charge	1	\$64.00	\$64.00
Goods & Service Tax - \$5.82			

1ST INSTALMENT	2ND INSTALMENT	3RD INSTALMENT	4TH INSTALMENT	DEDUCT PAYMENTS SINCE	NETT PAYABLE
\$1,109.24 31/08/2023	\$1,109.00 30/11/2023	\$1,109.00 28/02/2024	\$1,109.00 31/05/2024	19/07/2023	\$4,436.24

Simple daily interest is charged at 9% on overdue amounts.

[Redacted] GENERAL MANAGER

Name [Redacted]

Property Number [Redacted]

Total Due \$1,109.24

Due Date 31/08/2023

Pay in person at any post office



Scan here to pay



	Billers Code: [Redacted]
	Ref: [Redacted]
BPAY® this payment via Internet or phone banking.	
BPAY View® - View and pay this bill using internet banking	
BPAY View Registration No.: [Redacted]	

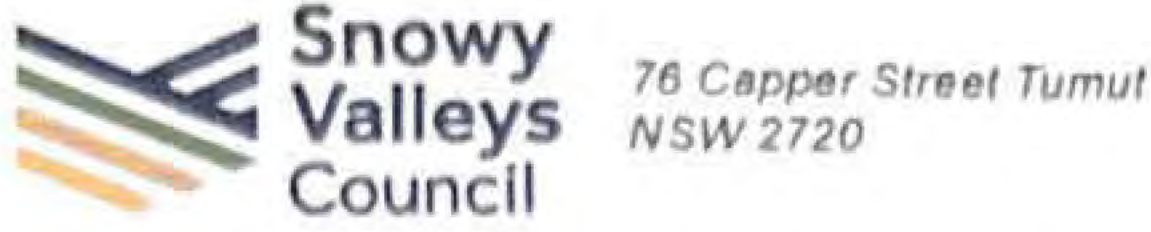
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ABN 63 658 891 887  
Phone: 1300 ASK SVC (1300 275 782)  
Email: info@svc.nsw.gov.au

Tumut Office  
76 Capper Street, Tumut NSW 2720

Tumbarumba Office  
Cnr Bridge and Winton Street, Tumbarumba NSW 2653

PLEASE NOTIFY THE COUNCIL IF THE MAILING ADDRESS IS INCORRECT



016  
1000341  
R1\_837

PROPERTY NUMBER
[Redacted]

ISSUE DATE
20/07/2023

DUE DATE
31/08/2023

DESCRIPTION & LOCATION OF PROPERTY
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

VALUATION	VALUATION DATE	AREA	CLASS
340,000	01/07/2022	25.9000 Ha	Farmland Vacant

DESCRIPTION	UNITS	RATE / CHARGE	AMOUNT
Ordinary Farmland Rate	340000	.1674 c/\$	\$569.16
Ordinary Farmland Rate Base		\$461.24	\$461.24

1ST INSTALMENT	2ND INSTALMENT	3RD INSTALMENT	4TH INSTALMENT	DEDUCT PAYMENTS SINCE	NETT PAYABLE
\$256.40 31/08/2023	\$258.00 30/11/2023	\$258.00 28/02/2024	\$258.00 31/05/2024	19/07/2023	\$1,030.40

Simple daily interest is charged at 9% on overdue amounts.

[Redacted]  
GENERAL MANAGER

Name [Redacted]

Property Number [Redacted]

Total Due \$256.40

Due Date 31/08/2023

Pay in person at any post office



Scan here to pay



Bill Code: [Redacted]  
Ref: [Redacted]

BPAY® this payment via Internet or phone banking  
BPAY View® - View and pay this bill using internet banking  
BPAY View Registration No.: [Redacted]

See reverse for more details



From Mr Ian Weule

15 March 2024

To: IPART  
SYDNEY

cc Hon. J. Clancy – Member for Albury;  
Hon. Jo McGirr – Member for Wagga;  
Hon. R. Hoenig - Minister for Local Govt;  
Hon. W. Tuckerman – Shadow Minister for Local Gov't.  
NSW Valuer General

Dear Sir/Madam

### Overview

I am a resident and ratepayer of the Snowy Valleys Council [SVC] – located in what was formerly the Tumbarumba Shire Council [TSC] area. I am landholder of around 256Ha comprised in two properties nearby each other. My core Farm Income is beef cattle which is supplemented by seasonally variable and sporadic secondary farm income of hay sales subject to demand and availability. Historically, (prior to 2000), this farm also once sustained a mix including crossbred sheep production. Crossbred wool as a commodity is now almost unsaleable and this component is no longer financially viable.

For over a decade through the 1980's into mid 1990's prior to my return to the farm I used to work in the ANZ Bank progressing to the Canberra Commercial lending sector. During those times, inflation was around 10%pa; housing loans approaching 20%pa, and overdraft peaked around 25%pa. By historical standards we are not in what I consider as being a "high inflationary period"- it is however higher than we have known for many years.

### Significant rate increase dwarfing the approved SRV.

The larger of my properties (191Ha) containing some lower production hill country was impacted by a 76% rate increase this year following on from a 15% increase in 2021/22, a total rate increase of 91% in just 2years.

Many of the rural ratepayers in the southern end of this SVC (formerly TSC) with "Rate harmonization" are now paying around 2.5 times the last approved Special Rate Variation [SRV] of 35.95%, no doubt generating millions of extra dollars revenue for SVC. That carefully crafted SRV was supposed to "ensure long term financial stability". If more than 2.5times the SRV from RU1 zoning won't fix the problem – then what will? And what of the credibility of the SVC budget process that they so soon again come cap in hand for another SRV far above CPI? Again, the last SRV was supposed to fix the mess. This failure is all the more repugnant as the former TSC never needed any SRV and, prior to forced merger, was one of the two most robust financially sound councils in NSW.

Where is the accountability and transparency from any NSW oversight entity? As ratepayers, I don't know that we have yet been properly informed of where the original TSC reserves disappeared soon after merger, let alone examples such as recent spending on several weighbridges for which even SVC Councilors seem unaware. Can someone provide council minutes that approved this absurd spending. Waste from SVC is transported to Jugiong and all of it passes through Tumut on the way and could have been weighed there either by a far more cost effective arrangement at one of the timber industry weighbridges or in a single weighbridge installation at the Tumut waste transfer station.

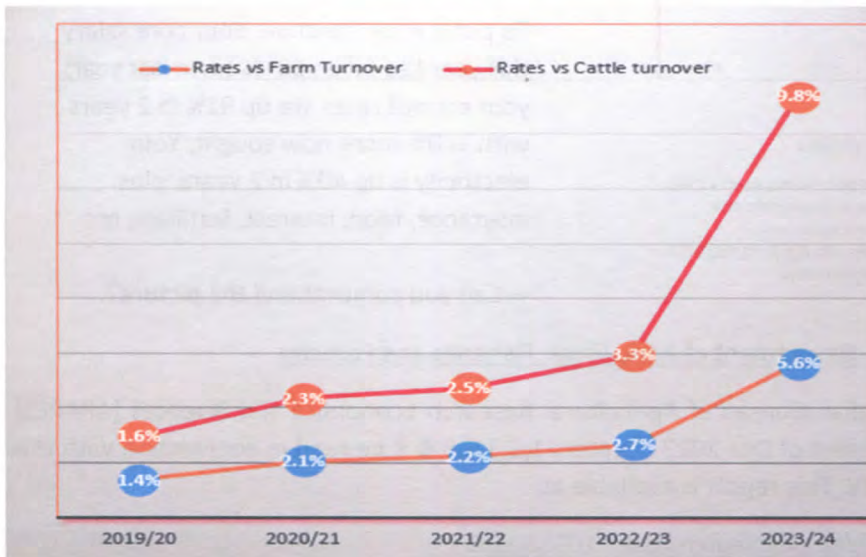
## 1. Affordability.

Do you want to really talk about cost of living pressures:-

- Electricity - Up 40% in the last 2 years
- Fuel - Peak increase from June 2021 to June 2022 +122%  
Average increase over the last 2Yrs9Mths + 56%
- Insurance - They quoted around +21% increase this year – I pruned this back.
- Fertilizer - 78 % increase 2019 to 2022, falling to 63% increase 2019 to 2023.  
Fertilizer is the highest farm expense. 2024 spending may need to be curtailed.
- Council Rates - Overall, up 75.4% since FY 2021/22 and now more is being sought.  
(My main property up 15.3% FYEJun22 to FYJun23 and up 75.7% FY Jun23 to Jun24; total +91% in 2 yrs)

- Unimproved Land Values - Up 293% since 2019!

- INCOME - **Cattle sales income YTD is 45% of the last 5 years average.**  
**FYE30Jun24 position potentially may reach 65% of the last 5 year average**  
**although this is conditional on additional sales being achievable prior 30Jun.**



Given the collapse in beef prices, to past levels of 2015-2019, my proportion of SVC rates to primary farm income (cattle) is currently 9.8% YTD this financial year which is huge. SVC rates to total farm turnover (cattle +hay) is 5.6%YTD. These figures will only reduce if I'm able to make further possibly suboptimal cattle sales towards the end of this financial year. Only if a further \$30k of sales is achievable: **SVC Rates vs Cattle turnover would still be 7.0% and SVC Rates to total farm turnover 4.6%.**

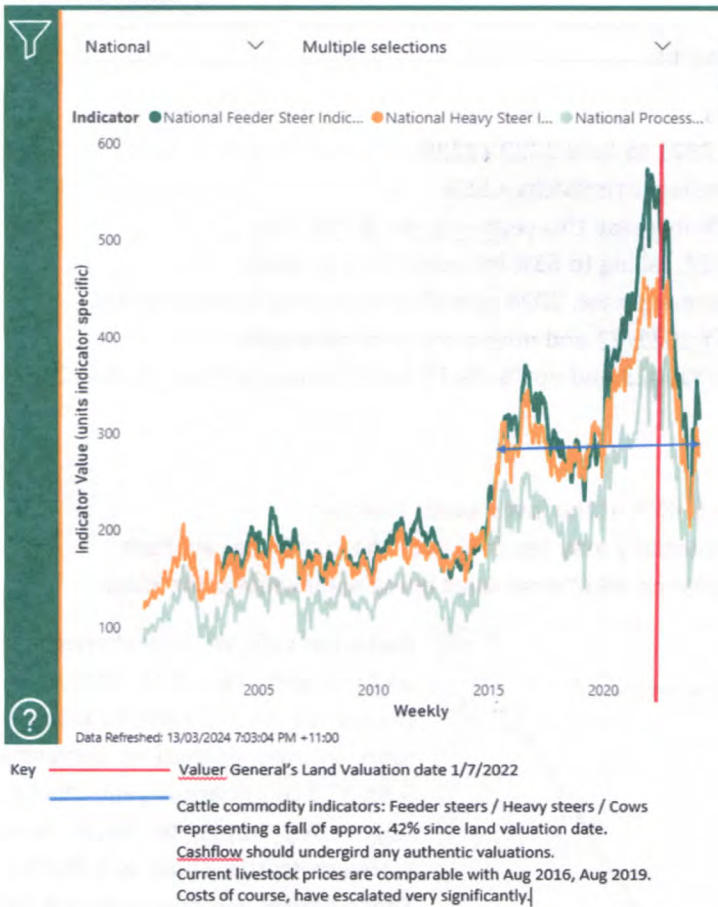
**Council plus LLS rates are now my third highest farm expense.** Only Fertilizer and Repairs+Maintenance are greater. Rates now exceed all other Farm costs including fuel and insurance.

Agriculture is a price-taking enterprise. We are unable to pass costs on. We can't simply get a SRV. I can't just click my fingers so that all my cows have twin calves or my livestock carrying capacity miraculously doubles. It doesn't work that way.

Many in agriculture may not have much superannuation; some rarely indulge in holidays. Both apply to me. It's hard work and I seem to remember there is a song somewhere with a line ...*wealth for toil*...

Well, there is certainly plenty of toil.





The information on the left is derived from the Meat and Livestock Australia [MLA] website.

I've collated data for the main commodities that I produce: Steers and Cows.

The red line I have superimposed over the graph represents the date of the Valuer General's 1/7/2022 valuation. Since then, a very significant collapse has occurred in the beef commodities, together with most other agricultural commodities.

It is not uncommon for agricultural income to fluctuate, sometimes widely. The blue line I've superimposed indicates 2016-2019 and then 2023 steer and cow price levels.

To put it in perspective: Your core salary this year has fallen 50+% since last year: your council rates are up 91% in 2 years with +40% more now sought; Your electricity is up 40% in 2 years, plus insurance, food, interest, fertilizer, etc.

– Can you comprehend the picture?.

ABAREs data - Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

I request that the most recent Australian Bureau of Agricultural Research Economics and Sciences [ABARES] quarterly Agricultural Commodities Report of Dec 2023 chapters 1,2,3,5,6 & 8 be read in conjunction with this letter of objection to any additional SRV. This report is available at:

[https://daff.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en\\_AU/search/asset/1035303/0](https://daff.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/search/asset/1035303/0)

This report illustrates a complex and wide range of factors that impact Agriculture – an indication of what we in agriculture contend with. Following are a couple of points:

*Saleyard prices for cattle, sheep and lambs have fallen significantly over the last year; average national indicator prices show year-on-year prices to October 2023 have fallen for cattle (down 59%), lamb (down 40%) and mutton (down 75%) (Figure 1.6) (see Livestock Prices). Low saleyard prices pose a significant challenge for farmers and have been driven by higher livestock turn-off and lower buyer demand in saleyards. Predominantly, this has been triggered by a sudden shift to drier seasonal conditions which has incentivised strong turn-off rates and reduced restocker demand after three consecutive La Niña years (see Seasonal Conditions). Additionally, constrained capacity at meat processing facilities, and falling global livestock prices because of higher supply, are both weighing on processor demand and saleyard prices.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Australian Government ABARES Agricultural Commodities Report Dec Qtr 2023 Vol13 issue 4, p8



The average rate of return (excluding capital appreciation) for beef specialist farms is estimated to have fallen in 2022–23 to an estimated 1.4%, compared with 2.5% in 2021–22, AND The average rate of return (excluding capital appreciation) for sheep specialist farms is estimated to have fallen to 0.4% in 2022–23, compared with 1.2% in 2021–22<sup>2</sup>.

Earlier ABARES data indicated that Return on Investment [ROI] of Agricultural enterprises had tripled in the 2021 financial year...to 1.6%pa. Staggering! ROI 2022 fell to between 1.2% and -0.9%pa for some farms<sup>3</sup>  
It would not surprise me if ROI for livestock farms in 2023/24 falls to levels around 0.5%  
**So whilst asset prices might seem high – the ROI is predominantly abysmal.**

## **2(a) Valuer General – Agriculture / Plantation disparities.**

This week I have discovered publicly available online valuation information. On checking my surrounding properties I am astounded to discover that one of my immediate neighbors - a private pine plantation, property number 3458700 – has an RU1 zoned valuation of only about 18% of the per Ha valuation of my agricultural RU1 zoned property. Unbelievable. I kept searching and have now also checked several other private plantation assets in my brigade area. All are a fraction of the per Ha agricultural unimproved value.

Property Number	Property Name	Owner	Council Zoning	Area Ha	Valuation 1/07/2022	\$ Per Ha	\$ Per Ac	Per Ha % Comparison
4365422	Cornucopia	IAN WEULE	RU1	191.523	\$ 3,520,000	\$18,378.99	\$ 7,437.98	
3458700	Fromelles/Willis	Private plantation	RU1	229.7	\$ 752,000	\$ 3,273.84	\$ 1,324.92	17.8%
3299512	Walteela Rd	Private plantation	RU1	93.81	\$ 291,000	\$ 3,102.01	\$ 1,255.39	16.9%
3306191	Kinkuna	Private plantation	RU1	172.1	\$ 555,000	\$ 3,224.87	\$ 1,305.10	17.5%
3306192	Kinkuna	Private plantation	RU1	105.5	\$ 331,000	\$ 3,137.44	\$ 1,269.72	17.1%
3306188	Kinkuna	Private plantation	RU1	43.57	\$ 152,000	\$ 3,488.64	\$ 1,411.85	19.0%
3298082	Webb	Private plantation	RU1	932.60	\$ 779,000	\$ 835.30	\$ 338.05	4.5%
552177	Seymour's	Plantation	RU3	1716.00	\$ 3,230,000	\$ 1,882.28	\$ 761.76	10.2%
553224	Belleview	Private plantation	RU1	294.20	\$ 806,000	\$ 2,739.63	\$ 1,108.73	14.9%
3812729	West of Belleview	Private plantation	RU1	1609.80	\$ 1,760,000	\$ 1,093.30	\$ 442.46	5.9%
3380488	Karbethon	Private plantation	RU1	131.30	\$ 344,000	\$ 2,619.95	\$ 1,060.30	14.3%
553093	NSW Forestry		RU3	192.00	\$ 824,000	\$ 4,291.67	\$ 1,736.84	23.4%
552250	Munderoo Access Rd	Plantation	RU3	64.75	\$ 331,000	\$ 5,111.97	\$ 2,068.81	27.8%
553084			RU3	191.20	\$ 828,000	\$ 4,330.54	\$ 1,752.57	23.6%

I firmly believe that no discrepancy is warranted with the unimproved land values irrespective of landholder's free choice of land usage – agriculture or plantation, and consider that the Valuer General has not, in the case of plantations, *ensured the integrity of valuations of land* in terms of the Valuation of Land Act 1916.

Plantation assets, whether State owned or Private, are very significantly undervalued. Far lower valuations, if utilized, have the potential to falsely misrepresent stakeholder investment returns and if utilized could indicate a far higher Return on Investment than is actually the case. This matter should be fully investigated, if necessary by full parliamentary inquiry.

Also, all other landholders in the SVC should be contributing their fair share of Rates including, but not limited to: National Parks / Corrective Services / Water NSW, etc. These differing entities will have varying effect on council expenditure and Council Rates or some cost recovery mechanism should at least reflect a fair cost

<sup>2</sup> ABARES : Financial Performance of Livestock Farms <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/surveys/livestock#farm-cash-income>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/surveys/livestock>



recovery basis for Council expenditure corresponding to these entities **so that agriculture and others do not unfairly compensate for them**. We all contribute to the local economy – there should be no Rate exemptions.

I have not, at time of the writing of this letter, had time to verify how Rates are determined on plantation assets or what road funding contributions Plantation owners have made to SVC in terms of The Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999 No 97 Part 5 Clauses 39-46, if any, or whether this legislation still applies.

#### **2(b) Valuer General – Agricultural land unimproved value 105% of 2021 sales price**

A relative sold property [REDACTED] in March 2021 for \$2,850,000

The Valuer General's unimproved valuation as at 1/7/21 was increased to \$1,900,000 and then at 1/7/22 it was raised to \$2,990,000. So the unimproved land value became 105% of the actual sale price just 16 months prior?? I find this questionable.

I note that the Valuation Sales Report for that property and also my property, references to sales of high production river flat properties in the Greg Greg / Tooma area which are not comparable to land in this area.

#### **2(c). Valuer General - Valuation objection issues**

I am advised that the objection process is difficult and has been described as a horrible process.

In my opinion, 60 days to object to a valuation does not give the landholder adequate opportunity to object. 60 days does not allow scope for review following a subsequent significant event as now experienced more than 60 days post-valuation. This is compounded by the fact that we simply do not know what the valuation will translate into in terms of council rates till the following year. To me, the 60 days process is akin to a legal term – *entrapment* - insofar as it facilitates the deliberate denial of challenge due to genuine events or circumstances that could later impact land values. This is compounded by information hidden away on websites which, without diligent searching, may remain unfound and unknown by most ratepayers.

I also appreciate that there is complexity and difficulty involved in the valuation process, and acknowledge that there would also be significant difficulty in constructing valuations based on Net Present Value of cashflow.

#### **3. High Soil Acidity**

My property [REDACTED] and the properties in the surrounding area are not high production river flats such as Greg Greg and the Upper Murray area. The land locally, due to terrain and soil types, has reduced ability to allow cultivation, and also importantly does not take into account the deprivation of production caused by high soil acidity in this region which is among the top 5% of worst soil acidity in NSW. Unless corrective sustainable measures are implemented, high soil acidity will reduce grassland production by 25-30% which in turn results in reduced livestock production capacity, resulting in reduced cashflow which in turn undergirds (or should undergird) any authentic valuation. There appears to be no allowance for the adverse impact of high soil acidity factors in valuations regionally.

#### **4. Community responsibility and participation.**

I have been RFS Captain or Senior Deputy almost all of the past 15 years, including Captain during the black summer fire emergency where I had about 55Km of fire perimeter in and adjoining my brigade area. I am concerned that higher council rates mean that folk may need to seek additional off-farm income to offset the added rates impost in order to make ends meet and thereby be far less available for voluntary contributions of their time such as RFS participation.

It seems to me that the whole unique and complex basis of Shire Rates in this region is in dire need of thoroughgoing reform. Please consider:-

- Maybe dispensing entirely with the valuation process for RU1 agricultural use rate zoning and levying a Rates charge annually on say 3% of on-farm turnover - something like Medicare. Implement a base amount minimum per landholding. Apply the higher of the two.  
It could be a significant reform like GST was federally to move some taxation away from income onto consumption. Think of the millions of dollars that could be saved to NSW in significantly rationalizing and implementing a streamlined more cost-effective and efficient process, thus reducing (or in part eliminating) the constant need for valuations every 3 years for RU1 Rate zoning when used for agriculture. Councils would need to hold reserves however for times of agricultural turnover downturn. There may be prohibitive problems that would need to be identified, but worth exploring at least.
- Or possibly: For every Council that seeks a SRV – Legislate that the absolute maximum that a Council can levy any ratepayer is the approved amount of the SRV following rigorous affordability due diligence. Legislation should be amended and implemented to ensure that any Council seeking a SRV **forfeits** any additional benefit otherwise attributable through increases in valuation by the Valuer General for all council ratepayers for the entire duration of any SRV being in effect. This would avoid the parlous situation that most agricultural landholders have faced in this last year in the southern half of the Snowy Valleys Council in the area formerly being the Tumbarumba Shire.

Maybe a full parliamentary or even Federal enquiry is needed into the whole Rates / Valuation process in regard to its impact in terms of the Cost of Living.

I will end on a question that maybe I should have started with: What legislation authorizes and empowers any Council to Levy Rates and charges; charge interest on arrears; pursue non-payment of arrears, etc. Just wondering what the legal framework actually says.

Due to recent agricultural economic shock with significant adverse income impact, I consider that further SRV Rate increases especially on RU1 agricultural ratepayers is outright unreasonable. I resolutely oppose any further SRV increase on the RU1 agricultural landholdings located in this Council area, especially in the former TSC jurisdiction.

I am hopeful that IPART will instigate some very robust due diligence although the IPART factsheet seems to indicate that this entity too is powerless to investigate and perform due diligence to ascertain such things as the levels of cost-shifting and probe reasons why Councils cannot maintain cost increases close to CPI increases. This is most imperative for sustainability.

