

IPART  
Jim Cox  
CEO IPART  
Local Government Section  
PO Box Q290  
QVB POST OFFICE  
NSW 1230



22<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

Dear Jim Cox

**I wish to submit objections to the Special Rate Variation being applied for by the Kempsey Shire Council for 2012-13.**

Please find enclosed petitions against the proposed Special Rate Variation signed by residents of the Kempsey Shire of NSW as **Attachment 1**. These signatures were collected over a two week period being made accessible in only three suburbs due to other commitments and health issues. Their presence was not advertised to the general population. Therefore the **372** signatures obtained are a very limited representation of those who object to the proposal.

The petition states the following:

To IPART  
PO Box Q290  
QVB POST OFFICE NSW 1230

"We the undersigned request that you refuse the application for a Special Rate Variation by the Kempsey Shire Council on the grounds that it will cause considerable hardship and stress to a large proportion of property owners already struggling in this low socio-economic rural area.

Council informed residents the survey conducted by the council recently in 2011 resulted in the majority of responding residents not wanting the rate rise with a preference towards reduced services. We request better management of current funds and services. Public meetings held by Council regarding the proposed rate increase also found an overwhelming response against the proposed rate rise."



Please also find enclosed a copy of the brochure supplied to some householders by the Kempsey Shire Council as **Attachment 2**. I personally didn't receive one in my mailbox, I did however obtain a copy from another householder. Concerns were raised by some residents as to the times the meetings were held as many of those with families were prevented from attending. The presentation of the brochure and the way the meeting I attended was conducted, was that of a foregone conclusion rather than of any form of community consultation.

I would like to note at this point that at the meeting I attended, with a conservative estimate of 80 residents, a resident asked the attending residents to raise their hand if they were against the Kempsey Council applying for the Special Rate Variation and all but one voted against it. An attending resident who claimed to have previously worked in the Department of Local Government raised the option of the General Manager David Rawlings applying for funding through relevant government departments but this was not responded to at all with attention drawn to other matters.

During the course of the meeting I raised concerns in relation to unnecessary expenditure at a time when Kempsey Shire management are informing the residents of financial hardship, one example was the heating of a local swimming pool recently. A Kempsey Shire staff member informed the attending residents that this was financed with grant money, which I later confirmed was not the truth as Kempsey Council made contributions to this project. Please find enclosed a copy of our local newspaper article, obtained online, dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 in relation to this as **Attachment 3**. There is a loss of faith and integrity in the Kempsey Shire Council. One month previously an article, in the local Argus paper dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011, discusses a report from the General Manager of Kempsey Shire Council Mr. Rawlings that mentions swimming pools being decommissioned during the winter season and other relevant findings. Please find a copy of the article as **Attachment 4**. I don't find it unreasonable to feel there are management issues that need addressing.

There are also the ongoing dramatically increasing running costs associated with this luxury the community to date has previously never had and managed to live without. Then more recently I found another community pool has also been afforded the same luxury. There are also other costly and very questionable projects afoot.

Please find a copy of my letter to the General Manager of Kempsey Shire Council dated 30<sup>th</sup> July 2011 in relation to my objection to the Special Rate Variation and my questioning management of community funds as **Attachment 5**.

**Attachment 6** is Kempsey Council's response to my letter submitted as **Attachment 5**. The statements in Kempsey Council's response to me regarding the \$3million are inconsistent with the statements made by the General Manager David Rawlings in **Attachment 4**. Where the Argus states the General Manager David Rawlings said he "found" an extra \$3million and then he goes on to identify numerous other avenues that differ from the claimed \$3million from Natural Disaster Funding as a result from the delayed 2009 flood damage as claimed in **Attachment 6** being the local Argus paper article dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

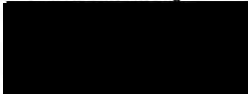
Also **Attachment 7** is a copy from our local quarter publication 'The Happenings' that has a section 'from the Mayor', dated 27<sup>th</sup> July 2011, the Mayor at the time being

Councillor John Bowell. It has the Mayor stating that Council must be prepared to explore other avenues of increasing income from sources, other than the ratepayers and/or reducing overheads across the board. This was also the general consensus at the community meeting I attended held in relation to the Special Rate Variation.

In light of what I understand this community of ours is referred to as a disadvantaged community by state and federal governments, placing the Kempsey Shire fourth from the bottom in socio-economic terms nationwide in an article of the newspaper 'The Mid-Coast Observer' dated 11th May 2011 as being explained by Kempsey Councillor Betty Green. The majority of residents cannot afford and do not want a Special Rate Variation.

Thankyou for your consideration of the objections to the Special Rate Variation being applied for by Kempsey Shire Council.

Yours Sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.A black rectangular redaction box covering contact information, likely a phone number or email address.



# Attachment 1 (17 pages)

## PETITION AGAINST KEMPSEY RATE RISE

### To IPART

P.O. Box Q290  
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