I am also concerned that the last SRV initially mooted at 15-30% grew to 35.95% and am not certain that the ratepayers were consulted fully and frankly of this percentage from the outset, and therefore have cause for concern that the ratepayers were not in fact fully and adequately consulted as per IPART guidelines. This needs verification.



Resident and ratepayer

Author name: J. Oldfield

Date of submission: Thursday, 7 March 2024

Please write your submission below:

This should not be approved as many households are already struggling with the cost of everyday living. Tumbarumba in particular has many roads and facilities that are in need of maintenance works however this are not being made a priority, I do not believe that the council can justify a special variation without increasing the amount of work that they are doing within the community. In recent times the amount of work that has been completed in Tumbarumba is significantly less than was being done before the amalgamation.

Author name: K. Shanahan

Date of submission: Thursday, 7 March 2024

Please write your submission below:

We have already had a Rate Variation of 35.95% for 2022-23 and 2023-24 to fix Councils financial woes and it has not according to Council fixed their problems. Now they have applied for 42.38% cumulative over three years 2024 to 2027 to try and fix their financial woes and this is not sustainable for Ratepayers to keep having to pay these huge increases. From my perspective, I own my own home but live on a pension and whilst we get a modest increase in this pension every 6 months, its certainly nothing like these increases applied for by Council. As you know everything has been increasing in the way of costs and very significantly over the last few years. I have no doubt that Council is impacted the same way as I am, but its not only rates that are increasing, but everything from food, insurance, petrol, car costs and there is a limit to how much we can absorb or afford. We know that the forced merger between Tumut and Tumbarumba Councils has caused some of these problems, but thats not ratepayers fault, that was forced on this Council by NSW State Government. I know Council needs to fix their problems, but you cannot keep slugging the ratepayers to try and balance the books, there has to be other ways explored. Council was told to make the community aware and they had a meeting and sent out a flyer. However, they are very short on detail and keep trotting out the same reason They want to maintain current service levels. But what does that mean, they are very short on detail. The reality of the situation is that Council obviously cannot maintain current service levels because they are almost broke, there is no money. Everyone knows in our own personal budget is that if we dont have the money we cannot spend. Why cannot this Council be made to realise they are going to be the same. From what I see, the core function of Council is General, water and sewer. They need to try and stick to the basics for the next five years and live on the allowable 5% increase. Its called living within your means. Stop pandering to the noisy minority who think Council should provide anything and everything. Learn to say NO. Why is Council providing Community Grants? Why do they pay to sponsor Community functions? We cannot afford to do these things .so stop and consolidate. I really ask that IPART do not give this Council anything other than the allowable increase and this way force them to try and fix their own problems. They can take the community with them by informing us but you cannot keep coming back and make us pay more rates, its unsustainable. What happens if ratepayers start defaulting on paying their rates in full because we dont have the money? Is Council going to instigate legal action (at a further cost) to collect these unpaid rates even to the point of selling houses This situation with Snowy Valleys Council cannot be solved simply by increasing rates, there needs to be a whole reassessment of the situation. We are not the only Council with these problems and its time the NSW State Government had a complete reassessment of Local Government and how it functions. It is definitely broken.



Author name: M. Greenhalgh

Date of submission: Monday, 18 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

Criteria 2 There is little doubt that the council consulted widely with public forums and social media campaigns during the consultation period. But then the Council promptly disregarded the results and applied for a special rate variation of 42% anyway. The results of the survey and submissions made during the consultation period have been reduced to the paragraph below. Only 17.4% of survey respondents supported Option 2, yet this is the option for which the Council has applied. The council cites the council report at the 1st of February 2024 but this document is not included in the supporting documents of this application. I believe that this is not only misleading but it is disrespectful toward the tribunal process. Anecdotally, I have not spoken to any ratepayer who supports the application for a special rate variation. Im sure that if the tribunal would consider it, I would have no problems lodging a petition against any rate increase signed by the majority of landholders in the southern part of the Shire. Criteria 3, There are many landholders, particularly in the southern part of the Shire, for whom this is not the case. The rate rises previously experienced by landholders in the southern part of the Shire area have already been considerable. If rates are increased by another 42%, the effects on the long-term profitability of farmers will be serious. Our rates are calculated, based on the land values determined by the Valuer General. These land values are extremely inaccurate and are basically irrelevant other than for calculating our shire rates. For some inexplicable reason, the land values in the southern part of the Shire have increased at a completely unrealistic rate over the past six years. From 2016 to 2022, the land value of my property has increased by 495%, on exactly the same land holding. ABARE figures for the same period put the actual increase at 125%. This would not be a problem if the Valuer General's land values increased uniformly across the LGA; as rate pegging or Special rate variations apply to Councils total rate revenue. However, this is clearly not the case in our area. In 2016 my rates bill was \$13,315. If it had only increased by the rate peg amount and the 2 increases allowed under the previous special rate variation, then my rates would be \$20,505. But my rates are currently \$39,028. I think this demonstrates the inequity of the rate increase during this period. If this special rate variation is granted my rates will increase to \$55,569. I run a family farm by myself, with a workman three days a week being able to comfortably do the work. I only add this to indicate that Im not operating on a very large scale but am typical of many full time farmers in our area. With Shire rates at this level they would represent about 19% of the fixed and variable costs of running my farm and as such represent a significant cost that Im unable to influence. Over the last few years we have experienced good seasons and extremely good prices. Prices have already fallen from these levels. If our income returns to long-term averages, which is inevitable, and these higher levels of Shire rates are locked in for the future, then I fear for the viability and profitability for myself and many of the farmers in this area. Criteria 4 After examining the financial statements for both Tumbarumba and Tumut Shires and the merged Snowy Valleys Council it becomes clear that the costs have increased dramatically. From 2016 to 2023 Wages per full time equivalent (FTE) employee rose from \$74,522 to \$105,249 per (FTE). This is twice the average wage growth for NSW Public Sector Jobs for this period. The council now relies a great deal on contractors despite its permanent wages increasing. During this period Expenditure on Contractors rose from \$1.04M to \$25.29M. Consultants from \$0.86M to \$1.74M. Cost of materials did fall From \$15.07M to \$7.3M. In Conclusion I believe if the special rate variation is granted, there will be a significant impact on many rate payers in the council area. I believe that the council has not effectively attempted to control the costs or implement efficiency measures. The council resolved to apply for a second special rate variation in June 2023, before the final increase of the previous special rate variation had even come into effect. In the past 12 months Snowy Valley Council has recruited a very experienced and capable General Manager. I believe that it would be prudent not to grant another special rate variation and allow council time to work on controlling their costs and bringing the budget back into order. If this is not done, the \$4 million increase in rates revenue will very quickly be swallowed up in more inefficient spending. I urge your tribunal not to grant Snowy Valleys Council another Special Rate Variation.

Criteria one,  
I believe there is considerable doubt as to the council's ability to accurately forecast income and expenses 10 years into the future. Their own figures from the financial statement for the year ending June 2023 show how inaccurate their forecast budget figures are compared to the actuals over a 12 month period.

Snowy Valleys Council | Income Statement | for the year ended 30 June 2023

## Snowy Valleys Council

### Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2023

Original unaudited budget 2023	\$ '000	Notes	Actual 2023	Actual 2022
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>				
20,768		B2-1	19,860	18,000
15,141		B2-2	25,456	19,307
934		B2-3	4,758	5,699
10,800		B2-4	20,309	15,085
28,809		B2-4	14,579	13,749
330		B2-5	1,159	316
–		B2-6	1,746	1,397
–		B6-1	4,219	–
76,782			92,086	73,553
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>				
17,244		B3-1	21,155	20,823
14,808		B3-2	38,756	28,090
344		B3-3	282	398
10,984		B3-4	11,949	26,518
5,789		B3-5	1,493	1,109
–		B4-1	3,685	2,582
49,169			77,320	79,520
27,613			14,766	(5,967)
27,613			14,766	(5,967)
<b>Net operating result for the year attributable to Council</b>				
<b>Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes</b>				
(1,196)			187	(19,716)

The above Income Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

For example Materials and Services is under estimated by \$24 million.

Therefore I believe there is significant doubt that the council has demonstrated that it actually needs more income.

### Criteria 2

There is little doubt that the council consulted widely with public forums and social media campaigns during the consultation period.

But then the Council promptly disregarded the results and applied for a special rate variation of 42% anyway.



The results of the survey and submissions made during the consultation period have been reduced to the paragraph below.

Council received two hundred and one (201) online survey and feedback forms. Of those who participated 17.4% preferred option 2 (12.5% increase spread over three years). Council also received thirteen (13) separate submissions.

71.1% provided 'other' responses which included being opposed to the SRV or asked additional financial related questions.

The Community and pop-up meetings were reasonably attended with 250 members of the community in attendance across all locations.

Council's comments and responses on key themes raised in the online survey/feedback forms and submissions were summarised in councils report at the 1st of February 2024 meeting.

Only 17.4% of survey respondents supported Option 2, yet this is the option for which the Council has applied.

The council cites the "council report at the 1st of February 2024" but this document is not included in the supporting documents of this application.

I believe that this is not only misleading but it is disrespectful toward the tribunal process.

Anecdotally, I have not spoken to any ratepayer who supports the application for a special rate variation. I'm sure that if the tribunal would consider it, I would have no problems lodging a petition against any rate increase signed by the majority of landholders in the southern part of the Shire.

Criteria 3,

In response to the effect on Rate payers Council submitted the table below. The effect on the average rate payer appears to be of modest impact.

**SRV Option 2 - The increased rating level at the completion of 2026/27 would then remain permanently and be the amount subject to any future increases.**

	Average Rate Paid per property	SRV 12.5% 2024/25	SRV 12.5% 2025/26	SRV 12.5% 2026/27
Ordinary Business Rate	\$2,071.48	\$2,330.42	\$2,621.72	\$2,949.43
Ordinary Farmland Rate	\$2,705.38	\$3,043.56	\$3,424.00	\$3,852.00
Ordinary Mining Rate	\$3,174.23	\$3,571.01	\$4,017.39	\$4,519.56
Ordinary Residential Rate	\$907.39	\$1,020.82	\$1,148.42	\$1,291.97

There are many landholders, particularly in the southern part of the Shire, for whom this is not the case. The rate rises previously experienced by landholders in the southern part of the Shire area have already been considerable. If rates are increased by another 42%, the effects on the long-term profitability of farmers will be serious.

Our rates are calculated, based on the land values determined by the Valuer General. These land values are extremely inaccurate and are basically irrelevant other than for calculating our shire rates.

For some inexplicable reason, the land values in the southern part of the Shire have increased at a completely unrealistic rate over the past six years.

From 2016 to 2022, the land value of my property has increased by 495%, on exactly the same land holding.

ABARE figures for the same period put the actual increase at 125%.

This would not be a problem if the Valuer General's land values increased uniformly across the LGA; as rate pegging or Special rate variations apply to Council's total rate revenue. However, this is clearly not the case in our area.

In 2016 my rates bill was \$13,315. If it had only increased by the rate peg amount and the 2 increases allowed under the previous special rate variation, then my rates would be \$20,505. But my rates are currently \$39,028. I think this demonstrates the inequity of the rate increase during this period.

If this special rate variation is granted my rates will increase to \$55,569.

I run a family farm by myself, with a workman three days a week being able to comfortably do the work. I only add this to indicate that I'm not operating on a very large scale but am typical of many full time farmers in our area.

With Shire rates at this level they would represent about 19% of the fixed and variable costs of running my farm and as such represent a significant cost that I'm unable to influence.

Over the last few years we have experienced good seasons and extremely good prices. Prices have already fallen from these levels. If our income returns to long-term averages, which is inevitable, and these higher levels of Shire rates are locked in for the future, then I fear for the viability and profitability for myself and many of the farmers in this area.

#### Criteria 4

Snowy Valley Council, since it's formation, has not shown any ability to control their costs. In their submission they cite the Road to Sustainability document which identified \$1.4 million in savings. I note that this document is not included with their submission. I have been unable to find it on an Internet search. However, I did find one document which identified savings made by capitalising wages, i.e., taking wages from operational expenditure and reallocating them as capital expenditure. This is not a cost saving or efficiency measure, just a reallocation.

After examining the financial statements for both Tumbarumba and Tumut Shires and the merged Snowy Valleys Council it becomes clear that the costs have increased dramatically. From 2016 to 2023 Wages per full time equivalent (FTE) employee rose from \$74,522 to \$105,249 per (FTE).

This is twice the average wage growth for NSW Public Sector Jobs for this period.

The council now relies a great deal on contractors despite it's permanent wages increasing. During this period Expenditure on Contractors rose from \$1.04M to \$25.29M. Consultants from \$0.86M to \$1.74M. Cost of materials did fall From \$15.07M to \$7.3M.

In Conclusion I believe if the special rate variation is granted, there will be a significant impact on many rate payers in the council area.

I believe that the council has not effectively attempted to control the costs or implement efficiency measures.

The council resolved to apply for a second special rate variation in June 2023, before the final increase of the previous special rate variation had even come into effect.

In the past 12 months Snowy Valley Council has recruited a very experienced and capable General Manager. I believe that it would be prudent not to grant another special rate variation and allow council time to work on controlling their costs and bringing the budget back into order. If this is not done, the \$4 million increase in rates revenue will very quickly be swallowed up in more inefficient spending.

I urge your tribunal not to grant Snowy Valleys Council another Special Rate Variation.

Author name: M. Harrison

Date of submission: Thursday, 7 March 2024

Please write your submission below:

This is the second large special rate variation that Snowy Valleys Council has requested, the mismanagement of public monies needs to stop. I believe a state government review of how they spend our (rate payers) funds would be a better option. When attending community's consultation meetings they have openly advised the rate rise would NOT be enough to balance the books, so why put pressure on the rate payers if the mismanagement is still to continue. The council currently has 11 vacant positions advertised ( Tumberumba Times 28.2.2024)and still over budget. Services have dropped and expenses are blowing out, how will we attract people in to grow our towns at this prospect. Snowy Valley Council paid for an independent study into SVC since and before forced amalgamation and the professor provided a very comprehensive presentation that advised with the current and future predictions on SVC, there is no way to balance the books as the rate payers are too few and the current expenses too large and future predictions are for more costs and same rate payers base. I strongly request you hold rate rises until SVC has done very thorough reviews on spending. I personally cannot remember the last major project that remained even close to budget. Mismanagement must stop

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 12 March 2024

Please write your submission below:

I would like to address two of the OLG's guidelines; establish that the impact on affected ratepayers is reasonable - I don't think SVC has considered the impact of the last SRV and increase from valuations (see attached) In summary my rates jumped 74% at an average cost of \$40 per ha. Relative to the neighbouring shire Hume which at the same time had a cost of \$13 per ha (less than 40km from rest of my properties). I would like to understand if Council have any information on what impact the impact of further rate hikes through a SRV might have on the underlying profitability of rural businesses and the competitiveness against operating in neighbouring shires? My statement reflects SVC limited knowledge around rural business profitability, sustainability in environment where rising interest rates and lowering commodity prices have impacted agriculture where enterprises are dropping into cashflow negative territory! explain and quantify the councils productivity improvements and cost containment strategies. Clearly Council faces many challenges as we all do in our own businesses. I just wonder SVC has really identified or stepped outside the business to look at alternatives to how it operates so that sustainability can be achieved without just simply hiking rates? I would like to think some of considerations could include; \* depreciation schedules / rules be treated differently as many assets are created by outside grants and I think many maintenance schedules it could be assumed will be financed through grants??? I'm not an expert in this field but would like to know if SVC or all shire depreciation schedules could be treated accordingly?? \* I would like to better understand the impact of 'Forestry Corporation of NSW' not being a rate payer has on the SVC bottom line? I'd assume causes the most significant impact on state and local roads? Is this an opportunity to force the issue so that they do pay rates and or attract additional funding outside of rates to ensure SVC sustainability? We may also consider anything else we consider relevant.

Shire	Rate No.	Ha	Rates 2023	Rates 2022		Rates
			per annum	per annum	%	\$/ha
SVC		11.2	\$1,753	\$1,489	18%	\$157
SVC		368.11	\$13,158	\$7,661	72%	\$36
SVC		129.6	\$6,103	\$3,430	78%	\$47
SVC		108.7	\$4,914	\$2,769	77%	\$45
SVC		145.2	\$6,437	\$3,625	78%	\$44
SVC		199.7	\$8,521	\$5,037	69%	\$43
SVC		99.58	\$3,960	\$2,220	78%	\$40
SVC		209.64	\$6,789	\$3,047	123%	\$32
SVC		158.96	\$5,266	\$3,427	54%	\$33
					av.	av.
SVC		1430.7	\$56,900	\$32,705	74%	\$40
Hume		201.0	\$2,628	\$2,174	21%	\$13

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 18 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

The impact on affected ratepayers must be reasonable- We are a young farming family who own land and lease land (which we pay its rates) in SVC. I will use as an example a 290ha piece of primary production zoned land we lease that its rates will increase from \$5783 pa in 2021 to \$14372 in 2026 after this SRV. 148% increase in 5 years. Is \$14372pa too much? About this property -Grazing property of a size that is regarded as half the size required to make a living -Tumut (SVC headquarters) 81kms away -Albury 120kms away -Sydney 487kms away -Beach 309kms away If I compare the rates of \$14372pa to 2681ha (more than 9 times in size) Their rates in 2026- \$13914pa! That's right just 14kms west and a property 9 times its size for less rates. The only difference is a council under better management. Here is an article about this property. Upper Murray grazing gems | Stock & Land | VIC (stockandland.com.au) 2 Woolworths Tumut \$13400! This proves the inequity within the SVC. A one man farm operation of half the land size to make a living pays more than Woolworths located in the centre of Tumut. 3- Coles Tumut \$11256 4- McDonalds Tumut \$4543 5- KFC Tumut \$1787 6- Kmart Tumut \$5973 7- AKD Timber Tumut \$6189 Incredible to think that 290ha with no chance of being anything but a farm in the next couple of hundred years will be paying more rates than McDonalds, KFC and Kmart combined! Now maybe these are not the best properties to compare to primary production land and I do understand how the unimproved value works. The problem being that RU1 primary production zoned lands use is restricted to Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; Forestry; Home occupations; Intensive plant agriculture; Roads. I can guarantee Woolworths has a greater capacity to pay these rates than I do. If on my land I am not allowed to build a Woolworths to cover the rates bill, how can I be expected to pay more than them? Does SVC really think 290 ha of land in Tumbarumba has a greater capacity to pay their extortion than Woolworths, Coles, McDonalds, KFC, Kmart and AKD Timber? They don't care. As far as my capacity to pay this current extortion, let alone the next one, I am a little embarrassed to admit that Snowy Valleys Council looks set to make more from my business in 2023-2024 than I am. I would suggest that the adversely affected rate payers would number in the hundreds and the parcels of farmland adversely affected would number in the thousands. Has SVC addressed these adversely affected rate payers? No, they have not. There was no community consultation only information sessions to tell rate payers what they were doing. I requested further information on the survey where more than 70% selected other and left a comment rather than the SRV option, SVC finally responded with pointing me to the extraordinary meeting business paper. The survey was not consultation, it gave three options SRV A, SRV B or other. If it was consultation, they would have addressed the 70% other comments. I left a comment and they never addressed it. If Ipart asks maybe they will give you the survey results for the other field, as I don't think paraphrasing 70% of survey responses is consultation. I have attached my letter to the councilors with the spreadsheet showing different scenarios for rates. One scenario where there is a 20% land value increase (over 10 years) and another SRV predicts a rates of \$30188! I think that if Ipart approves this SRV there will definitely be another SRV. Snowy Valleys Council will spend any money they get. A 20% land value increase wouldn't be a surprise as in the last valuation the 290ha value increased by 337%. This land value increase really does nothing for this property's ability to pay the massive rates. In the spreadsheet there is also a graph showing a standard house in Tumbarumba rates in comparison to the 290ha. It shows the inequity from farm rates to residential rates, same scenario of one additional SRV and 20% land increase. The 290ha would pay \$208225 over 10 years and the residential rates would only pay \$8710! In conclusion this SRV is far too much especially when we know that it is avoidable. Snowy Valleys Council has made no attempt to consult the community they have only communicated their demands. When asked in Tumbarumba what their plan was if Ipart declined the SRV they replied nothing. Snowy Valleys Council is so confident Ipart will just rubber stamp this SRV that they have not made any other plan. Snowy Valleys Council has made no attempt to listen to its rate payers and especially not the adversely affected rate payers. Snowy Valleys Council has lied throughout the whole SRV process. They have deliberately misled the community on the reason for this SRV citing inflation. We know inflation all too well. They should spend what they make and then apply for an SRV for extra infrastructure, and not spend the money, then cry poor. This is guaranteed with your rubber stamp!

## **Evidence that the community is aware of the need for and extent of a rate rise**

The only correspondence I have ever received on the matter was a flyer in the mail in November. It said about the SRV option B "This option would show a return to a balanced budget\* from year 2026/27 and an overall balanced budget with a slow increase in a small (<2%) surplus over the 10 year period to service any further cost shifting or unexpected new service deliveries as was the case during Covid-19 " This is a lie.

The General Manager has stated that this SRV will not be enough. He has stated that once this SRV is fully implemented that it will add \$4.6 million a year and that they will require \$7 million or more a year. Are we supposed to believe that this council will find an additional \$2.4 million in savings? Where? I have looked through their application and couldn't find any detail on this. Surely the "Snowy Valleys road to sustainability plan 23/24" can't cover this? SVC only found \$1.4 million in savings (low hanging fruit I would imagine) In the last 4 years since the plan was adopted in 2020. This plan has failed. It obviously needed to find \$7 million and it found \$1.4 million. Where is the detail on the further \$2.4 million in proposed savings? When questioned on the matter in Tumbarumba's community meeting the GM only had that [REDACTED] ". I have no faith that SVC will find any savings. Did they find enough savings last time? Were the savings in line with Ipart's expectations? I certainly hope not because here we are again. The last SRV (really is still the current one) was promised and approved by Ipart on the premise of "ensure financial sustainability". This clearly didn't happen.

In the flyer SVC said "Current modelling in Council's 2023- 2033 Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) shows that further rate increases are needed to enable Council to maintain current service levels, adequately fund ongoing asset maintenance, reduce Council's reliance on external grant funding for asset renewals, and ensure Council's financial sustainability". This is also a lie. How is it possible that SVC will be able to achieve this statement whilst making the \$2.4 million in savings? They cannot. Anyone who only read the flyer and took it to be not a lie and didn't manage to attend the community meetings thinks these statements are true. They are both a lie.

This SRV cannot ensure financial sustainability. If SVC could find \$2.4 million in savings they should have already implemented it before extorting more money from rate payers' empty pockets.

I wrote to the councillors and Mayor on this matter and included a spreadsheet outlining my expected rates after this SRV fails and they need a further 40%. If SVC need \$7 million to ensure financial sustainability they need show exactly how they plan to raise it or save it. Perhaps this SRV should be to raise the \$7 million? Why isn't it? Are we expected to just prop up this failing organisation at great expense to our business until it fails and we lose our investment? Yes investment, we have become investors in the Snowy Valleys Council that behaves more like a developer than a council. Just not a very good one.

Take the basketball stadium, it is said to take \$800000 pa from budget. If 5% of Tumut's population play basketball (330 people) this is going to cost \$2424 per player per year! I seriously doubt 5% would play each year. I realise Ipart does not question councils projects but it must be mentioned to add context to the argument that SVC will not save \$2.4 million a year. Oh sorry it's an evacuation centre. So if 1000 people use it once every 10 years that would be \$8000 per person. Average motel room in Tumut \$130, that's 61 days in a motel per person. My point being here is that SVC has never been able to afford this but they are still pressing ahead! With \$5 million deficit they are still spending more. It is impossible to think that SVC will just stop and then cut \$2.4 million a year. Any



reasonable council would apply for an SRV to build these projects ( with community consultation) SVC builds them then forces an SRV because there's no money left.

How can there still be a \$5 million deficit after implementing a 35% SRV? It was only 2 years ago that they applied for it! How could they not see a \$5 million hole in the budget? The answer is they could. They could see it and they mislead the rate payers and lpart last time just as they are trying to do now. Because they are so hopeless and knew that lpart might decline a 120% increase to the rates in 2022. Yes 120%, I will attach my spreadsheet showing that when this SRV fails they will be back.

### **The impact on affected ratepayers must be reasonable**

We are a young farming family who own land and lease land (which we pay its rates) in SVC.

I will use as an example a 290ha piece of primary production zoned land we lease that's rates will increase from \$5783 pa in 2021 to \$14372 in 2026 after this SRV. 148% increase in 5 years. Is \$14372pa too much?

About this property

- Grazing property of a size that is regarded as half the size required to make a living
- Tumut (SVC headquarters) 81kms away
- Albury 120kms away
- Sydney 487kms away
- Beach 309kms away
- Snowy Valleys doesn't even collect our rubbish. Nothing is supplied but a road past the property.

If I compare the rates of \$14372pa to-

1 - Property no [REDACTED]

2681ha (more than 9 times in size)

Their rates in 2026- \$13914pa! That's right just 14kms west and a property 9 times its size for less rates. The only difference is a council under better management. Here is a article about this property.

[Upper Murray grazing gems | Stock & Land | VIC \(stockandland.com.au\)](http://stockandland.com.au)

2 – Woolworths Tumut \$13400! This proves the inequity within the SVC. A one man farm operation of half the land size to make a living pays more than Woolworths located in the centre of Tumut. This will make a great news story if this SRV goes ahead. Although it already could as I am already paying more than Woolworths as it is.

3- Coles Tumut \$11256

4- McDonalds Tumut \$4543

5- KFC Tumut \$1787

6- Kmart Tumut \$5973

7- AKD Timber Tumut \$6189 8.8 ha Industrial land in Tumut

Incredible to think that 290ha with no chance of being anything but a farm in the next couple of hundred years will be paying more rates than Mcdonalds, KFC and Kmart combined!

Now maybe these are not the best properties to compare to primary production land and I do understand how the unimproved value works. The problem being that RU1 primary production zoned lands use is restricted to "Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; Forestry; Home occupations; Intensive plant agriculture; Roads". I can guarantee Woolworths has a greater capacity to pay these rates than I do. If on my land I am not allowed to build a Woolworths to cover the rates bill, how can I be expected to pay more than them? Does SVC really think 290 ha of land in Tumbarumba has a greater capacity to pay their extortion than Woolworths, Coles, Mcdonalds, KFC, Kmart and AKD Timber? They don't care.

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## Special rate variation effects

1 attachments (27 KB)

SRVRATES.xlsx;

Dear Mayor Chaffey,

Can I please raise my concerns about the proposed special rate variation.

We are a young farming family in Tumbarumba who lease and are owners. As we pay rates on leased land also, I would like to bring to your attention what this SRV will do to our family.

Attached is a spreadsheet that shows the projected rates for our lease property of 290.19Ha (717 acres). This property was valued in 2022 and increased by 337%. This with the last SRV (which appears to have completely failed and has shown absolutely no improvement in our business) has increased the rates to \$10094pa.

I attended the SRV meeting in Tumbarumba and was surprised to learn that this proposed SRV will also not be enough to cover the deficit. Which leads me to believe that it is probable that this won't be the last SRV in the near future.

In the spreadsheet you will notice that the rates are projected to increase over the next 10 years to \$30118pa !

Assuming rate peg used by the council in the SRV meetings,

-20% land value increase (not unprecedented as the last valuation was 337%)

-Another SRV of 40% (we can agree this definitely isn't unprecedented!).

This would cost our business \$208225 over 10 years for this parcel of land.

Compare this with a standard house in Tumbarumba of an increase to \$1263 and a 10-year cost of \$8710. How can this be allowed?

Snowy valleys council has not done its homework because I cannot imagine anyone who thinks this is a fair deal (please see the graph in spreadsheet). Our young family of four cannot survive on the farm income as it is. My wife works as a nurse at the hospital to supplement income.

It would become very attractive for farmers and younger ones at that to base their career outside this council area. Empty corporate farmhouses is the only result you could hope for.

If there is no other option but to raise rates, then I would propose that a change to the farm rate would be absolutely mandatory.

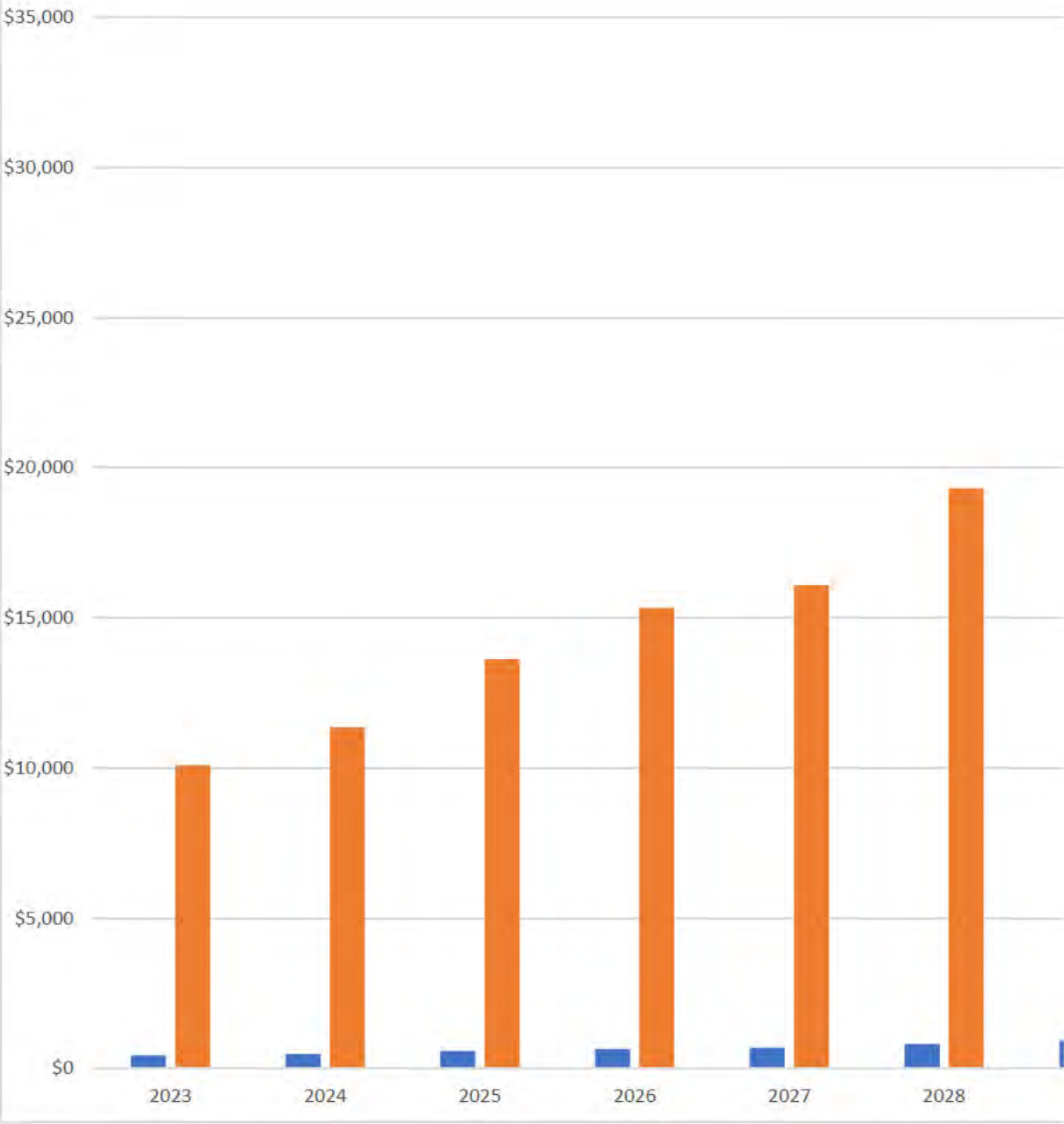
It is entirely unsustainable for family farms to contribute what I can only describe as more than their fair share. We add to the community the same way as every family but certainly use less services than most.

Please do not vote yes until the farm to residential rate ratio has been corrected.

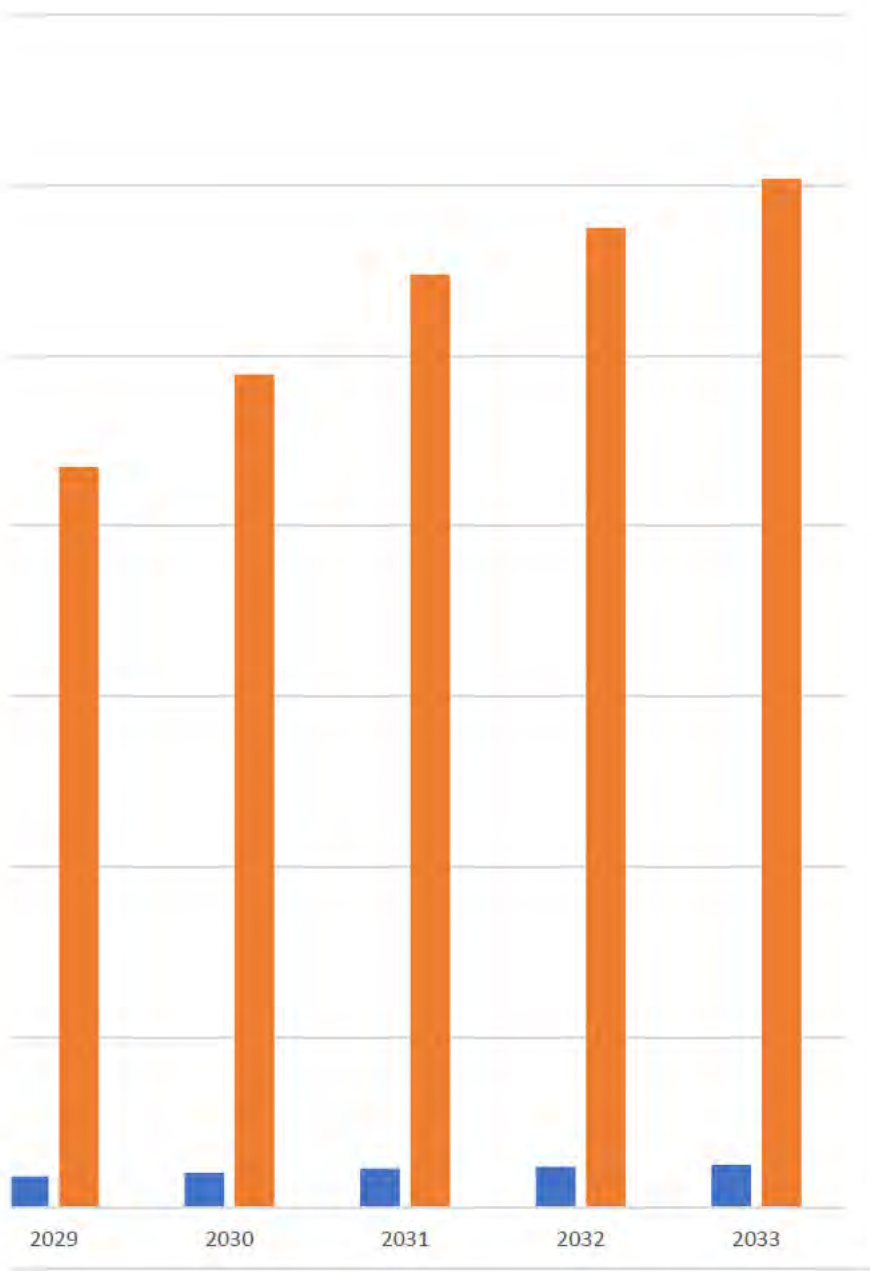
Thankyou for your time,

20% LAND VALUE INCREASE + 1 ADD

town farm



ADDITIONAL SRV





HECTARES	290.19				
YEAR	c/\$	PEG/SRV	VALUER GEN %	VALUE/Ha	RATES/YR \$
2023	0.001674			20,779.49	10094
2024	0.00188325	112.5%	100%	20779.49	11356
2025	0.00211866	112.5%	100%	20779.49	12775
2026	0.00238349	112.5%	100%	20779.49	14372
2027	0.00250266	105.0%	100%	20779.49	15091
2028	0.00262780	105.0%	100%	20779.49	15846
2029	0.00275919	105.0%	100%	20779.49	16638
2030	0.00289714	105.0%	100%	20779.49	17470
2031	0.00304200	105.0%	100%	20779.49	18343
2032	0.00319410	105.0%	100%	20779.49	19260
2033	0.00335381	105.0%	100%	20779.49	20223
TOTAL 24-33					161375.4

HECTARES	290.19					
YEAR	c/\$	PEG/SRV	VALUER	GEN %	VALUE/Ha	RATES \$
2023	0.001674				20,779.49	10094
2024	0.00188325	112.5%		100%	20779.49	11356
2025	0.00211866	112.5%		100%	20779.49	12775
2026	0.00238349	112.5%		100%	20779.49	14372
2027	0.00250266	105.0%		100%	20779.49	15091
2028	0.00281550	112.5%		100%	20779.49	16977
2029	0.00316743	112.5%		100%	20779.49	19100
2030	0.00356336	112.5%		100%	20779.49	21487
2031	0.00374153	105.0%		100%	20779.49	22561
2032	0.00392861	105.0%		100%	20779.49	23689
2033	0.00412504	105.0%		100%	20779.49	24874
TOTAL 24-33						182284

HECTARES	290.19					
YEAR	c/\$	PEG/SRV	VALUER	GEN %	VALUE/Ha	RATES \$
2023	0.001674				20,779.49	\$10,094
2024	0.00188325	112.5%		100%	20779.49	\$11,356
2025	0.00211866	112.5%		107%	22164.79	\$13,627
2026	0.00238349	112.5%		100%	22164.79	\$15,331
2027	0.00250266	105.0%		100%	22164.79	\$16,097
2028	0.00281550	112.5%		107%	23642.44	\$19,317
2029	0.00316743	112.5%		100%	23642.44	\$21,731
2030	0.00356336	112.5%		100%	23642.44	\$24,448
2031	0.00374153	105.0%		107%	25218.6	\$27,381
2032	0.00392861	105.0%		100%	25218.6	\$28,750
2033	0.00412504	105.0%		100%	25218.6	\$30,188
TOTAL 24-33						208225.4

HECTARES	290.19				
YEAR	c/\$	PEG/SRV	VALUER GEN %	VALUE/Ha	RATES \$
2023	0.001674			20,779.49	10094
2024	0.00188325	112.5%	100%	20779.49	11356
2025	0.00211866	112.5%	117%	24242.74	14905
2026	0.00238349	112.5%	100%	24242.74	16768
2027	0.00250266	105.0%	100%	24242.74	17606
2028	0.00281550	112.5%	117%	28283.19	23108
2029	0.00316743	112.5%	100%	28283.19	25997
2030	0.00356336	112.5%	100%	28283.19	29246
2031	0.00374153	105.0%	117%	32997.06	35827
2032	0.00392861	105.0%	100%	32997.06	37618
2033	0.00412504	105.0%	100%	32997.06	39499
TOTAL 24-33					251929.7

M2

674

YEAR	c/\$	PEG/SRV	VALUER GEN %	VALUE/m2	RATES \$
2023	0.00391			160.23	\$422
2024	0.00439875	112.5%	100%	160.23	\$475
2025	0.00494859	112.5%	107%	170.912	\$570
2026	0.00556717	112.5%	100%	170.912	\$641
2027	0.00584553	105.0%	100%	170.912	\$673
2028	0.00657622	112.5%	107%	182.30613	\$808
2029	0.00739824	112.5%	100%	182.30613	\$909
2030	0.00832302	112.5%	100%	182.30613	\$1,023
2031	0.00873918	105.0%	107%	194.45988	\$1,145
2032	0.00917613	105.0%	100%	194.45988	\$1,203
2033	0.00963494	105.0%	100%	194.45988	\$1,263
TOTAL 24-33					\$8,710



**Submission to IPART**  
**Snowy Valley Council Special Rate Variation.**

Prepared by

**Robert Brown CPA**

1. This submission will prove Snowy Valley Council (SVC) has used false and misleading data to support their application for another Special Rate Variation (SRV). Before IPART grants SVC another SRV, it must have Council's Budgets/Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) audited. A thorough and proper audit will reveal there is missing income and expense at the Fund level in SVC's 2023-24 Budget/LTFP. This is part of a broader institutional failing within Local Government (LG) finance which I have addressed in a separate submission to IPART.
2. A full independent review of SVC's internal transactions is required to understand the exact financial and cash position for each Fund. I have witnessed some questionable accounting practices at SVC when applying overhead charges. The true GF cash balance is somewhere between the reported \$21 million and the \$39 million after the below adjustments.
3. The Mayor, at the extraordinary meeting 1<sup>st</sup> February stated GF has an average operational loss of \$5 million a year after capital income. Council continually quotes "Operating result after Capital Income" as a justification for the SRV. I have never understood why you would remove any income from the result, especially when it is inconsistent with accounting standards. This is an example of misusing information to justify one's position.
4. This submission will show.
  - 4.1. SVC General Fund (GF) has a potential additional \$17M cash compared to publicly reported figures. This is a result of cross subsidisation between Funds due to Council using an accounting method inconsistent with the Office of Local Government's Code of Accounting Practice (The Code),
  - 4.2. SVC Cash has increased by \$13 million since amalgamation in 2016,
  - 4.3. SVC GF has an average operating surplus of \$5.5 million,
  - 4.4. SCV GF seven years asset replacement is at 164% of depreciation, an addition net spend of \$15 million,
  - 4.5. SVC's financials and Budgets/LTFP failed the Cash V Accrual test for all years since amalgamation,
  - 4.6. SVC GF has failed the equity reconciliation test for all Statements and Budgets/LTFP since amalgamation,
  - 4.7. SVC GF has failed the cash flow reconciliation test for all Statements and Budgets/LTFP since amalgamation, and
  - 4.8. SVC "Surplus to Capital additions" is averaging \$3.56 million per year.
5. I left Council in March 2023 with Councils Budget 99% complete. My version was prepared in accordance with The Code and for all intents and purposes was balanced. The published version of LTFP was not prepared in accordance with The Code and had a \$4 million deficit. Councils SRV submission is based on this deficit and is misleading. Further, as the second half of the current 35% SRV is yet to be reported on, the below results can only improve.

6. A review of Snowy Valley Council financial records, as of 2023 financial year, shows.
  - 6.1. Cash has increased by \$13 million since amalgamation. Cash at amalgamation was \$31 million, cash at 30 June 2023 was \$44 million. The question is how much cash belongs to General Fund (GF). The below information places doubt on the financial information at the Fund level and shows a potential \$17 million missing from GF accounts.
  - 6.2. GF operating surplus is an average \$5.5 million per year, this number is doubtful due to the potential \$17 million internal income missing from GF in SVC's reports by Fund. In SVC's 2017 financial statements at Note D, GF equity reconciliation is out by \$3.226 million. This \$3.226 million is the same imbalance for the cash flow reconciliation. As the two amounts offset each other it implies missing income in the income statement, supporting the assumption that "Cash" accounting was used to prepare Node D in 2017 financial statements.
  - 6.3. GF capital replacement is sitting at 164% of depreciation. The additional overspend is \$18 million with other asset classes underspent by \$3 million. Yes, there is additional asset replacement due to Merger Funding, Disaster Funding and COVID Funding. This means asset replacement should slow down over the short financial horizon, also reducing the need for an SRV as Council should not need as much Funding for asset replacement.
  - 6.4. SVC's own source of income ratio is an average 59%, only 1% below the 60% benchmark. GF's average own source of income is 53%, however increase to 55% after adjusting for potential missing income. This own source of income ratio is distorted by the increased capital income from Merger Funding, Disaster Funding and COVID Funding.
  - 6.5. GF operating performance is an average negative 11%, benchmark is 0%. After adjusting for potential missing income, this benchmark reduces to negative 4%.
7. In other words, SVC is not behind with its asset replacement, has good cash reserves and is close to par for the benchmark "own source of income". The above indicates it is overspending on asset replacement, at the same time its cash is increasing, these are not signs of a Council in need of an SRV.
8. The underlying issue is SVC has used "Cash accounting" principles to prepare its LTFP. What is "Cash accounting" v "Accrual accounting"? I call "Cash accounting" the practice of excluding internal transaction between Funds or using GF as a balancing Fund when preparing reports at the Fund level. "Accrual accounting", on the other hand, is the practice of treating each Fund as a Subsidiary Business of Council and including transactions between these Subsidiary Businesses. Accrual accounting is supported by the commentary in Note D of the financial statements, which states: *"All amounts disclosed in this note are gross i.e. inclusive of internal charges and recoveries made between the Funds"*.
9. SVC is one of the 79 (92%) Multi Fund Councils that have used cash accounting principles to prepare their Note D and LTFP. The impact, of practicing cash accounting, is net income received by GF is missing from the reports and a cross subsidisation between Funds is occurring. The variation between my version of SVC's 2023-24 Budget, prepared on an accrual basis, and the published version, prepared on a cash basis, is a \$4 million deficit.

10. I have applied three tests to SVC’s GF results, as reported in Note D, and all failed, indicating incorrect reporting.

- 10.1. Cash V Accrual test,
- 10.2. Equity movements test, and
- 10.3. Cash flow reconciliation test.

11. Test 10.1, Cash V Accrual.

11.1. A simple test can be performed to identify the basis of preparation. You add the total income from Note D in the financial statements, or Funds in the Budget/LTFP, and compare the result to the total income in the consolidated income. The sum of Funds must be greater than the consolidated accounts as transaction between Funds are removed in the consolidated report. If the two values equal, then “Cash” accounting was used to prepare the annual Statements or Budget/LTFP resulting in missing revenue in the GF. Following is SCV’s cash v accrual test.

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2017 Actual</b>	<b>2018 Actual</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>2020 Actual</b>	<b>2021 Actual</b>	<b>2022 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>
General Fund	61,603	42,444	46,512	53,997	66,131	62,747	77,070
Water Fund	5,116	4,671	4,935	4,100	5,026	5,247	9,283
Sewer Fund	4,852	4,554	5,340	4,618	5,542	5,559	5,733
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>71,571</b>	<b>51,669</b>	<b>56,787</b>	<b>62,715</b>	<b>76,699</b>	<b>73,553</b>	<b>92,086</b>
Consolidated	71,571	51,669	56,787	62,715	76,699	73,553	92,086
Variation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b><i>Total funds must be greater than Consolidated</i></b>							

11.2. The above variation is all zeros indicating missing information at the Fund level. A review of SVC’s Budget/LTFP reveals the basis of preparation is also “Cash accounting” and has potential missing income and expense.

11.3. One example of missing income and expense is Rate income. Both WF and SW own land and pay rates to GF. The rate income should be reported in GF and expense in WF and SF but eliminated in the consolidated report. As the above total income variation in zero confirms the internal rates have not been included in the above GF income.

12. Test 10.2 – Equity movements test

12.1. The following table is the SVC’s equity movements reconciliation for the GF from public reported information (Note D). It shows a consistent imbalance in the equity reconciliation between \$1.4 million and \$3.2 million each year, total variation \$19 million. The below imbalance suggests missing income from net operating result.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	GF	GF	GF	GF	GF	GF	GF
General Fund	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
<b>Total other Comprehensive Income</b>	<b>11,623</b>	<b>1,959</b>	<b>3,462</b>	<b>64,644</b>	<b>16,263</b>	<b>70,927</b>	<b>52,320</b>
Accumulated surplus	482,283	480,859	483,564	473,504	479,534	486,543	495,058
Revaluation Reserve	638	4,056	4,759	64,305	74,002	137,185	180,484
<b>Reported Equity</b>	<b>482,921</b>	<b>484,915</b>	<b>488,323</b>	<b>537,809</b>	<b>553,536</b>	<b>623,728</b>	<b>675,542</b>
Equity Reconciliation							
Opening Equity	468,072	479,695	481,654	485,116	534,566	550,829	621,756
Adoption of AASB 15/1058				(15,194)			
Net result for the year	10,985	(1,459)	2,670	5,098	5,995	6,977	8,477
Gain (Loss) on revaluation	638	3,418	792	59,546	10,268	63,950	43,843
Closing Equity	468,072	<b>479,695</b>	<b>481,654</b>	<b>485,116</b>	<b>534,566</b>	<b>621,756</b>	<b>674,076</b>
Variation		3,226	3,261	3,207	3,243	2,707	1,466
<b>Total Variation</b>							<b>19,082</b>

13. Test 10.3 – Cash flow reconciliation test

13.1. This next table is the SVC’s cashflow reconciliation for the GF from public reported information. This example shows GF cash has decreased by \$1.534 million since amalgamation. The cash movement cannot be relied on as there is a potential \$19 million imbalance in equity movements reconciliation above, indicating missing revenue in GF.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	GF	GF	GF	GF	GF	GF	GF
General Fund	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
<b>Change in Operating Assets and Liabilities</b>							
Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables	4,543	180	(1,471)	(611)	(4,187)	1,917	149
Decrease/(Increase) in Inventories	219	286	86	52	44	47	(6)
Decrease/(Increase) in Other Assets	165	(124)	121	43	(335)	(165)	(78)
Decrease/(Increase) in Investment Assets	0	72	(340)	0	0	(51)	41
Decrease/(Increase) in Fixed Assets	(153)	(5,729)	(2,987)	(67,566)	(19,017)	(74,204)	(51,730)
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	(2,414)	215	266	(266)	1,472	1,506	(308)
Increase/(Decrease) in other provisions	541	(755)	690	789	506	168	511
Increase/(Decrease) in Borrowings	(355)	(415)	(451)	(45)	200	(368)	(255)
Increase/(Decrease) in Contract Liability	0	0	429	8,783	(583)	5,075	(3,151)
<b>NET CASH FLOW FROM ALL ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>14,169</b>	<b>(4,311)</b>	<b>(195)</b>	<b>(9,371)</b>	<b>(5,637)</b>	<b>4,852</b>	<b>(2,507)</b>
Opening Cash	22,990	40,385	36,109	35,860	26,525	20,352	24,469
Closing Cash	40,385	36,109	35,860	26,525	20,352	24,469	21,456
<b>Increase/(Decrease) in Cash</b>	<b>17,395</b>	<b>(4,276)</b>	<b>(249)</b>	<b>(9,335)</b>	<b>(6,173)</b>	<b>4,117</b>	<b>(3,013)</b>
Cash Movement to Cash & Cash Equivlent	(3,226)	(35)	54	(36)	536	735	506
<b>Total Variation</b>							<b>(1,466)</b>

13.2. Combining the Equity imbalance and the Cash flow imbalance there is a potential \$17 million missing from GF.

13.3. The above demonstrates the importance of having GF reports and Budget/LTFPs audited before any SRV is considered.

14. A reconstruction of SVC's GF statement, assuming the imbalance is net missing income, changes GF's cash position from \$21.45 million to \$39.11 million on 30 June 2023.

General Fund	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	GPFS SVC	GPFS Actual	GPFS Actual	GPFS Actual	GPFS Actual	GPFS Actual	GPFS Actual	GPFS Actual
<b>Net Equity</b>								
Accumulated surplus		482,283	480,859	483,564	473,504	479,534	486,543	495,058
Revaluation Reserve		638	4,056	4,759	64,305	74,002	137,185	180,484
	<b>468,072</b>	<b>482,921</b>	<b>484,915</b>	<b>488,323</b>	<b>537,809</b>	<b>553,536</b>	<b>623,728</b>	<b>675,542</b>
<b>Equity Reconciliation</b>								
Opening Equity		468,072	479,695	481,654	485,116	534,566	550,829	621,756
Adoption of AASB 15/1058		0	0	0	(15,194)	0	0	0
Net result for the year	<b>38,743</b>	10,985	(1,459)	2,670	5,098	5,995	6,977	8,477
Gain (Loss) on revaluation		638	3,418	792	59,546	10,268	63,950	43,843
		<b>479,695</b>	<b>481,654</b>	<b>485,116</b>	<b>534,566</b>	<b>550,829</b>	<b>621,756</b>	<b>674,076</b>
<i>Potential Missing revenue</i>		<i>3,226</i>	<i>3,261</i>	<i>3,207</i>	<i>3,243</i>	<i>2,707</i>	<i>1,972</i>	<i>1,466</i>
<i>Adjusted income</i>		<i>482,921</i>	<i>484,915</i>	<i>488,323</i>	<i>537,809</i>	<i>553,536</i>	<i>623,728</i>	<i>675,542</i>
Variation		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adoption of AASB 15/1058		0	0	0	(15,194)	0	0	0
<b>Reconciliation of result to Net Cash</b>								
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year		11,623	1,959	3,462	64,644	16,263	70,927	52,320
Adoption of AASB 15/1058					(15,194)			
<i>Potential Missing revenue</i>		<i>3,226</i>	<i>3,261</i>	<i>3,207</i>	<i>3,243</i>	<i>2,707</i>	<i>1,972</i>	<i>1,466</i>
<i>Adjusted Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</i>		<i>14,849</i>	<i>5,220</i>	<i>6,669</i>	<i>52,693</i>	<i>18,970</i>	<i>72,899</i>	<i>53,786</i>
<b>Change in Operating Assets and Liabilities</b>								
Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables		4,543	180	(1,471)	(611)	(4,187)	1,917	149
Decrease/(Increase) in Inventories		219	286	86	52	44	47	(6)
Decrease/(Increase) in Other Assets		165	(124)	121	43	(335)	(165)	(78)
Decrease/(Increase) in Investment Assets		0	72	(340)	0	0	(51)	41
Decrease/(Increase) in Fixed Assets		(153)	(5,729)	(2,987)	(67,566)	(19,017)	(74,204)	(51,730)
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables		(2,414)	215	266	(266)	1,472	1,506	(308)
Increase/(Decrease) in other provisions		541	(755)	690	789	506	206	511
Increase/(Decrease) in Borrowings		(355)	(415)	(451)	(45)	200	(368)	(255)
Increase/(Decrease) in Contract Liability		0	0	429	8,783	(583)	5,075	(3,151)
<b>NET CASH FLOW FROM ALL ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>17,395</b>	<b>(1,050)</b>	<b>3,012</b>	<b>(6,128)</b>	<b>(2,930)</b>	<b>6,862</b>	<b>(1,041)</b>
Adjusted Opening Cash	0	22,990	40,385	39,335	42,347	36,219	33,289	40,151
Closing Cash	22,990	40,385	36,109	35,860	26,525	20,352	24,469	21,458
<i>Adjustment to Cash at bank</i>			<i>3,226</i>	<i>6,487</i>	<i>9,694</i>	<i>12,937</i>	<i>15,682</i>	<i>17,652</i>
<b>New Closing Cash</b>		<b>40,385</b>	<b>39,335</b>	<b>42,347</b>	<b>36,219</b>	<b>33,289</b>	<b>40,151</b>	<b>39,110</b>
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash	22,990	17,395	(1,050)	3,012	(6,128)	(2,930)	6,862	(1,041)
Cash Movement to Cash & Cash Equivlent		0	0	0	0	0	0	0

14.1. I have made several assumptions in the above table and a full reconstruction of the raw data is required to ensure accurate information is reported.



15. The following two reports contrast the difference between Cash accounting and Accrual accounting.

15.1. SVC has all zeros in the variation column, confirming no internal transaction have been included and cash accounting has been used.

SVC 2022	GF	WF	SF	Total Subsidiary Business		Variation
				(Funds)	Consolidated	
Rates & annual charges	11,972	1,615	4,413	18,000	18,000	0
User charges & fees	15,224	3,297	786	19,307	19,307	0
Interest & investment revenue	239	33	44	316	316	0
Other Revenues	5,594	38	67	5,699	5,699	0
Grants & contributions - Operating	15,074		11	15,085	15,085	0
Grants & contributions - Capital	13,247	264	238	13,749	13,749	0
Other income	1,397			1,397	1,397	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>62,747</b>	<b>5,247</b>	<b>5,559</b>	<b>73,553</b>	<b>73,553</b>	<b>0</b>
Employee Benefits	18,839	921	1,063	20,823	20,823	0
Materials & contracts	24,791	1,699	1,600	28,090	28,090	0
Borrowing costs	106	173	119	398	398	0
Depreciation & amortisation	8,851	16,159	1,508	26,518	26,518	0
Other expenses	614	289	206	1,109	1,109	0
Net loss from disposal of assets	2,569	(5)	18	2,582	2,582	0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>55,770</b>	<b>19,236</b>	<b>4,514</b>	<b>79,520</b>	<b>79,520</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Operating result</b>	<b>6,977</b>	<b>(13,989)</b>	<b>1,045</b>	<b>(5,967)</b>	<b>(5,967)</b>	<b>0</b>

15.2. Whereas Clarence Valley Council has offsetting income and expense values in the variation column, indicating internal transaction have been included in the subsidiary business and accrual accounting has been used.

Clarence Valley Council 2022	GF	WF	SF	Total Subsidiary Business		Variation
				(Funds)	Consolidated	
Rates & annual charges	48,762	3,039	19,421	71,222	68,736	2,486
User charges & fees	19,865	13,964	2,518	36,347	35,380	967
Interest & investment revenue	815	652	321	1,788	1,788	0
Other Revenues	1,374	2,420	2,332	6,126	1,500	4,626
Grants & contributions - Operating	35,866		380	36,246	36,246	0
Grants & contributions - Capital	30,704	6,687	2,082	39,473	39,473	0
Other income	687			687	687	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>138,073</b>	<b>26,762</b>	<b>27,054</b>	<b>191,889</b>	<b>183,810</b>	<b>8,079</b>
Employee Benefits	34,130	1,431	1,492	37,053	37,053	0
Materials & contracts	42,558	5,999	6,316	54,873	46,794	8,079
Borrowing costs	1,315	1,484	3,619	6,418	6,418	0
Depreciation & amortisation	32,932	7,171	8,648	48,751	48,751	0
Other expenses	5,098	3		5,101	5,101	0
Net loss from disposal of assets	12,128	1,285	281	13,694	13,694	0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>128,161</b>	<b>17,373</b>	<b>20,356</b>	<b>165,890</b>	<b>157,811</b>	<b>8,079</b>
<b>Net Operating result</b>	<b>9,912</b>	<b>9,389</b>	<b>6,698</b>	<b>25,999</b>	<b>25,999</b>	<b>0</b>

15.3. Further evidence that SVC's Budget/LTFP is incorrect is my version, accrual accounting, of the 2023-24 Budget was close to balanced. The published LTFP version, prepared on a cash accounting basis, had a deficit of \$4 million. Comparing Clarence Valley's report above to SVC you can see Clarence Valley total income is approximately double that of SVC. The variation between the Funds and consolidated is \$8 million. 50% of \$8 million is \$4 million, which happens to be the SVC's GF cash Budget/LTFP deficit result. If the missing revenue is included in SVC LTFP, the variation would \$4 million.

16. A more informative indicator would be “Surplus to Capital additions” benchmark.

16.1. This benchmark would state “on a ten-year average, operating result before comprehensive income, less depreciation, less loss/gain on disposal, and less revaluation decrement / impairment of IPP&E, be greater than capital additions”.

16.2. Using Snowy Valley Council’s seven years of data since amalgamation the report would look like this. This report shows Council is generating enough surplus to cover asset additions, future losses, and loan repayments by an average of \$3.56 million per year.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	GPFS	GPFS	GPFS	GPFS	GPFS	GPFS	GPFS
<b>Consolidated</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Capital Funding</b>							
<b>Net Operating Result</b>	<b>9,051</b>	<b>(2,671)</b>	<b>3,209</b>	<b>4,031</b>	<b>6,760</b>	<b>(5,967)</b>	<b>14,766</b>
Add back Depreciation	12,324	10,541	11,603	11,704	11,172	26,518	11,949
Add back Gain Loss on disposal	2,271	1,084	2,541	2,028	2,305	2,582	3,685
Add back Revaluation decrement / impairment of IPP&E	0	4,046	0	0	14,811	0	0
Less Reversal revaluation decrements	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,219
<b>Total Available for Assets Additions</b>	<b>23,646</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>17,353</b>	<b>17,763</b>	<b>35,048</b>	<b>23,133</b>	<b>26,181</b>
Asset additions	12,435	14,249	15,153	19,674	21,284	23,773	24,634
<b>Yearly Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>11,211</b>	<b>(1,249)</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>(1,911)</b>	<b>13,764</b>	<b>(640)</b>	<b>1,547</b>
<i>Total 7 year Surplus (Deficit)</i>	24,922						
<i>Average 7 year Surplus (Deficit)</i>	3,560						
<i>Average Net Operating Income</i>	4,168						

16.3. The above benchmark is based on how listed companies use their surplus. That is, surplus after tax is used in one of five ways.

16.3.1. Pay Dividends,

16.3.2. Buy back shares,

16.3.3. Retain for future losses,

16.3.4. Asset replacement, or

16.3.5. Business expansion,

16.4. As LG does not have shareholders or pay dividends, the surplus is all about asset replacement or expansion. Therefore, the “Surplus to Capital additions” benchmark would be more informative and useful when assessing SRV applications.

16.5. In SVC GF case, surplus to capital additions is a total \$5.2 million, seven-year average \$753K. Given the second half of the 35% SRV is yet to be reported, the below should improve further.

	2017 GF Actual	2018 GF Actual	2019 GF Actual	2020 GF Actual	2021 GF Actual	2022 GF Actual	2023 GF Actual
<b>General Fund</b>							
<b>Capital Funding</b>							
<b>Net Operating Result</b>	10,985	(1,459)	2,670	5,098	5,995	6,977	8,477
Add back Depreciation	9,163	8,292	8,885	8,893	8,211	8,851	9,760
Add back Gain Loss on disposal	2,168	1,084	2,541	1,887	2,284	2,569	3,575
Add back Revaluation decrement / impairment of IPP&E	0	4,046	0	0	14,811	0	0
Less Reversal revaluation decrements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Available for Assets Additions</b>	<b>22,316</b>	<b>11,963</b>	<b>14,096</b>	<b>15,878</b>	<b>31,301</b>	<b>18,397</b>	<b>21,812</b>
Asset additions	11,727	14,249	15,153	19,674	21,284	23,773	24,634
Yearly Surplus (Deficit)	<b>10,589</b>	<b>(2,286)</b>	<b>(1,057)</b>	<b>(3,796)</b>	<b>10,017</b>	<b>(5,376)</b>	<b>(2,822)</b>
<i>Total 7 year Surplus (Deficit)</i>	5,269						
<i>Average 7 year Surplus (Deficit)</i>	753						
<i>Average Net Operating Income</i>	5,535						

16.6. Again, the above information is unreliable as Note D does not reconcile and there is potential missing income from the above report. After adding in potential net missing income, SVC's "Surplus to Capital additions" would be a total \$24 million as per below.

	2017 GF Actual	2018 GF Actual	2019 GF Actual	2020 GF Actual	2021 GF Actual	2022 GF Actual	2023 GF Actual
<b>General Fund</b>							
<b>Capital Funding</b>							
<b>Net Operating Result</b>	10,985	(1,459)	2,670	5,098	5,995	6,977	8,477
Add back Depreciation	9,163	8,292	8,885	8,893	8,211	8,851	9,760
Add back Gain Loss on disposal	2,168	1,084	2,541	1,887	2,284	2,569	3,575
Add back Revaluation decrement / impairment of IPP&E	0	4,046	0	0	14,811	0	0
Less Reversal revaluation decrements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Potential missing net income</b>	<b>3,226</b>	<b>3,261</b>	<b>3,207</b>	<b>3,243</b>	<b>2,707</b>	<b>1,972</b>	<b>1,466</b>
<b>Total Available for Assets Additions</b>	<b>25,542</b>	<b>15,224</b>	<b>17,303</b>	<b>19,121</b>	<b>34,008</b>	<b>20,369</b>	<b>23,278</b>
Asset additions	11,727	14,249	15,153	19,674	21,284	23,773	24,634
Yearly Surplus (Deficit)	<b>13,815</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>2,150</b>	<b>(553)</b>	<b>12,724</b>	<b>(3,404)</b>	<b>(1,356)</b>
<i>Total 7 year Surplus (Deficit)</i>	24,351						
<i>Average 7 year Surplus (Deficit)</i>	3,479						
<i>Average Net Operating Income</i>	5,535						

17. If this Council was in financial trouble requiring an SRV, then the seven-year surplus would be showing a (Deficit), cash would be going down and asset replacement would be less than 100%.
18. I feel the above information is sufficient to force an audit on SVC Budget/LTFP and reject the SRV application.
19. Before any application for an SRV can be considered, Councils needs to restate Node D, for all seven years of Councils operation to establish the true financial position of GF. Only then can Council produce an accurate LTFP. Restating the GF Equity, using the above publicly available information, GF has a potential cash surplus of \$16 million.

Regards  
Robert Brown CPA.

Author name: R. Coutts

Date of submission: Tuesday, 27 February 2024

Please write your submission below:

27 February 2024 Planned Special Rate Variation (SRV) I strongly oppose Snowy Valleys Councils application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval of an SRV to be imposed on rate payers such as myself. The Council has already implemented a hefty 35.95% SRV over two years (2022/23 to 2023/24) with the aim of increasing the long-term financial sustainability of the Council and addressing ongoing deficits. (Snowy Valleys Council, Special Rate Variation, Frequently Asked Questions 25/11/23) This rate hike was a heavy burden for rate payers, particularly farmers, whose rates make up 40 % of Councils revenue. Rates based on the value of our farmland have already risen dramatically, regardless of any SRV; this is due in part to the inflated prices which have been paid for Upper Murray properties in recent years. Our own rates have more than doubled since 2019. Having already absorbed one 35.95% SRV I cannot afford another, nor should I have to. In November 2023, rate payers were advised that: Council is investigating two options. the first would see a 39.24% increase in rates over two years and the second would see a 42.38% over three years. However, in the same letter we were given the following information: Another SRV alone will not be sufficient to ensure Councils financial sustainability. The few additional cost cutting measures which were considered as a means of achieving financial sustainability were neither sensible nor convincing. It is disgraceful to expect rate payers, especially farmers, to find more money for rates when, by Councils own admission, this will not fix the problem. As a beef farmer, I have already suffered a crippling loss of income caused by the recent drastic slump in prices for our stock, and I do not have off farm employment. The Council cites rising costs and inflation as one of the reasons for its huge deficit (currently around \$7 million) which has risen steadily since 2016 when the Tumbarumba and Tumut Shire Councils were merged despite fierce opposition from rate payers. Farmers also, of course, have suffered from these rising costs, yet Council wants to impose an even heavier financial burden on them. An FAQ document was circulated, which contained this question: What will happen if a special rate variation is not implemented? The answer was: Council will be financially unsustainable with intervention from state government highly likely. Yes please. Yours sincerely Robyn Dixie Coutts

Author name: T. a'Beckett

Date of submission: Monday, 11 March 2024

Please write your submission below:

I strongly oppose the granting of any rate increase via an SRV to SVC. In the southern part of the Shire (former Tumbarumba Shire area) we have suffered an increase in rates due to harmonisation with the northern area (former Tumut Shire) in addition to the SRV granted in 2022. The effect of another SRV will result in a massive increase of close to 100% in rates over five years. With beef and sheep prices retreating to lower levels and costs inexorably increasing this makes for a grim outlook for those of us involved in the rural sector. SVC needs to be held to account for pain that it is inflicting on its hapless rural ratepayers.



Author name: M. Anderson

Date of submission: Monday, 18 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

Dear IPART, I'm a farmer and currently the President of the Tumbarumba Chamber of Commerce and I would like to convey the sentiments of farmers and businesses in our district, particularly in the Southern end of Snowy Valleys Council. In previous years before Tumbarumba was forced to merge with Tumut, our rates were an average annual cost that we put in our budget and accepted along with other expenses, however that has changed considerably in the past few years and our rates are now one of our highest expenses in our farming enterprise. I know personally over the past five years our rates have increased 260% and if you IPART, are to rubber stamp the next proposed SRV of 42.38% that will be a 370% increase, who the hell else gets away with increasing an expense 370% over 5 years, or 3 times what our rates were in 2021. What do you think our chances are of passing this cost onto our buying entities such as Coles and Woolworths for our commodities, we would be laughed at. This is of no comfort when our commodity prices are currently at their lowest point for quite some time, our running expenses have gone through the roof and we are now going without things that we deem NOT essential. Heaven forbids if we go into a drought over the next few years and are forced to buy in fodder for our stock, then my guess is some farmers will be borrowing money to pay their rates. Im not going to pretend I understand how the Valuer General values land parcels, however from what I understand our land valuations in the old Tumbarumba Shire have increased significantly by using land sales from productive river flats, which has no similarity to a great deal of land in our area. Further to this, it is no secret that farmers to the north of us i.e. The old Tumut Shire are enjoying very little or no increases at all. Therefore, us farmers in the Southern area of SVC feel like we are subsidising the short comings of (a) the State Govt for merging our shires and instead of being in a much better financial position due to economies of scale as predicted by our politicians, we are now the polar opposites and (b) the poor management of funds by our council over the years since merging, particularly large ticket items that we will likely never use. When SVC came to us a couple of years ago asking for a SRV of 35.95% and IPART approved, we were under the understanding that it was to ensure long-term financial sustainability however, here we are again two years later asking for an even larger amount of 42.38%, what will it be in the next couple of years, a further 60% SRV?? I think it time for ACCOUNTABILITY from both Snowy Valleys Council and IPART and would like you to consider very carefully the impact you are placing on farmers, businesses and our community in general with another Special Rate Variation. Kind Regards, Maria Anderson President Tumbarumba Chamber of Commerce

Author name: C. Webb

Date of submission: Tuesday, 19 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION TO IPART Feedback on Snowy Valleys Councils application to IPART for a Special Variation of 42.38% over 3 years, annual increases of 12.5% in each of the following years 2024-25, 2025-26, 2026-27. 1. Demonstrate the need for the additional income Tumut Community Association is opposed to Snowy Valleys Councils (SVC) 2024 Special Rare Variation application as we are not confident that council has explored every option for savings and income generation prior to requesting increased funding from ratepayers. It is unfair to ask ratepayers to subsidise perceived mismanagement of council, they need to learn to live within means. IPARTS Media Release 10th May 2022 stated that Snowy Valleys Councils (SVC) special variation will allow it to improve its long-term financial sustainability. Tumut Community Association is concerned that financial information used by SVC to prepare the 2022 SRV and current SRV applications may be inaccurate. Improved financial sustainability has not occurred resulting in this new SRV application. We are concerned that SVC's finances seem to be in disarray, unless this is reigned in there will be ongoing SRVs. With planning and modelling there should be buffers in place to absorb difficulties and shocks. Tumut Community Association would like to see a comprehensive review of Snowy Valleys Council to identify and fix issues. It is concerning that SVC has not told the community about planned specific use for additional income, action taken to reduce expenditure, increase income for example through increasing the rate pool and increasing industry. They have provided 5 general uses for the additional income. We are not aware of work and community consultations following approval of previous SRV which should have commenced immediately to identify possible savings and income generation opportunities to prevent need for further SRVs. Ideas for savings include ceasing all travel to meetings and conferences, using internet and video conferencing facilities resulting in savings on travel, accommodation, meals, possible reduction in fleet, cost of insurance, increased productive time. Review and streamline policies, procedures and processes to reduce councils administration time, for convenience of community for example subdivision and planning policies. Stop using consultants, use expertise of council staff. Benchmark against other industry. Numerous examples too many to mention here. Tumut Community Association held a community meeting by zoom and phone on 14th March 2024. [REDACTED] provided information about possible anomalies in accounting procedures. The following resolution was passed Owing to the impactful but as-yet untested explanation by [REDACTED] of SVC's incorrect accounting procedures, I move that a public meeting be held to allow SVC & [REDACTED] to discuss their differences of opinion.

2. Provide evidence that the community is aware of the need for and extent of a rate rise Tumut Community Association is not aware of any video or teleconferencing sessions. The information was not provided with emailed rates notices. Sessions and information provided appeared to a present councils case for SRV as though the decision had been made rather than community consultation to gain ideas and concerns.

3. Establish that the impact on affected ratepayers is reasonable Following approval of 2022-23, 2023-24 SRV Tumut Community Association wrote to council in May and July 2022 with concerns about impact on individuals and community and unaffordability. The Socioeconomic Index for SVC area (SEIFA) ranges from 16% to 37% with an average of 26%, most advantaged rate is 100%. According to ABS 56.3% people over 15 have a job compared to 58.7% in NSW, median weekly household earnings \$1,306 compared to \$1,829 for NSW, 22.3% of population earning less than \$650 per week compared to 16.3% for NSW and 23.1% over 65 compared to 17% for NSW. Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of NSW in an article published 15th November 2023 wrote about increased pressure on households and business struggling to pay bills, concerned that concessions for pensioners do not automatically increase in line with rates. This concession is not indexed in line with CPI and has not changed since it was introduced in 1993. For one pensioner under this SRV rates will rise by over \$300 for first 2 years and over \$400 3rd year to \$3,322 combined increased of \$1,397. Benefit of rate rebate lost in the first quarter of 2023-2024, the second year of the previous SRV. Pensions will rise by 1.96%, \$40 this year.. Tumut Community Association is concerned about impact on farmers and businesses. They could be paying thousands of dollars above their current rate amounts.

Mayor, Councillors, General Manager  
Snowy Valleys Council



16<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**RE: Tumut Community Association Response to Special Rate Variation**

Dear Mr Chaffey, Mr Hyde and Councillors,

Tumut Community Association is concerned about the impact of the Special Rate Variation on the Snowy Valleys Council rate payers and the unaffordability of the proposed rate rise.

Our council region has significant social disadvantage as rated on the Socioeconomic Index for area (SEIFA) in comparison to other regions across Australia. Added to this we are still recovering from the lasting effects of the previous drought, 2019/2020 bush fires, Covid 19 pandemic, downturn in the economy, rising costs and there will be no increase in the aged pension this year. As 29% of our population is over 65 this increases the hardship for our region.

Tumut Community Association is concerned about the negativity of the information provided to the community in the Integrated Planning and Reporting Community Update. The document included an extensive list of services which would be cut or reduced if the rate rise was not implemented. It did not provide information about what the council could do to increase revenue and save money. We have not seen information showing the reasons for the council's debt and for requesting this rate variation. The document does not clearly state the proposed use of this increased funding. It appears that it will be used for the usual running costs of the council and the largest portion allocated to buildings and economic development. Wages have gone up by just over 2% and the CPI and cost of living by just over 5% not 15.7% the amount proposed for 2022/2023 and 17.5% for 2023/2024 or the full rise of 39.5%. We would like to know what buildings are planned and how will the money be used for economic development?

Tumut community Association is requesting that prior to imposing any rate increase the council shows that they have taken action to reduce expenditure through ceasing the use of consultants, reducing travel expenses, in the place of this travel use available technology for all meetings and conferences and through other cost saving measures which don't impact services. As well we request that they show us that council are taking action to increase our population and therefore the rate pool and expand our industry.

In the interest of improved communication and consultation for the residents of the Snowy Valleys Council region Tumut Community Association is requesting that confidentiality be removed from all council business including all meetings with the exception of personal details of council staff, councillors and others so that our councillors can consult with the community about impending matters and gain advice and so that the community gains a better understanding about council business.

We are looking forward to receiving a response from the council about the concerns and questions raised above.

Yours Sincerely



Christine Webb, President/Secretary

**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

<b>Meeting Arrangements</b>			
<b>Date:</b> 26/05/2022	<b>Time:</b> 7pm	<b>Time commenced:</b> 7pm	<b>Time finished:</b> 8:30pm
<b>Chairperson:</b> Christine Webb	<b>Secretary:</b> Christine Webb	<b>Venue:</b> Zoom	<b>Joining by:</b> Zoom, Phone (Ph)
<b>Next meeting:</b>	<b>Date:</b> 28/07/2022	<b>Time:</b> 7pm	<b>Venue:</b> By zoom and phone

<b>No</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	
1	Attendance	[REDACTED]
2.	Apologies	[REDACTED]
3.	Confirmation of previous minutes	Minutes for 28/10/2021 [REDACTED] moved that minutes were read and accepted
		Minutes for 2/12/2021 [REDACTED] moved that minutes were read and accepted
		Minutes for 28/04/2022 [REDACTED] moved that minutes were read and accepted, Geoff Pritchard seconded minutes.



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.1	Snowy Hydro 2.0	<p><b>29/62017</b> - TCA supports Snowy Hydro 2.0.  <b>13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018 21/06/2018, 20/09/2018, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019, 18/07/2019</b> – opportunities for region: employment, business, enormous power generation upgrade, solar, wind farm, donation to community, Tumut airport upgrade, engaging private paramedic, telecommunications along Snowy Mountains highway, accommodation onsite, transport to be provided for safety. <b>23/09/2021</b> Large number of staff employed. <b>28/04/2022</b> Discussion about difficulty getting tradespeople for work in Tumut due to their Snowy Hydro commitments.</p>	Not discussed		
4.2	Health, Aged Care, Disability	<p><b>Health Services</b>  <b>29/6/2017</b> – Requested support for improved medical and nursing coverage. <b>17/08/2017, 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018, 15/11/2018 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019, 29/07/2021</b> Concerns lack of doctors, need hospital on-call, anaesthetist, emergency physician, surgeons, obstetricians, allied health, lack of routine procedures, post-operative care as surgeons return to Wagga, increased transfers to Wagga, lack of accommodation for families of patients in Wagga,  <b>Action: 18/07/2019, 19/09/2019, 21/11/2019</b> – Campaign for anaesthetist and emergency physician, online and NSW parliament paper petitions, <b>30/10/2019</b> rally, <b>29/04/2021</b> additional petition signatures including Wagga specialist doctors, <b>27/05/2021</b> Guest speaker - concerns about birthing safety and care at Tumut hospital, community health, Wagga Base Hospital, lack of accommodation for WWBH patients' families. Need pool of anaesthetists and emergency physicians. <b>Action: extensive media coverage, letter to MLHD CE about lack of accommodation, contact Mick Vietch MP. 24/06/2021, 29/07/2021, 26/08/2021</b> Discussed with Kristy McBain MP about Tumut Hospital not meeting Australian College of Emergency Medicine ED standard, national triage standard. College willing to support need, new health model to make Tumut subregional hospital. <b>Proposed action: gain support from councillors and others, provide research re need for doctors and new model, gain further petition signatures, discuss support needed with Dr McGirr, MP. 28/10/2021</b> Link provided for Rural Health Review, concern about hospital reduced bed numbers.</p>	<p><b>Health Services</b>  Discussion about the need to consider the report from the NSW Review into Rural Health Care. It was decided to place this on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting for discussion to prepare questions for the Minister for Rural Health, the Shadow Minister for Health, Dr McGirr and Kristy McBain MP and to prepare a response. It was decided to invite the above MPs to meet with us and to invite the community to attend these meetings.</p> <p><b>Aged Care</b>  Christine provided feedback about the fortnightly Aged Care Forums. A panel of speakers has shown interest and are attending regularly to provide information about their services including the Manager of MLHD Aged Care Assessment Teams, Service NSW and Snowy Valleys Council. The samelink and phone number is used for all forums  <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84393534725?pwd=N0M2MitqaDRsbEozQ0w0YnhIT1pQT09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84393534725?pwd=N0M2MitqaDRsbEozQ0w0YnhIT1pQT09</a> and use meeting ID 843 9353 4725 and passcode 715518. Community attendance has been low and Christine asked members to circulate the information.</p>		



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.2 (cont d)	Health, Aged Care, Disability (contd)	<p><b>2/12/2022</b> Dr McGirr provided an update on new hospital and services, continuing medical coverage difficulties, availability of telehealth. Concerns raised by TCA lack of medical coverage, inadequacy of telehealth for seriously ill and critically injured patients, increased workload for GPs on-call, patients' appointments delayed or cancelled, emergency department doesn't appear to meet national standards for level 3 designation. Dr McGirr agreed GPs don't wish to work in hospitals, believes it is not practical and wouldn't work for specialist doctors to be employed. Association suggested work for Anaesthetist and ED physician seeing inpatients, going out with paramedics, training medical, nursing, allied health students as supported by definition of emergency physician and national standards. <b>28/04/2022</b> Concern NSW Department of Rural Health could divert funding from employing doctors, nurses, allied health, community health staff. Invitation to Minister for Rural Health, Dr McGirr, Shadow Minister for Health Ryan Park to seek clarification and urgent action Tumut Hospital to employ an emergency physician and anaesthetist.</p> <p><b>Covid 19:</b> <i>Action request regular insertion of information in TA Times about availability of RATs, importance of wearing masks, vaccinations and help and request pharmacy provide advice and assistance with RATs.</i></p> <p><b>Asthma 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017 Action pending:</b> <i>Seek regional rates</i></p> <p><b>Aged Care 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 20/06/2019,</b> Concern about shortage of aged care packages, services' charges, poor outcomes e.g. falls, mental health issues, suicide rates, community transport cost, public housing. <b>Action:</b> <i>raised with Dr McGirr MP and Mike Kelly MP.</i></p> <p><b>29/04/2021</b> Issues raised by carer – services unhelpful, lack understanding about needs, benefits service more than clients, waiting list aged care packages.</p>			



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.2	Health, Aged Care, Disability (contd)	<p><b>24/06/2021, 29/07/2021, 26/08/2021</b> Discussion with Kristy McBain MP - community care, lack of packages, no regulation to ensure organisations managed by nurses and people with aged care qualifications, lack of training for aged care staff, review rate of nursing home admissions from individual community organisations, Kristy discussed workers' low pay, decline in course enrolments, increased population of seniors, need to implement Royal Commission recommendations. <b>29/04/2021, 27/05/2021, 29/07/2021, 28/10/2021 Action:</b> Subcommittee organise Senior's forum, invitations to Mr Colbeck Minister for Aged Care Services to open forum, Kristy McBain MP, Victoria Oakden Aged Care consultant, services for seniors, organise venue/format, hold forum early 2022. <b>24/02/2022</b> Commence fortnightly Aged Care Forums by phone and zoom include: Centrelink, Service NSW, Services Australia and My Aged Care information, Aged Care Packages, Mental Health, Dental health, eye health, advocacy services and Legal Aid information <b>Suicide Prevention 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 20/06/2019-</b> Concerns about untrained counsellors, disengagement of young people, lack of support <b>Action:</b> Lobby SVC, LMP, others for well-staffed youth drop-in centre, suicide prevention, detox unit. <b>Action pending:</b> motivational speaker Joe Williams.</p> <p>Disability 29/07/2021, 26/08/2021 Christine attending Disability Inclusion Advisory Group meetings, SVC survey re satisfaction and need for services to occur soon.</p> <p><b>Covid 19</b></p>			
4.3	Hume and Hovell walking track.	<p><b>29/06/2017 – Action:</b> lobby for sealed road from Batlow to Talbingo. <b>17/08/2017, 17/10/2017, 19/04/2018, 21/06/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019 – Action:</b> Request tourism committee track sub-committee, Visy truck signs promoting Tumut and track, SVC budget for blackberry eradication.. Maintenance by walking group, Mannus prisoners, \$435,000 for combined cycle/walking track around Blowering Dam, tracks in Kosciusko National Park, Tumbarumba end of the track. <b>Action:</b> Lobby for tree trails linking towns. <b>13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 20/09/2018, 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019, 18/07/2019 –</b> Bicentennial anniversary 2024 prep - web page, SVC Tourism Plan includes track, maintenance</p>	Discussion about the Wee Jasper to Tumut section of the track, the need for maintenance. Discussion about developing a camping ground at Michalong Creek.		



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.4	Amenities	<p><b>Pool 29/06/2017, 17/08/2017, 13/12/2017, 21/06/2018 – TCA supports indoor sports complex with 4 basketball courts, 25 metre and hydrotherapy pools</b></p> <p><b>Hydrotherapy - 29/06/2017, 17/08/2017, 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018, 21/06/2018 - Benefits for rehabilitation, community, business, funding and management partnerships, private pools in Canberra, Wagga supported by physiotherapists, Arthritis Association.</b></p> <p><b>Action: Lobby for pool. MLHD won't fund hydrotherapy.</b></p> <p><b>Parks 17/08/2017, 15/02/2018, 15/11/2018- Concerns about untidiness, trees dying, Stockwell Gardens, River Walk. Action: Raise with SVC GM, suggest work by people on Community Service Orders.</b></p> <p><b>Tumut Common – Mayor Hayes, Dr McGirr, premier's department met re environmental damage, development proposal, drones to patrol. TCA concerned about bushfires in this region.</b></p> <p><b>Cemetery 24/06/2021 action: letter to SVC requesting barrier along Currawong Street side to stop vehicles driving onto cemetery. SVC's Jenny Kelleher raised with council. 26/08/2021 council reviewing long term viability of current cemetery site.</b></p> <p><b>Toilets 29/07/2021 Concerns none in Pioneer Park, state of toilets near skate park. Action: Jenny Kelleher raised with SVC. 26/08/2021 Bull Paddock checked daily, new in few months, Rotary Pioneer Park- new amenities in two years 23/09/2021 M. Hyde confirmed Pioneer Park installation, Stockwell Gardens kept locked, for volunteers. Action: request pool toilets be made available. Lack of public toilets between Adelong and Wagga. Action Letter to Transport NSW, Dr Joe McGirr and Continence Foundation to update their map. 28/10/2021 Action: Contact council to find out if new facilities for driver reviver to be shared with trucks and note safety concerns. Lack of toilets between Adelong and Wagga to be raised with Dr McGirr. 2/12/2021 Discussed lack of toilets between Adelong and Wagga with Dr Joe McGirr. He is following up locating them at Borambola, Response from SVC General Manager - new Driver Reviver amenities at Bull Paddock for cars not trucks, further consultation about toilets at Rotary Pioneer Park to occur 11/12/2021. 28/04/2022 Action: Request update from SVC about Tumut toilets and from Dr McGirr about toilets at Borambola.</b></p>	<p>SVC Tracks and trails consultation discussed. ██████ proposed that TCA Inc submit a proposal for a walking track linking both ends of the Riverwalk to make a circular track around the town. Agreed Christine to prepare a submission.</p> <p>██████ raised a concern about the Privet along the Riverwalk. Christine to prepare a letter to council.</p> <p>Concerns raised again about public toilets. Those at Stockwell Park and the basketball courts remain closed and the Railway Precinct toilets are poorly maintained.</p> <p>Toilets between Adelong and Wagga discussed and agreed Christine to request update about progress.</p>	C Webb	As soon as possible



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.5	Youth matters.	29/06/2017, 17/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/11/2019 <b>Action:</b> Lobby SVC for drop-in centre at Boy's Club managed by service club, holistic focus, include youth worker, mental health program, discussion with Inspector Radford, SVC General Manager, Youth Officer, Aboriginal Liaison representative. 19/04/2018, 17/10/2017, 20/09/2018, 15/11/2018, 20/06/2019 <b>Action:</b> Letter to Dr McGirr re disadvantaged children, homeless people, lack of crisis accommodation, drug testing facilities, parenting programs. 13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 21/06/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019 <b>Action:</b> Lobby for financial and life skills training, support PCYC, Seventh Day Adventist programs, Blakeney Miller foundation for funding Joe Williams. 18/07/2019, 19/09/2019 proposed project for young people to clear area behind Banksia Crescent, concern girls may be excluded from projects.	Not discussed		
4.6	TCA Administration Membership Treasurer's report Promotion and Liaison	19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 18/07/2019 <b>Action:</b> Continue networking with other community groups and through FRRR project. 31/03/2021 Welcomed 6 new members, working through transition period, become more regionally focused. <b>Action:</b> Christine to conduct membership drive, increase by 10 to 15 by AGM. [REDACTED] will assist, invite organisations to join, press release to TA Times about new committee, promote TCA and membership. Treasurers Report tabled, bank balance \$225.20. 3 signatories for banking and documents agreed Public Officer, President, Treasurer. 29/04/2021, 27/05/2021 Concerns about community perception that TCA had folded. <b>Action:</b> raise association's profile, president to work on promotion and publicity. TA Times and Sounds of Mountains providing support, interviews with ABC radio and Wagga Daily Advertiser. 24/06/2021 <b>Action:</b> Christine attends SVC's Disability Inclusion Advisory Group (DIARG) meetings and raises concerns. 29/07/2021 Treasurer's report tabled, reminder membership fees due. 26/08/2021 September guest speakers Alli Mudford FRRR, Sam Archer Australian Rural Leadership Foundation. 23/09/2021 Proposed AGM and Christmas party December 2021. 28/10/2021 Advice from Public Officer that AGM could be delayed until February 2022 due to Covid restrictions. 24/02/2022 AGM rescheduled to 7pm on 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2022. 28/04/2022 <b>Action:</b> Develop plan for business and speakers.	Discussion about inviting Kristy McBain to a meeting to discuss priorities and ideas for advancing our region now as her new term as our local member has commenced. Christine to organise this meeting.		



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.7	Road Safety Issues	<p><b>Pedestrian and scooter safety</b>  <b>Snowy Mountains Highway Fiveways to skate park urgent need for footpath.</b> 29/06/2017, 19/10/2017, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019 – lobbied and on SVC works program. 27/05/2021 No footpath from Currawong Street to Bull Paddock, seniors, people with disability, others need to ride or walk on highway. <b>Action:</b> write to SVC to request footpath as soon as possible. 24/06/2021 raised at DIARG, SVC rep advised will register as SVC risk 26/08/2021 feedback from Councillor Cross costing is occurring. 29/01/2019. <b>Action:</b> need to raise public awareness of night time visibility of pedestrians.</p> <p><b>Batlow Road and Snowy Mountains Highway intersection</b> 21/06/2018 29/06/2017, 17/08/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 21/03/2019, 19/09/2019, 21/11/2019, 27/05/2021 – concerns changed road markings and 100km speed limit on Batlow Road don't reduce risk, increased risk for drivers unfamiliar with roads and conditions, noted GPA's proposed underpass <b>Action:</b> Letters and meetings with SVC Traffic Committee, Roads &amp; Maritime Services, Dr McGirr, requested 80km zones extended through intersection, move traffic island to make 90 degree approach from Batlow Road, request notice about need for caution and checking for obstructed view west of intersection prior to turning right onto Snowy Mountains Highway. 23/09/2021 Noted Batlow Road and Snowy Mountains Highway intersection had 1.4 million dollars upgrade with no safety improvement. <b>Action:</b> TCA to follow up. 2/12/2021 Members and guests raised ongoing concerns with Dr McGirr that intersection appears to remain dangerous despite large amount of money spent on work. Underpass supported by TCA. <b>Action:</b> Dr McGirr offered to review works and amount spent. 28/04/2022 <b>Action:</b> Letter to Dr McGirr, Transport NSW and SVC request Led light 100 to 200 metres before intersection telling people to Slow Down and stop signs on Batlow Road</p>	<p>Discussion about the pedestrian path from Currawong Street to the Bull paddock and agreed Christine to seek update on progress. Discussion about dangers and risks of crossing Fitzroy Street/Snowy Mountains Highway for pedestrians, seniors using mobility scooters, wheelchairs and walking frames and Mothers with prams and toddlers. Agreed Christine to write to council to request safe crossings and pedestrian lights.</p> <p>█ raised a concern about the risk of using the Wynyard Street crossing especially for pedestrians with mobility problems and Mothers with young children. █ suggested that it be made safe and include a speed hump/raised crossing. Agreed Christine to write to council raising this concern.</p> <p>Discussion about the Batlow Road/Snowy Mountains Highway intersection. Agreed Christine to write to Transport NSW and SVC traffic committee to again raise our concerns about this dangerous intersection.</p>	C Webb	As soon as possible.



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.7 cont d	Road Safety Issues contd	<p><b>Gocup Road and Snowy Mountains Highway intersection</b> 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 15/11/2018, 21/03/2019, 18/07/2019, 19/09/2019, 21/11/2019 – Meetings with SVC General Manager, RMS reps - new road signs, changed road markings, planned traffic lights, improved pedestrian safety, discussed relocation of intersection to near saleyards. <b>Action:</b> letter to SVC requesting stop signs Gocup road and Capper Street entrances. Letter to RMS, Dr McGirr, Inspector Radford re progress of traffic lights. 27/5/2021 Follow up Tumut Highschool survey. 24/06/2021 <b>Action:</b> organise forum, invite Dr McGirr, police, Visy, transport businesses, Mick Vietch, Transport NSW, Media, TWU, other unions, Snowy Valleys Council. Wagga Daily Advertiser story interviews Groves Logging, Elliott's Landscapes, Dr McGirr. 29/07/2021 Kristy McBain suggested contacting Mick Vietch.. 23/09/2021 M Hyde advised Transport NSW submitted plans for \$15 million dollar 50 metre roundabout to commence early 2022. 28/10/2021 <b>Action:</b> Letters to Dr McGirr, Mick Veitch and Transport NSW, request remove Give Way sign, replace with Stop signs and LED lit notice. 2/12/2021. Dr McGirr advised work to commence on roundabout early in 2022, Members and guests confirmed support for relocating intersection to near to saleyards. 28/04/2022 concern roundabout may not be the safest option, preference relocate intersection to near Saleyards, <b>Fitzroy Street/Wynyard Street Intersection 2/12/2021 Action:</b> Need for traffic lights raised with Dr McGirr.</p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.8	Mobile Network and Towers	<p>29/06/2017, 13/12/2017, 20/09/2018, 13/12/2017, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019 Suggested towers Thomas Boyd Track, midway Brindabella Road, use of National Parks tower for Brindabella Road, Hume and Hovell Walking Track, top of Goobragandra, cover Southeast Tumut. <b>Action:</b> Letter to State Forests, Mike Kelly, raised with SVC. Concern lack of coverage Gocup Road, Snowy Mountains and Sturt Highways. 26/08/2021 Poor mobile and internet services in Talbingo discussed with Kristy McBain who held meeting on 23/09/2021 with Talbingo residents and Telstra. 28/10/2021 <b>Action:</b> letters to Telstra, Kristy McBain, Michael McCormack about numerous, wide spread black spots for mobile and internet connection. 28/04/2022 Lack of mobile phone coverage in all directions surrounding Tumut discussed and decision to write to local federal member.</p>	Lack of mobile phone coverage and risks for people travelling on our region's roads without coverage and for farmers and others discussed. Agreed for Christine to write to Kristy McBain MP.	C Webb	As soon as possible



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.9	TAFE	<p><b>Course for Hume and Hovell walking track guides</b> 29/06/2017, 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017- <i>Action: Ongoing lobbying for Tumut TAFE Training for school children as guides.</i> 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019 <b>Relocation of key positions to Griffith</b> forestry training management, lack and downgrading of TAFE training, effect on forestry and milling industry in this region. <i>Action: Keep item on the agenda, raise with Dr McGirr and Visy Community Consultative committee.</i></p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.10	Environment	<p><b>Bush Fire protection for town</b> 21/06/2018, 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019, 18/07/2019, 19/09/2019 Discussed pine forest exclusion zone, designated cooling off areas for SVC towns and infrastructure, Aboriginal amphitheatre proposed for Tumut. Common to provide buffer. <i>Action: Request SVC adopt recommendations from 2003 Canberra Fires report for pine exclusion and green zones, include climate change on agenda. Invite Mayor Hayes and SVC GM to meeting. 21/11/2019 Action: Community meeting with National Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Industry Corporation. RFS apology due to a fire.</i> TCA requested recommendations from 2003 Canberra Fires report be adopted as above and information about planning, preparation and management of fires, tabled letter from concerned resident and Daily Advertiser story about high risk for Tumut region. Information provided about responsibilities, reduction in funding, interagency committee preparation, advised TCA to raise concerns with SVC and request LEP include abatement zones. <i>Action: Letter to SVC. 24/06/2021 Action: Invite FCNSW, National Parks and Wildlife Service, RFS, SVC, community to meeting for update about preparedness for upcoming season and pine planting. 29/07/2021, 26/08/2021 Discussions with K. McBain about Bush Fire prevention strategies, NSW Forestry Corporation replanting strategy.</i> Kristy advised approach Dr Joe McGirr to request a portion of Australian Gov. \$150 million dollars Bush Fire resilience and mitigation funding. <b>23/09/2021 28/10/2021 Action: Invite RFS, NSW Forestry Corporation, National Parks and Wildlife service, SVC to discuss preparation for 2021/2022 bush fire season on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 by zoom and phone.</b></p>	<p>raised that he has ongoing concern about the waste being brought from Sydney to Visy for energy production. No action decided.</p>	Nil	Nil



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.10 cont d	Environment contd	<p><b>2/12/2021</b> Concerns raised with Dr McGirr about communication during emergencies, need for alarms and sirens, lack of awareness of emergency management interagency committee. <i>Action: Dr McGirr to follow up 28/04/2022 Action: Request update from RFS about implementing green zones around Tumut.</i></p> <p><b>Black Staining and corrosion on paving, buildings, etc 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019</b> – concern about possible causes. <i>Action: write to Environmental Protection Authority and SVC. Outcomes - shopping precinct pavement replaced.</i></p> <p><b>Waste and air quality 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/09/2019</b> – Concern about waste brought from Sydney by Visy for energy production, haze across the area, sorting of waste, expansion of Belle's tip. <i>Action pending: correspondence to Environmental Protection Authority, LMP re Visy waste.</i></p> <p><b>Water - 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019</b> concern about lack of action to secure Australia's water supply for rivers, towns and farms. <i>Dr McGirr has our support to bring government to account.</i></p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.11	Snowy Valleys Council	<p><b>Brindabella Road 13/12/2017</b> –Brindabella Road upgrade to Piccadilly Circus SVC feasibility study, funding allocated. <b>26/08/21</b> Discussed need for road with Kristy McBain. Kristy on Regional Australia committee and advocating for development of regional plan to include roads. SVC applied for grant for feasibility study. <i>Action: Request update on applications from SVC. 2/12/2021</i> Dr McGirr provided update 3 million dollars provided to SVC for minor works and SVC have full plans for Piccadilly Circus to Goodradigbee River section. <b>28/04/2022</b> Discussion about Brindabella Road upgrade, council's role and Kristy McBain's pledge from Labour for \$17.4 million.</p> <p><b>SVC Planning 29/07/2021</b> Guest speaker Jenny Kelleher, SVC Corporate planner discussed development of the Community Strategic plan Towards 2042.</p> <p><b>29/07/2021, 23/09/21, 28/10/2021 Action: Planned Meet the Candidates forum and held 15/11/2021. forum.</b></p>	<p>████████████████████ from the Brindabella Road the Economic Link group provided update. 17.4 million dollars recently pledged by Kristy McBain MP will assist to make the most dangerous section of the road safe. Further funding required and lobbying to continue with the aim to have a safe road from the ACT border to the Snowy Valleys Council region in the next three to four years. This link will improve access to health care for residents of SVC region by improving travel to attend medical appointments in ACT and for ACT doctors and other health professionals to travel to Tumut and improve travel for our residents who currently travel weekly or more often for work and education in Canberra and will bring business to our towns ██████████ expressed concern about effect of increased visitors on Tumut ██████████ and Christine discussed positive feedback from community members in favour of this link.</p>	Nil	Nil



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.11 contd	Snowy Valleys Council contd	<p><b>Special Rate Variation 28/10/2021</b> M Hyde encouraged all to provide comment on Special Rate Variation.<b>28/04/2022</b> Discussed SVC's Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. To meet 7pm on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 by zoom and phone to prepare a response to and invite community members.</p> <p><b>Public Health 28/04/2022</b> Discussion about council's role with public health.</p> <p><b>Council workshops</b> Discussed format of workshops held prior to the council meeting. Concern confidentiality surrounding discussion impedes councillor's ability to discuss and seek advice from the community, provides a barrier to the community being fully informed and having an understanding about council business. <b>Action: raise with councillors, Dr McGirr and NSW Government.</b></p>	<p><b>Special Rate Variation</b> Correspondence sent to SVC council office, to the CEO, Mayor and each councillor. Awaiting response.</p> <p>Discussion about proposed site for Evacuation centre and concerns about appropriate and safe parking and vehicle access. Two sites discussed were the Town Common and the vacant block opposite the Saleyards. Agreed other sites should be considered and that this should be raised with SVC Mayor. Invitation to be extended to mayor to attend a meeting to discuss this matter.</p>	C Webb	23/06/2022
4.12	Tumut Country expo	<p><b>21/03/2019, 18/07/2019</b> Opportunity to increase visitors to Tumut on the second Monday in March from ACT and Victorian public holiday. TCA to coordinate a country expo showcasing Tumut and promote to doctors to attract them to the region, involve Tourist Information centre and SVC.</p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.13	FRRR and VFFF Tumut Region Community Capacity Development Project	<p><b>20/06/2019, 19/09/2019</b> Grant application successful \$45,000 for project coordination, website and training. Steering committee formed, meetings held, chairperson, deputy chairperson elected, recruitment underway for project coordinator/s, meetings with Tumut Regional Chamber of Commerce's president discussed working together and larger grant application. <b>2/10/2019</b> meeting with community groups to prepare Expression of Interest (EOI) for \$950,000 for the Tumut Region, submitted on 28/10/2019.</p> <p>Community Capacity Development steering committee meetings held <b>21/10/2019, 9/12/2019, 31/03/2021</b> Treasurer's report, bank balance FRRR account \$7,694.97. <b>Action: Motion that C Webb do all things necessary including gaining access, developing implementation plan, media release to make the website go live by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021. 29/04/2021</b> Cre8tive Co's director provided data and deliverables related to the website development project.</p> <p><b>Action: Christine to review and provide summary of deliverables for next meeting and progress towards website launch. Action: Commence Institute of Community Directors training funded by FRRR and VFFF grant, many community groups identified this as a high priority during grant workshops held by FRRR and TCA.</b></p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022		
4.13	FRRR and VFFF Tumut Region Community Capacity Development Project contd	<p><b>Action:</b> Christine send emails to community NFP groups promoting the 2 free training courses. <b>27/05/2021 Action:</b> Christine to check information received from Cre8tive Co to identify host and hosting dates. Website promotional Video Ad [REDACTED] available to complete the Riverina Highlands Groups' website ad. Christine advised that \$2,000 from the grant funding available for this work. <b>Action:</b> Christine to engage John and provide him with material. <b>Action:</b> 24/06/2021 Panthur, domain host attempted to contact Cre8tive Co, left Christine's phone number, provided a link for domain if the situation continues to deteriorate, strongly suggested trying to get them to change ownership to access data. <b>Action:</b> Christine to attempt to contact Cre8tive Co. 29/07/2021 Motion: [REDACTED] be authorised to take all reasonable legal and practical steps to recover all data and intellectual property for Riverina Highlands website specifically belonging to TCA Inc.</p> <p><b>26/08/2021</b> Cre8tive Co have released website, [REDACTED] a videographer is completing the video advertisement.</p> <p><b>23/09/2021</b> Guest speaker Alli Mudford, People Portfolio Lead, representing Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal provided an overview of FRRR's work and advised about financial assistance available for organisations for IT through the NSW Government Social Sector Support Fund. John Riddell, Videographer, produced video and radio advertisements for Riverina Highlands Groups' website. All encouraged to view and provide feedback to Christine.</p> <p>Christine demonstrated website. Michael Edwards approached to provide education for community groups. Committee and fundraising training information circulated and names being collected. <b>28/10/2021 Action</b> Discussion about Riverina Highlands website. Christine asked members to discuss website with other organisations and they belonged to and encourage them to sign up. [REDACTED]s following up with Probus and Festival of Falling Leaf and [REDACTED] will raise with Ciderfest committee</p> <p><b>28/04/2022</b> Groups having difficulty accessing website. <b>Action:</b> Christine to follow up.</p>			



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising				
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	26/05/2022	
5	New Business		Minutes and action 26/05/2022	
5.1	Nil		Nil	
5.2				
6. Business from the Floor			Minutes and action 26/05/2022	
6.1	Nil		Nil	
Chairperson's Signature:				Date:

**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

<b>Meeting Arrangements</b>			
<b>Date:</b> 23/06/2022	<b>Time:</b> 7pm	<b>Time commenced:</b> 7:05pm	<b>Time finished:</b> 8:30pm
<b>Chairperson:</b> Christine Webb	<b>Secretary:</b> Christine Webb	<b>Venue:</b> Zoom	<b>Joining by:</b> Zoom, Phone (Ph)
<b>Next meeting:</b>	<b>Date:</b> 28/07/2022	<b>Time:</b> 7pm	<b>Venue:</b> By zoom and phone

<b>No</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	
1	<b>Attendance</b>	[REDACTED]
2.	<b>Apologies</b>	[REDACTED]
3.	<b>Confirmation of previous minutes</b>	4.11 SVC Brindabella Road Amend minutes to change comment from: [REDACTED] expressed concern about effect of increased visitors on Tumut to [REDACTED] worried about the disruption to town if Brindabella road is upgraded to the level requested. Minutes accepted by [REDACTED]



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.1	Snowy Hydro 2.0	<p><b>29/62017</b> - TCA supports Snowy Hydro 2.0.  <b>13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018 21/06/2018, 20/09/2018, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019, 18/07/2019</b> – opportunities for region: employment, business, enormous power generation upgrade, solar, wind farm, donation to community, Tumut airport upgrade, engaging private paramedic, telecommunications along Snowy Mountains highway, accommodation onsite, transport to be provided for safety. <b>23/09/2021</b> Large number of staff employed. <b>28/04/2022</b> Discussion about difficulty getting tradespeople for work in Tumut due to their Snowy Hydro commitments.</p>	Not discussed		
4.2	Health, Aged Care, Disability	<p><b>Health Services</b>  <b>29/6/2017</b> – Requested support for improved medical and nursing coverage. <b>17/08/2017, 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018, 15/11/2018 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019, 29/07/2021</b> Concerns lack of doctors, need hospital on-call, anaesthetist, emergency physician, surgeons, obstetricians, allied health, lack of routine procedures, post-operative care as surgeons return to Wagga, increased transfers to Wagga, lack of accommodation for families of patients in Wagga,  <b>Action: 18/07/2019, 19/09/2019, 21/11/2019</b> – Campaign for anaesthetist and emergency physician, online and NSW parliament paper petitions, <b>30/10/2019</b> rally, <b>29/04/2021</b> additional petition signatures including Wagga specialist doctors, <b>27/05/2021</b> Guest speaker - concerns about birthing safety and care at Tumut hospital, community health, Wagga Base Hospital, lack of accommodation for WWBH patients' families. Need pool of anaesthetists and emergency physicians. <b>Action: extensive media coverage, letter to MLHD CE about lack of accommodation, contact Mick Vietch MP. 24/06/2021, 29/07/2021, 26/08/2021</b> Tumut Hospital apparently not meeting Australian College of Emergency Medicine ED and national triage standards, new health model needed to make Tumut subregional hospital discussed with Kristy McBain MP. ACEM College willing to support need,. <b>Proposed action: gain support from councillors and others, provide research re need for doctors and new model, gain further petition signatures, discuss support needed with Dr McGirr, MP. 28/10/2021</b> concern about hospital reduced bed numbers.</p>	<p><b>Report Health outcomes and access to health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales Action – agreed to meet at 7pm on 30/06/2022 to prepare TCA's response to report. This response will be provided to NSW Minister for Rural Health, NSW Shadow Minister for Health, Dr Joe McGirr MP and Kristy McBain MP. Members of the Community are to be invited to attend this meeting or provide comments for inclusion.</b></p> <p><b>Disability Inclusion Advisory Reference Group (DIARG)</b> – The Disability Access Plan is available on Snowy Valleys Council website for consultation.</p> <p><b>Snowy Valleys Council interagency meetings</b> – Christine attending and Gundagai/Cootamundra's meeting. Opportunity to hear about services and community activities and to promote TCA work and projects. Christine will email contact details to members and others.</p> <p><b>Aged Care Forums</b> Christine reported that there is an impressive panel of health professionals, Services NSW, Aged Care and Community services attending in readiness to provide information and to answer questions. Christine requested assistance from members and attendees to promote these and the next one is on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022.</p>	All	30/06/2022
				Christine	28/07/2022



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.2 (cont d)	Health, Aged Care, Disability (contd)	<p><b>2/12/2022</b> Dr McGirr provided an update on new hospital and services, continuing medical coverage difficulties, availability of telehealth. Concerns raised by TCA lack of medical coverage, inadequacy of telehealth for seriously ill and critically injured patients, increased workload for GPs on-call, patients' appointments delayed or cancelled, emergency department doesn't appear to meet national standards for level 3 designation. Dr McGirr agreed GPs don't wish to work in hospitals, believes it is not practical and wouldn't work for specialist doctors to be employed. Association suggested work for Anaesthetist and ED physician seeing inpatients, going out with paramedics, training medical, nursing, allied health students as supported by definition of emergency physician and national standards. <b>28/04/2022</b> Concern NSW Department of Rural Health could divert funding from employing doctors, nurses, allied health, community health staff. Invitation to Minister for Rural Health, Dr McGirr, Shadow Minister for Health Ryan Park to seek clarification and urgent action Tumut Hospital to employ an emergency physician and anaesthetist. <b>26/05/2022</b> <i>Action: NSW Review into Rural Health Care – June meeting prepare response and questions for Minister for Rural Health, Shadow Minister for Health, Dr McGirr, Kristy McBain MP. Invite MPs and community to meeting to discuss.</i></p> <p><b>Covid 19:</b> <i>Action request regular insertion of information in TA Times about availability of RATs, importance of wearing masks, vaccinations and help and request pharmacy provide advice and assistance with RATs.</i></p> <p><b>Asthma 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017</b> <i>Action pending: Seek regional rates</i></p> <p><b>Aged Care 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 20/06/2019,</b> Concern about shortage of aged care packages, services' charges, poor outcomes e.g. falls, mental health issues, suicide rates, community transport cost, public housing. <i>Action: raised with Dr McGirr MP and Mike Kelly MP.</i></p> <p><b>29/04/2021</b> Issues raised by carer – services unhelpful, lack understanding about needs, benefits service more than clients, waiting list aged care packages. <b>26/05/2022</b> Fortnightly Aged Care Forums – Speakers from Aged Care, Services NSW, SVC provide information.</p>			



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.2	Health, Aged Care, Disability (contd)	<p><b>24/06/2021, 29/07/2021, 26/08/2021</b> Discussion with Kristy McBain MP - community care, lack of packages, no regulation to ensure organisations managed by nurses with aged care qualifications, lack of training for aged care staff, review rate of nursing home admissions from individual community organisations, Kristy discussed workers' low pay, decline in course enrolments, increased population of seniors, need to implement Royal Commission recommendations. <b>29/04/2021, 27/05/2021, 29/07/2021, 28/10/2021 Action:</b> Subcommittee organise Senior's forum, invitations to Mr Colbeck Minister for Aged Care Services to open forum, Kristy McBain MP, Victoria Oakden Aged Care consultant, services for seniors, organise venue/format, hold forum early 2022. <b>24/02/2022</b> Commence fortnightly Aged Care Forums by phone and zoom include: Centrelink, Service NSW, Services Australia and My Aged Care information, Aged Care Packages, Mental Health, Dental health, eye health, advocacy services and Legal Aid information <b>Suicide Prevention 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 20/06/2019-</b> Concerns about untrained counsellors, disengagement of young people, lack of support <b>Action:</b> Lobby SVC, LMP, others for well-staffed youth drop-in centre, suicide prevention, detox unit.</p> <p><b>Disability 24/06/2021, 29/07/2021, 26/08/2021</b> Christine attending Disability Inclusion Advisory Group meetings, SVC survey re satisfaction and need for services to occur soon.</p>			
4.3	Hume and Hovell walking track.	<p><b>29/06/2017 – Action:</b> lobby for sealed road from Batlow to Talbingo. <b>17/08/2017, 17/10/2017, 19/04/2018, 21/06/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019 – Action:</b> Request tourism track sub-committee, Visy truck signs promoting Tumut and track, SVC budget for blackberry eradication.. Maintenance by walking group, Mannus prisoners, \$435,000 for combined cycle/walking track around Blowering Dam, tracks in Kosciusko National Park, Tumbarumba end of the track. <b>Action:</b> Lobby for tree trails linking towns. <b>13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 20/09/2018, 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019, 18/07/2019 –</b> Bicentennial anniversary 2024 prep - web page, SVC Tourism Plan includes track, maintenance. <b>26/05/2022</b> Wee Jasper to Tumut section of the track needs maintenance, camping ground at Micalong Creek needs developing.</p>	Not discussed		



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.4	Amenities	<p><b>Pool</b> 29/06/2017, 17/08/2017, 13/12/2017, 21/06/2018 – TCA supports indoor sports complex with 4 basketball courts, 25 metre and hydrotherapy pools</p> <p><b>Hydrotherapy</b> - 29/06/2017, 17/08/2017, 15/02/2018, 19/04/2018, 21/06/2018 - Benefits for rehabilitation, community, business, funding and management partnerships, private pools in Canberra, Wagga supported by physiotherapists, Arthritis Association.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Lobby for pool. MLHD won't fund hydrotherapy.</p> <p><b>Tumut Common</b> – Mayor Hayes, Dr McGirr, premier's department met re environmental damage, development proposal, drones to patrol. TCA concerned about bushfires in this region.</p> <p><b>Cemetery</b> 24/06/2021 action: letter to SVC requesting barrier along Currawong Street side to stop vehicles driving onto cemetery. SVC's Jenny Kelleher raised with council. 26/08/2021 council reviewing long term viability of current cemetery site.</p> <p><b>Toilets</b> 29/07/2021 Concern Pioneer Park lacking, state of toilets near skate park. Action: Jenny Kelleher raised with SVC.</p> <p>26/08/2021 Bull Paddock checked daily, new in few months, Rotary Pioneer Park- new amenities in two years 23/09/2021 M. Hyde confirmed Pioneer Park installation, Stockwell Gardens kept locked, for volunteers. Action: request pool toilets be made available. Lack of public toilets between Adelong and Wagga. Action Letter to Transport NSW, Dr Joe McGirr and Continence Foundation to update their map. Lack of toilets between Adelong and Wagga to be raised with Dr McGirr. 2/12/2021 Discussed lack of toilets between Adelong and Wagga with Dr Joe McGirr. He undertook to follow up locating them at Borambola, SVC GM advised consultation about Rotary Pioneer Park toilets to occur 11/12/2021. 28/04/2022, 26/05/2022 Action: Request update from SVC about Tumut toilets and from Dr McGirr about toilets at Borambol26/05/2022 Include request to maintain Railway Precinct toilets.</p> <p><b>Tracks and trails</b> – 26/05/2022 Action: TCA to submit proposal for a walking track linking both ends of the Riverwalk to make a circular track around the town. Write to council re privet on River Walk.</p>	<p><b>Toilets - Driver Reviver</b> – Concern about a lack of public toilets due to several being closed and the delay in building the Rotary Pioneer Park toilets. Roger raised concern about the slow progress completing upgrades to toilets and that they are not available. Councillor Thomson advised that installation of the roof has stalled and SVC CEO should be notified of concerns.</p> <p><b>Stockwell Park Toilets</b> – Roger raised need to have these open for public. Councillors Thomson and Armour agreed. Councillor Armour is conducting an audit of public toilets, is requesting that these toilets be opened. Letter from TCA to SVC requesting opening these toilets.</p> <p><b>Toilets for Rotary Pioneer Park</b> – Councillor Armour supports making swimming pool toilets available to Rotary Pioneer Park. TCA to write to council with this request.</p> <p><b>Toilets between Adelong and Wagga Wagga</b> – Request update from Dr Joe McGirr.</p>	C Webb	28/07/2022
				C Webb	28/07/2022



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.5	Youth matters.	29/06/2017, 17/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/11/2019 <b>Action:</b> Lobby SVC for drop-in centre at Boy's Club managed by service club, holistic focus, include youth worker, mental health program, discussion with Inspector Radford, SVC General Manager, Youth Officer, Aboriginal Liaison representative. 19/04/2018, 17/10/2017, 20/09/2018, 15/11/2018, 20/06/2019 <b>Action:</b> Letter to Dr McGirr re disadvantaged children, homeless people, lack of crisis accommodation, drug testing facilities, parenting programs. 13/12/2017, 15/02/2018, 21/06/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019 <b>Action:</b> Lobby for financial and life skills training, support PCYC, Seventh Day Adventist programs, Blakeney Miller foundation for funding Joe Williams. 18/07/2019, 19/09/2019 proposed project for young people to clear area behind Banksia Crescent, concern girls may be excluded from projects.	Not discussed		
4.6	TCA Administration Membership Treasurer's report Promotion and Liaison	19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 17/01/2019, 18/07/2019 <b>Action:</b> Continue networking with other community groups and through FRRR project. 31/03/2021 Welcomed 6 new members, transition period, become more regionally focused. <b>Action:</b> Christine conduct membership drive, increase by 10 to 15 by AGM, invite organisations to join, press release to TA Times, promote TCA and membership. Treasurers Report tabled, bank balance \$225.20. 3 signatories for banking and documents agreed Public Officer, President, Treasurer. 29/04/2021, 27/05/2021 Concerns about community perception TCA folded. <b>Action:</b> raise association's profile, promotion and publicity by president. TA Times, Sounds of Mountains, ABC radio, Wagga Daily Advertiser providing support. 29/07/2021 Treasurer's report tabled, reminder membership fees due. 26/08/2021 September guest speakers Alli Mudford FRRR, Sam Archer Australian Rural Leadership Foundation. 23/09/2021 Proposed AGM and Christmas party December 2021. 28/10/2021 Advice from Public Officer that AGM could be delayed until February 2022 due to Covid restrictions. 24/02/2022 AGM rescheduled to 7pm on 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2022. 28/04/2022 <b>Action:</b> Develop plan for business and speakers. 26/05/2022 Invitation to Kristy McBain MP to discuss priorities and ideas for advancing region.	<b>Treasurer's report</b> – Nicholas presented report. Interest 4 cents and no expenditure. Acceptance of report moved by Christine and seconded by Roger. Christine contacted offices of Kristy McBain MP, Bronnie Taylor MP and Ryan Park MP to invite them to attend TCA meetings and will follow up for dates they available. It was agreed to invite community members to attend these meetings to hear from the MPs and raise their own concerns.	Christine	28/07/2022



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.7	Road Safety Issues	<p><b>Pedestrian and scooter safety</b>  <b>Snowy Mountains Highway Fiveways to skate park urgent need for footpath. 29/06/2017, 19/10/2017, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019</b> – lobbied and on SVC works program.  <b>Footpath from Currawong Street to Bull Paddock 27/05/2021</b> seniors, people with disability, others need to ride or walk on highway. <b>Action: write to SVC to request footpath as soon as possible. 24/06/2021</b> raised at DIARG, SVC rep advised will register as SVC risk <b>26/08/2021</b> feedback from Councillor Cross costing is occurring. <b>26/05/2022 Request update. 29/01/2019.</b>  <b>Action: need to raise public awareness of night time visibility of pedestrians.</b></p> <p><b>Fitzroy Street/Snowy Mountains Highway crossing 26/05/2022</b>  <b>Action write to SVC, raise concerns for pedestrians.</b></p> <p><b>Wynard Street pedestrian crossing. Write to council requesting safe crossing with speed hump.</b></p> <p><b>Batlow Road and Snowy Mountains Highway intersection 21/06/2018 29/06/2017, 17/08/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 21/03/2019, 19/09/2019, 21/11/2019, 27/05/2021</b> – concerns changed road markings and 100km speed limit on Batlow Road don't reduce risk, increased risk for drivers unfamiliar with roads and conditions, noted GPA's proposed underpass <b>Action: Letters and meetings with SVC Traffic Committee, Roads &amp; Maritime Services, Dr McGirr, requested 80km zones extended through intersection, move traffic island to make 90 degree approach from Batlow Road, request notice about need for caution and checking for obstructed view west of intersection prior to turning right onto Snowy Mountains Highway. 23/09/2021</b> Noted Batlow Road and Snowy Mountains Highway intersection had 1.4 million dollars upgrade with no safety improvement. <b>Action: TCA to follow up. 2/12/2021</b> Members and guests raised ongoing concerns with Dr McGirr that intersection appears to remain dangerous despite large amount of money spent on work. Underpass supported by TCA. <b>Action: Dr McGirr offered to review works and amount spent. 28/04/2022 26/05/2022 Action: Letter to Dr McGirr, Transport NSW and SVC traffic committee request Led light 100 to 200 metres before intersection telling people to Slow Down and stop signs on Batlow Road</b></p>	<p><b>Footpath from Currawong Street to Bull Paddock</b> – Margaret raised concerns that the wet weather and broken edges of the Snowy Mountains highway increases the danger for people needing to walk or ride mobility scooters on Snowy Mountains Highway due to no footpath and there is an increased number of people due to increased housing development at Glenn Estate. Councillor Thomson was not aware of any council action or planning for this path. Agreed TCA will write to SVC for an update and response to correspondence sent 12 months ago.</p>	C Webb	28/07/2022



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.7 cont d	Road Safety Issues contd	<p><b>Gocup Road and Snowy Mountains Highway intersection</b>            19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 20/09/2018, 15/11/2018,            21/03/2019, 18/07/2019, 19/09/2019, 21/11/2019 – Meetings with            SVC General Manager, RMS reps - new road signs, changed            road markings, planned traffic lights, improved pedestrian safety,            discussed relocation of intersection to near saleyards. <b>Action:</b>  <i>letter to SVC requesting stop signs Gocup road and Capper Street</i>  <i>entrances. Letter to RMS, Dr McGirr, Inspector Radford re</i>  <i>progress of traffic lights. 27/5/2021 Follow up Tumut Highschool</i>  <i>survey. 24/06/2021 Action: organise forum, invite Dr McGirr,</i>  <i>police, Visy, transport businesses, Mick Vietch, Transport NSW,</i>  <i>Media, TWU, other unions, Snowy Valleys Council. Wagga Daily</i>  <i>Advertiser story interviews Groves Logging, Elliott's Landscapes,</i>  <i>Dr McGirr. 29/07/2021 Kristy McBain suggested contacting Mick</i>  <i>Vietch.. 23/09/2021 M Hyde advised Transport NSW submitted</i>  <i>plans for \$15 million dollar 50 metre roundabout to commence</i>  <i>early 2022. 28/10/2021 Action: Letters to Dr McGirr, Mick Veitch</i>  <i>and Transport NSW, request remove Give Way sign, replace with</i>  <i>Stop signs and LED lit notice. 2/12/2021. Dr McGirr advised work</i>  <i>to commence on roundabout early 2022, Attendees confirmed</i>  <i>support for relocating intersection to near to saleyards.</i>            28/04/2022 concern roundabout may not be safest option,            preference relocate intersection to near Saleyards,  <b>Fitzroy Street/Wynyard Street Intersection 2/12/2021 Action:</b>  <i>Need for traffic lights raised with Dr McGirr.</i></p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.8	Mobile Network and Towers	<p>29/06/2017, 13/12/2017, 20/09/2018, 13/12/2017, 20/09/2018,            17/01/2019, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019 Suggested towers Thomas            Boyd Track, midway Brindabella Road, use of National Parks            tower for Brindabella Road, Hume and Hovell Walking Track, top            of Goobragandra, to cover Southeast Tumut. <b>Action: Letter to</b>  <i>State Forests, Mike Kelly, SVC. Concern lack of coverage Gocup</i>  <i>Road, Snowy Mountains and Sturt Highways. 26/08/2021 Poor</i>  <i>mobile and internet services in Talbingo discussed with Kristy</i>  <i>McBain who held meeting 23/09/2021 with Talbingo residents and</i>  <i>Telstra. 28/10/2021 Action: letters to Telstra, Kristy McBain,</i>  <i>Michael McCormack about SVC's lack of mobile and internet</i>  <i>connection. 28/04/2022, 26/05/2022 Lack of mobile phone</i>  <i>coverage in all discussed and decision to write to local federal</i>  <i>member.</i></p>	Lack of mobile and internet coverage discussed. Roger discussed raising this matter with Kristy McBain MP. Councillor Thomson advised that Telstra in conjunction with Snowy Hydro will be organising for an NBN representative to speak to council about issues and suggested TCA could write to SVC to request concerns be noted for the meeting. This was agreed by all.	C Webb	28/07/2022



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.9	TAFE	<p><b>Course for Hume and Hovell walking track guides</b>  <b>29/06/2017, 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017- Action:</b> Ongoing lobbying for Tumut TAFE Training for school children as guides.  <b>15/11/2018, 17/01/2019 Relocation of key positions to Griffith</b> forestry training management, lack and downgrading of TAFE training, effect on forestry and milling industry in this region.  <b>Action:</b> Keep item on the agenda, raise with Dr McGirr and Visy Community Consultative committee.</p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.10	Environment	<p><b>Bush Fire protection for town</b>  <b>21/06/2018, 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019, 21/03/2019, 20/06/2019,18/07/2019, 19/09/2019</b> Discussed pine forest exclusion zone, designated cooling off areas for SVC towns and infrastructure, Aboriginal amphitheatre proposed for Tumut. Common to provide buffer. <b>Action:</b> Request SVC adopt recommendations from 2003 Canberra Fires report for pine exclusion and green zones, include climate change on agenda. Invite Mayor Hayes and SVC GM to meeting. <b>21/11/2019 Action:</b> Community meeting with National Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Industry Corporation. RFS apology due to a fire. TCA requested recommendations from 2003 Canberra Fires report be adopted as above and information about planning, preparation and management of fires, tabled letter from concerned resident and Daily Advertiser story about high risk for Tumut region. Information provided about responsibilities, reduction in funding, interagency committee preparation, advised TCA to raise concerns with SVC and request LEP include abatement zones. <b>Action:</b> Letter to SVC. <b>24/06/2021 Action:</b> Invite FCNSW, National Parks and Wildlife Service, RFS, SVC, community to meeting for update about preparedness for upcoming season and pine planting. <b>29/07/2021, 26/08/2021</b> Discussions with K. McBain about Bush Fire prevention strategies, NSW Forestry Corporation replanting strategy. Kristy advised approach Dr Joe McGirr to request a portion of Australian Gov. \$150 million dollars Bush Fire resilience and mitigation funding. <b>23/09/2021 28/10/2021 Action:</b> Invite RFS, NSW Forestry Corporation, National Parks and Wildlife service, SVC to discuss preparation for 2021/2022 bush fire season on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 by zoom and phone.</p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.10 cont d	Environment contd	<p><b>2/12/2021</b> Concern about communication during emergencies, need for alarms or sirens, lack of awareness of emergency management interagency committee raised with Dr McGirr <i>Action: Dr McGirr to follow up 28/04/2022 Action: Request update from RFS about implementing green zones around Tumut.</i></p> <p><b>Black Staining and corrosion on paving, buildings, etc 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/04/2018, 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019</b> – concern about cause. <i>Action: write to Environmental Protection Authority and SVC.</i> Outcomes - shopping precinct pavement replaced.</p> <p><b>Waste and air quality 19/10/2017, 13/12/2017, 19/09/2019</b> – Concern about waste brought from Sydney by Visy for energy production, haze across the area, sorting of waste, expansion of Belle's tip. <i>Action pending: correspondence to Environmental Protection Authority, LMP re Visy waste. 26/05/22</i> Geoff raised concern about waste brought from Sydney to Visy</p> <p><b>Water - 15/11/2018, 17/01/2019</b> concern about lack of action to secure Australia's water supply for rivers, towns and farms. <i>Dr McGirr has our support to bring government to account.</i></p>	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.11	Snowy Valleys Council	<p><b>Brindabella Road 13/12/2017</b> –Brindabella Road upgrade to Piccadilly Circus SVC feasibility study, funding allocated. <b>26/08/21</b> Discussed need for road with Kristy McBain. Kristy on Regional Australia committee advocating for development of regional plan to include roads. SVC applied for grant for feasibility study. <i>Action: Request update on applications from SVC. 2/12/2021</i> Dr McGirr advised 3 million dollars provided to SVC for minor works, SVC have full plans for Piccadilly Circus to Goodradigbee River section. <b>28/04/2022</b> Discussion about Brindabella Road upgrade, council's role and Kristy McBain's pledge from Labour for \$17.4 million. <b>26/05/2022</b> – \$17.4 million to make most dangerous section of road safe, more funding required to make road from ACT border to Tumut safe in 3 to 4 years to improve access to Canberra and this region for economic, health and tourism purposes.</p> <p><b>SVC Planning 29/07/2021</b> Guest speaker Jenny Kelleher, SVC Corporate planner discussed development of the Community Strategic plan Towards 2042.</p> <p><b>29/07/2021, 23/09/21, 28/10/2021 Action: Planned Meet the Candidates forum and held 15/11/2021. forum.</b></p>	Progress report on Brindabella Road provided by [REDACTED]. They met with Matthew Hyde prior to his departure from SVC and thanked him for his support for their work. One million dollars has been provided through a grant for re-sheeting the current road from Snowy Valleys Council region to the ACT border. There will be ongoing discussion with Kristy McBain. There was agreement that the upgraded road would bring more tourists and traffic into and through Tumut and that this would assist our economy. This increased traffic travelling through to other centres would most likely not cause significant disruption to main street traffic as unlike other towns the current road bypasses the main shopping centre streets. Another benefit from having this link to the ACT is the likelihood of attracting appropriately qualified workers in several fields including for council work.		



**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.11 cont d	Snowy Valleys Council contd	<p><b>Special Rate Variation 28/10/2021</b> M Hyde encouraged all to provide comment on Special Rate Variation. <b>28/04/2022</b> Discussed SVC's Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. To meet 7pm on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 by zoom and phone to prepare a response to and invite community members. <b>26/05/2022</b> Correspondence sent to SVC council office, CEO, Mayor and each councillor. Awaiting response.</p> <p><b>Public Health 28/04/2022</b> Discussion about council's role with public health.</p> <p><b>Council workshops</b> Discussed format. Concern confidentiality impedes councillors' ability to discuss and seek advice from the community, is a barrier to community being fully informed and having an understanding about council business. <b>Action: raise with councillors, Dr McGirr and NSW Government.</b></p> <p><b>Evacuation Centre 26/05/2022</b> concerns about appropriate parking and vehicle access. <b>Action: Correspondence to Mayor and council to request consideration of other sites such as Town Common and vacant block opposite saleyards.</b></p>	<p><b>Special rate Variation</b> was discussed at some length with the councillors. The association is waiting on a response from Snowy Valleys Council to their letter sent in May. <i>Agreed to wait for response prior to further discussion and deciding further action.</i> Concerns raised with Councillors Thomson and Armour were the rate of the increase in comparison to other councils in surrounding regions, the expected significant financial hardship for many ratepayers especially as this region is rated as being among the most socially disadvantaged regions in comparison to other regions nationally, the rise far exceeds the pension rebate and there is to be no pension increase this year, the cost of living has gone up, interest rates are rising and wages have increased by two percent compared to the five per cent increase in the cost of living. Councillor Thomson advised that the councillors had agreed to this first rise as they felt they had no option if current services were to remain and staff positions retained. They had been advised that there had been significant costs associated with preparing documents for the Special Rate Review. Both councillors advised that they would be reviewing the council's financial position with a view to trying to avoid the implementation of the second part of the rate rise next year. The association advised the councillors that the community needs to know where the money has gone.</p> <p><b>Departure of SVC executive staff.</b> The association raised their concern with the councillors about the departure of all Snowy Valleys Council Executive staff. The association will write to relevant local government authorities and Dr Joe McGirr MP to express concern at the loss of experienced staff.</p>	Christine	28/07/2022



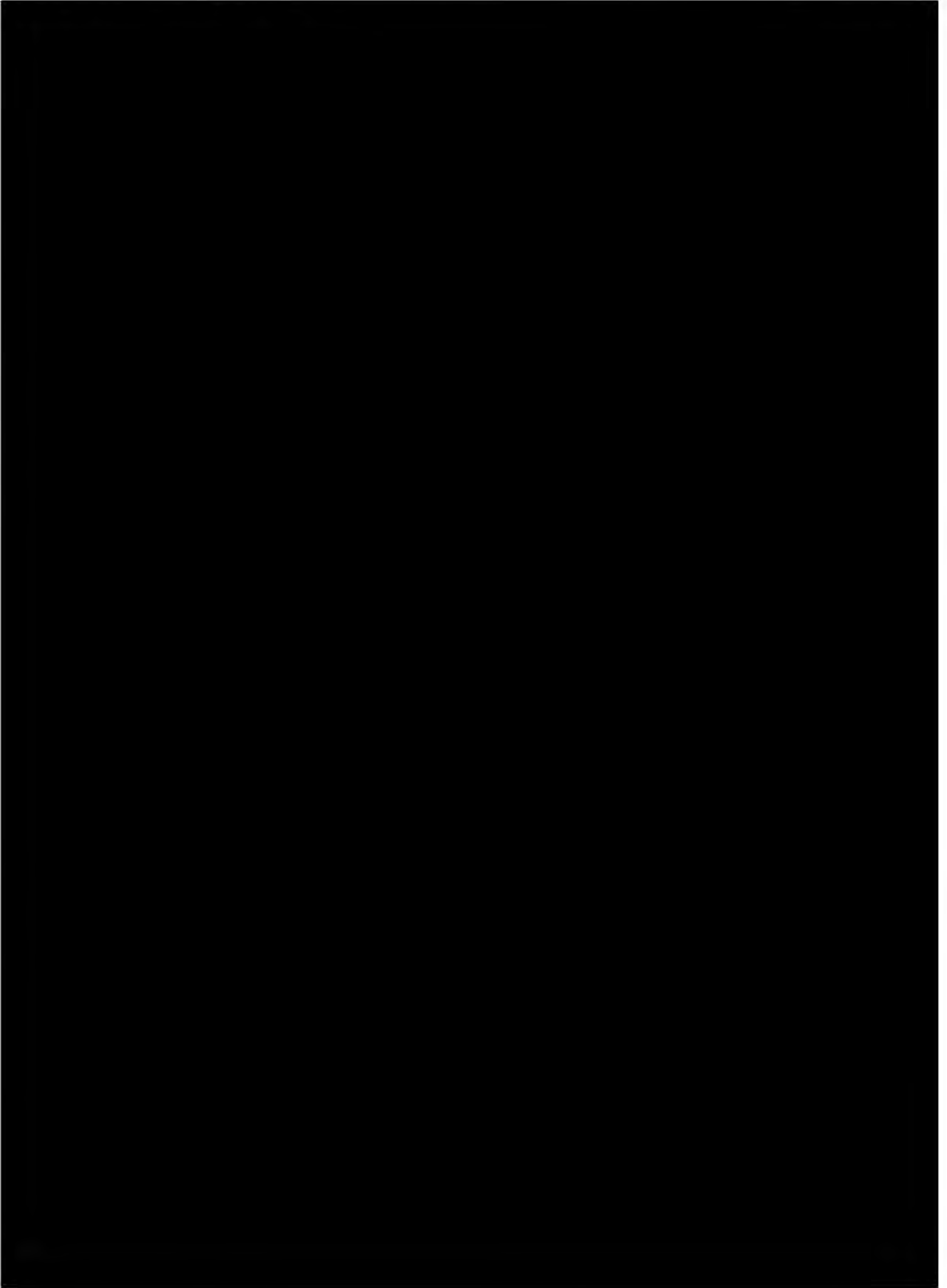
**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

4. Business Arising					
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022		
4.12	Tumut Country expo	21/03/2019, 18/07/2019 Opportunity to increase visitors to Tumut on the second Monday in March from ACT and Victorian public holiday. TCA to coordinate a country expo showcasing Tumut and promote to doctors to attract them to the region, involve Tourist Information centre and SVC.	Not discussed	Nil	Nil
4.13	FRRR and VFFF Tumut Region Community Capacity Development Project	20/06/2019, 19/09/2019 Grant application successful \$45,000 for project coordination, website and training. Steering committee formed, meetings held, chairperson, deputy chairperson elected, recruitment underway for project coordinator/s, meetings with Tumut Regional Chamber of Commerce's president discussed working together and larger grant application. 2/10/2019 meeting with community groups to prepare Expression of Interest (EOI) for \$950,000 for the Tumut Region, submitted on 28/10/2019. Community Capacity Development steering committee meetings held 21/10/2019, 9/12/2019, 31/03/2021 Treasurer's report, bank balance FRRR account \$7,694.97. <b>Action:</b> Motion that C Webb do all things necessary including gaining access, developing implementation plan, media release to make the website go live by 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2021. 29/04/2021 Cre8tive Co's director provided data and deliverables related to the website development project. <b>Action:</b> Christine to review and provide summary of deliverables for next meeting and progress towards website launch. <b>Action:</b> Commence Institute of Community Directors training funded by FRRR and VFFF grant, many community groups identified this as a high priority during grant workshops held by FRRR and TCA. <b>Action:</b> Christine send emails to community NFP groups promoting the 2 free training courses. 27/05/2021 <b>Action:</b> Christine to check information received from Cre8tive Co to identify host and hosting dates. Website promotional Video Ad John Riddell available to complete the Riverina Highlands Groups' website ad. Christine advised that \$2,000 from the grant funding available for this work. <b>Action:</b> Christine to engage John and provide him with material. <b>Action:</b> 24/06/2021 Panthur, domain host attempted to contact Cre8tive Co, left Christine's phone number, provided a link for domain if the situation continues to deteriorate, strongly suggested trying to get them to change ownership to access data. <b>Action:</b> Christine to attempt to contact Cre8tive Co.	Not discussed	Nil	Nil

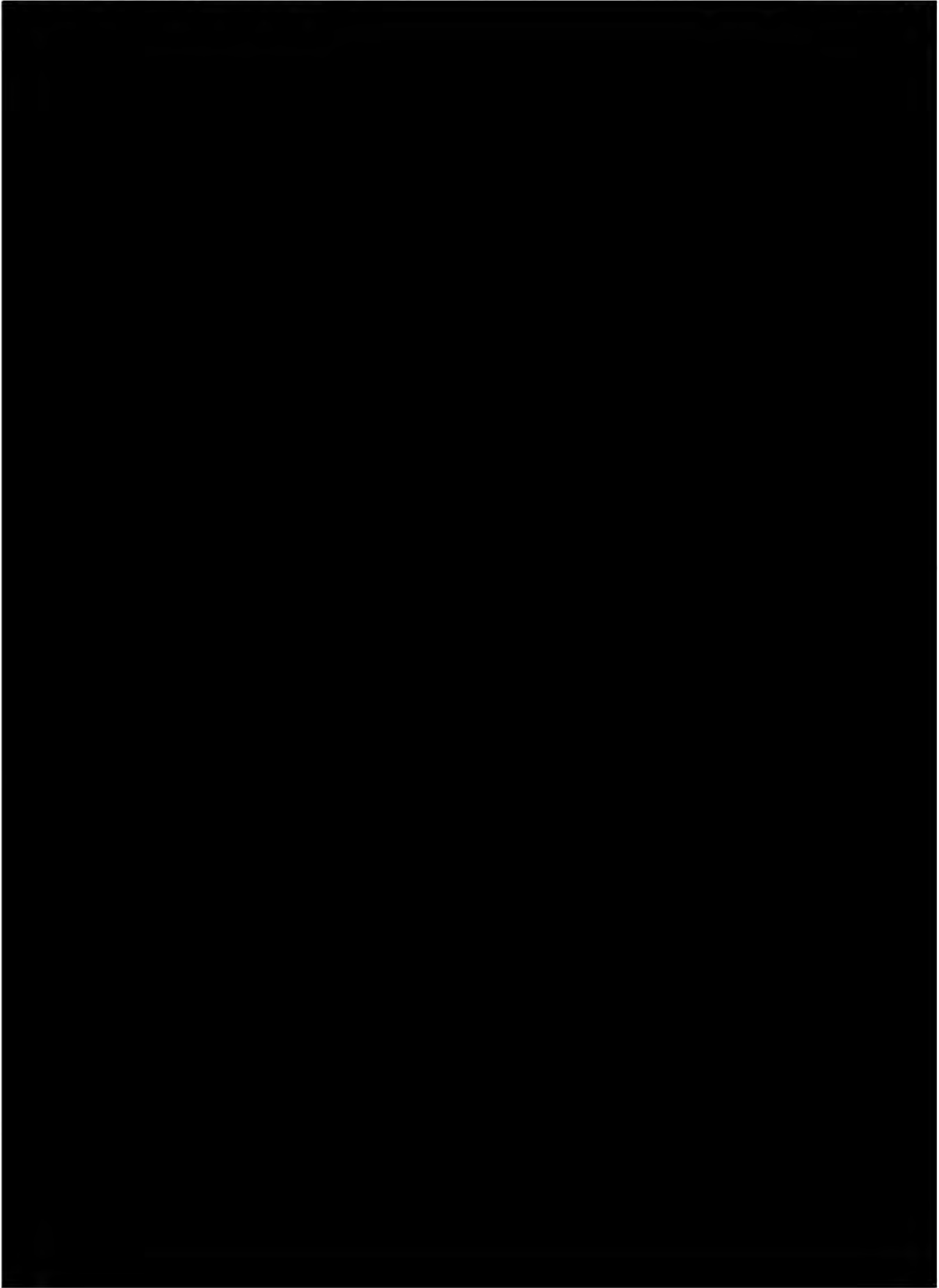


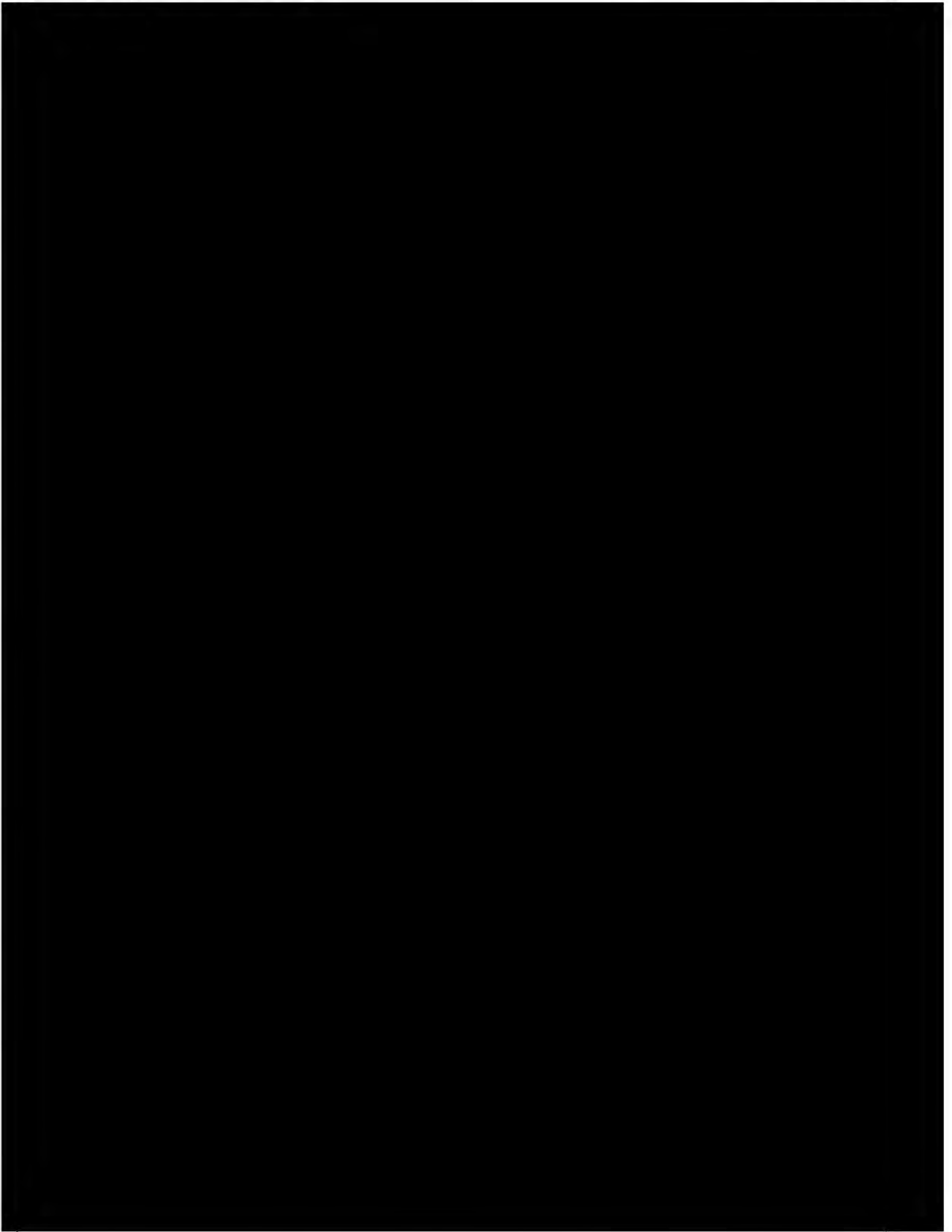
**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING MINUTES**

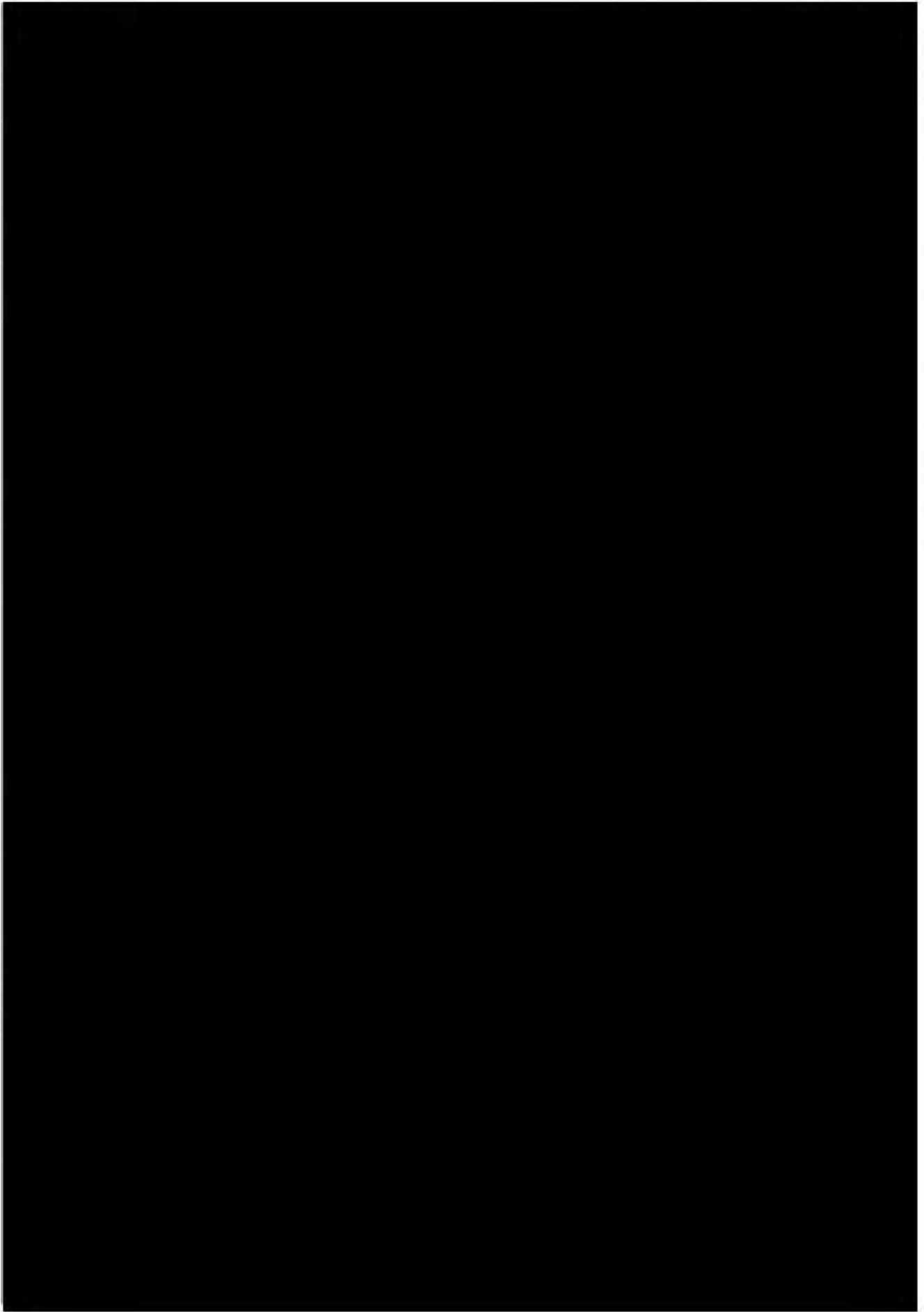
4. Business Arising				
No	Agenda Item	Previous Minutes	23/06/2022	
4.13	FRRR and VFFF Tumut Region Community Capacity Development Project contd	<p><b>29/07/2021</b> Motion: Matthew be authorised to take all reasonable legal and practical steps to recover all data and intellectual property for Riverina Highlands website specifically belonging to TCA Inc.</p> <p><b>26/08/2021</b> Cre8tive Co have released website, John Riddell a videographer is completing the video advertisement.</p> <p><b>23/09/2021</b> Guest speaker Alli Mudford, People Portfolio Lead, representing Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal provided an overview of FRRR's work and advised about financial assistance available for organisations for IT through the NSW Government Social Sector Support Fund. John Riddell, Videographer, produced video and radio advertisements for Riverina Highlands Groups' website. All encouraged to view and provide feedback to Christine.</p> <p>Christine demonstrated website. Michael Edwards approached to provide education for community groups.</p> <p>Committee and fundraising training information circulated and names being collected. <b>28/10/2021 Action</b> Discussion about Riverina Highlands website. Christine asked members to discuss website with other organisations and they belonged to and encourage them to sign up. Roger is following up with Probus and Festival of Falling Leaf and Col will raise with Ciderfest committee</p> <p><b>28/04/2022</b> Groups having difficulty accessing website. Action: Christine to follow up.</p>		
5	<b>New Business</b>		<b>Minutes and action 23/06/2022</b>	
5.1	Nil		Nil	
5.2				
<b>6. Business from the Floor</b>			<b>Minutes and action 23/06/2022</b>	
6.1	Nil		Nil	
<b>Chairperson's Signature:</b>			<b>Date:</b>	













**TUMUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
MEETING AGENDA**

Meeting Arrangements			
Date: 14/03/2024	Time: 7pm	Time commenced:	Time finished:
Chairperson: Christine Webb	Secretary/minutes: Christine Webb	Venue: n/a	Zoom link <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81362800863?pwd=bTlaTORUdUJJamtONGJpUDhtRnZ2UT09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81362800863?pwd=bTlaTORUdUJJamtONGJpUDhtRnZ2UT09</a> Or phone 02 8015 6011 Meeting ID: 813 6280 0863 Passcode: 446908
Next meeting:			Venue: Zoom/Telephone

**Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting. I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Aboriginal Elders of other communities who may be here today.

No	Agenda Item
1	Attendance
2.	Apologies
3.	Confirmation of Previous Minutes

No	Agenda Item	Who	Time
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**4.1 Ground rules**

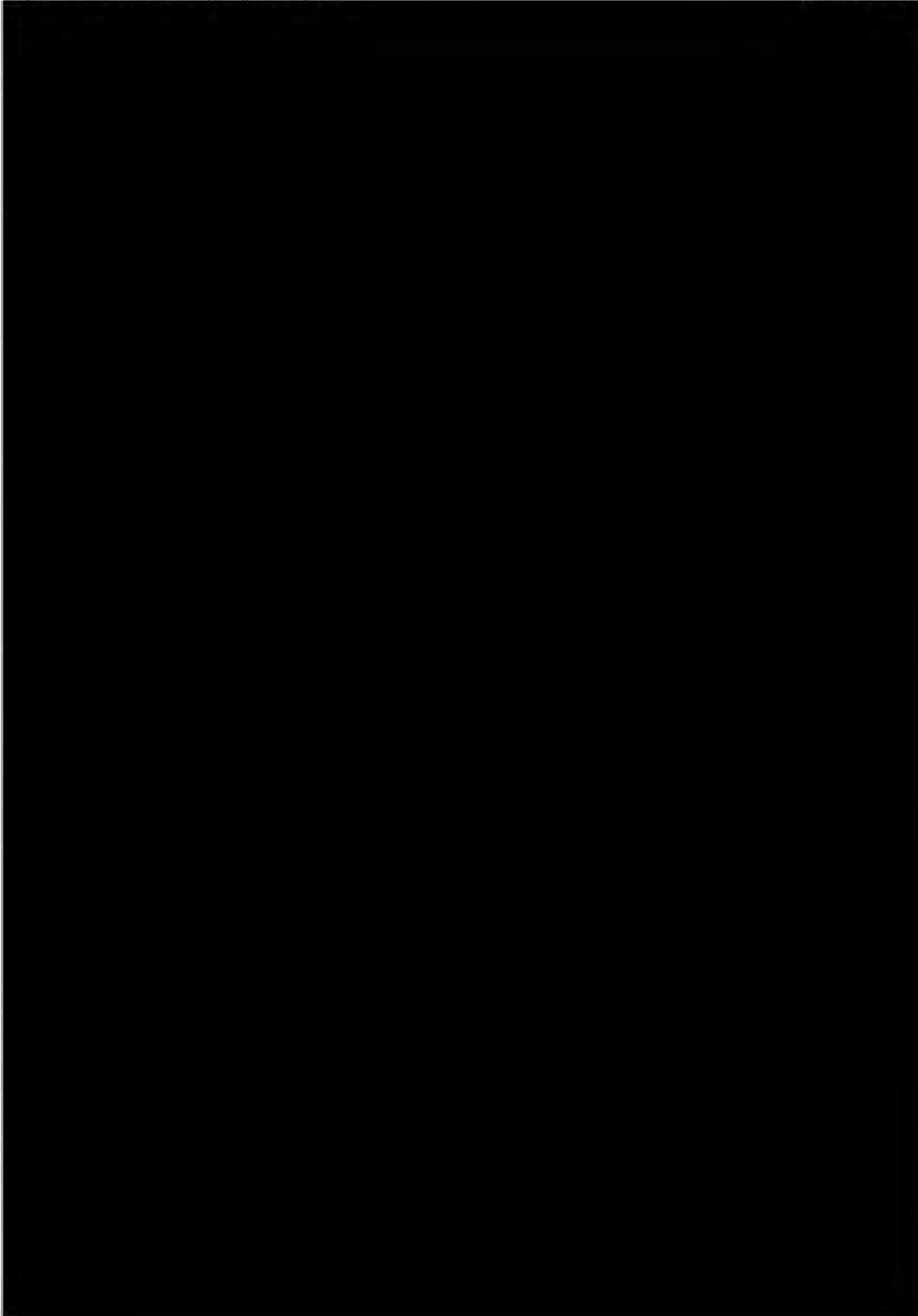
- Please mute your phone or computer audio and leave them muted throughout the proceedings.
- Please no background noise.
- Be respectful and polite. No bad language will be accepted.
- Questions from the audience Raise hand, use chat box, People on phone please let us know you would like to ask a question
- One person to speak at a time.
- We will need to limit time and ask you to finish your comment.
- .Please do not interrupt or argue with a person speaking.

**4.2 Submission to IPART must show strong opposition.**

- How will a rate rise affect you,
- how can council save money and increase number of ratepayers.
- Other action to stop rise. Request independent audit of SVC budget and Productivity Commission Review of council's revenue raising.

**4.3 The proposed rate rise is 12.5% per year for next 3 years.**

- In 2024/2025 the Aged pension will increase by 1.96% about 40 dollars and SVC rates will rise over 300 dollars. Farmers and businesses could have a rate rise of thousands of dollars. The January 2024 CPI was 3.4%.
- If this rate rise is approved it will affect the whole community and could lead to a rise in rents and costs of goods and services



[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 March 2024 12:57 PM  
**To:** Christine Webb  
**Subject:** SVR Meeting Notes.

Christine,

The following are some points that came out of the meeting last night.

Attendees:

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED] : - Council finances are not being reported correctly. [REDACTED] has attempted to discuss this with the council but they won't listen. there is a big discrepancy with what [REDACTED] has and the Council has.
- [REDACTED] : - Council's priority should be to get the council's finances in order.
- [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] stated that Council's Financial Status is questionable and changes should start with the Councillors.
- The General Managers that Snowy Valleys Council and the former Tumut Shire Council have employed in the past have not had a good track record.
- [REDACTED] : - [REDACTED] spoke about a letter he wrote to the General Manager and did not get a response but rather a phone call from a staff member.
- [REDACTED] : - [REDACTED] stated that residents / ratepayers should not be held responsible for Council's incompetencies.
- One major problem is that it is costing council money to apply for grants.
- All agreed that there should be an independent audit of the Council's finances. Someone outside of the Riverina.
- There needs to be a rationalisation of the Finances, Staff Numbers and equipment.
- All agreed that they are not confident with the General Manager or the Councillors.
- There needs to be a major overhaul of the Council's operations.



That's all from me. If you need any more please let me know but it won't be till Sunday or Monday.



Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Wednesday, 6 March 2024

Please write your submission below:

Continual mismanagement of funding does not entitle a council too a special Rate variance. Snowy valley council has already increased its rates to an almost unsustainable level due to incompetence and poor management. Too allow another rise will only negatively effect its residents.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 11 March 2024

Please write your submission below:

Our farming community can not afford another rate hike . Farm commodity prices are well down and we have had to budget accordingly to stay afloat financially . Land values in our area have risen significantly in recent lines adding to our rate increases. We have had to make cuts on spending and I think it is time Council did the same to remain viable .



Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 12 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

Dear IPART, I would like to write to you to object to the proposed SRV by Snowy Valley Council. My husband and I are rate payers on our farm 18 km from Tumbarumba. I find this request by our council unreasonable and unjustified. As you are well aware we are in a cost of living crisis and here we have our council asking for a completely out of kilter 40% increase in our farm rates. I need not remind you that IPART have just awarded this council a 35.95% variation only 2 years ago. How can this council claim that Covid 19 and inflation have driven them to need yet another increase in our rates? I really don't know how we will raise the funds to pay this extra 40% when cattle prices have halved, fuel, freight, insurance and finance costs have increased. On top of this it has moved into a dry time placing further pressure on our ability to generate the profit to pay this increase. With regard to the previous SRV has the council even established that this has addressed their shortfall as they said 35.95% would? This request seems to be a rerun of the promises made in 2021 by our council. How is it our council is repetitively going to IPART asking for increases and our neighbouring councils are not? It seems to me Greater Hume Shire which is only a few kilometres to our west enjoy vastly lower rates. Why? Living on the southern end of the shire I see little benefit for our increase in rates which have increased in excess of 250% in recent years. It seems to me the majority of our rates and borrowed money is spent in Tumut which is of no benefit to me yet the council and its staff continue to build projects and we are lumbered with the cost. It seems to us when we speak to rate payers in the north of the shire they are not seeing the same sort of rate increases as us. This seems very unfair to me as they are not shouldering the same load but are closer to the benefits of Tumut where it seems the funds are being spent. In conclusion we will struggle to pay this unreasonable and out of kilter increase in rates and I hope IPART can recognise we are at their mercy. Please do not approve this SRV as we will be punished for the spending and management of our current council, their staff and its spending. Kind Regards [REDACTED]

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 15 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

We just can not afford this next increase, interest rate pressure, cost of living, livestock value has put great financial pressure on our family.

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 18 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

I object!! Bad management by SVC has caused this crisis



Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 18 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

I am a farm owner from Tumbarumba and I am astounded at this rate hike announced by SVC. Two years ago my rates were \$5000 and this year my rates are \$10,600 and next year I expect a bill for \$20,000. This is terrible news for our family. This is a blatant money grab to make up for the waste of money since amalgamation. Farms in Hume Shire pay so much less than those in our shire-how fair is that? Perhaps you could take a look at that anomaly and explain to ratepayers in SVC. We will probably have to sell our farm if rates keep rising and our children will have to move away and look for employment elsewhere. We are so distressed it is having health effects for us. We need an explanation of the difference in SVC and Hume Shire. We are the bunnies by the sound of it!

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Monday, 18 March 2024

Please write your submission below. (Before starting, please ensure that you have chosen the correct council from the dropdown list of councils, at the very top).

Dear IPART, As a member of a family farm paying farm rates this request for another 40% increase in rates is nothing but price gouging! No other cost can be increased by this amount following the previous 35.95% increase in 2021. How can I afford to come back and start out in agriculture when these sort of costs are just loaded into us? Please deny the Snowy Valley Council this SRV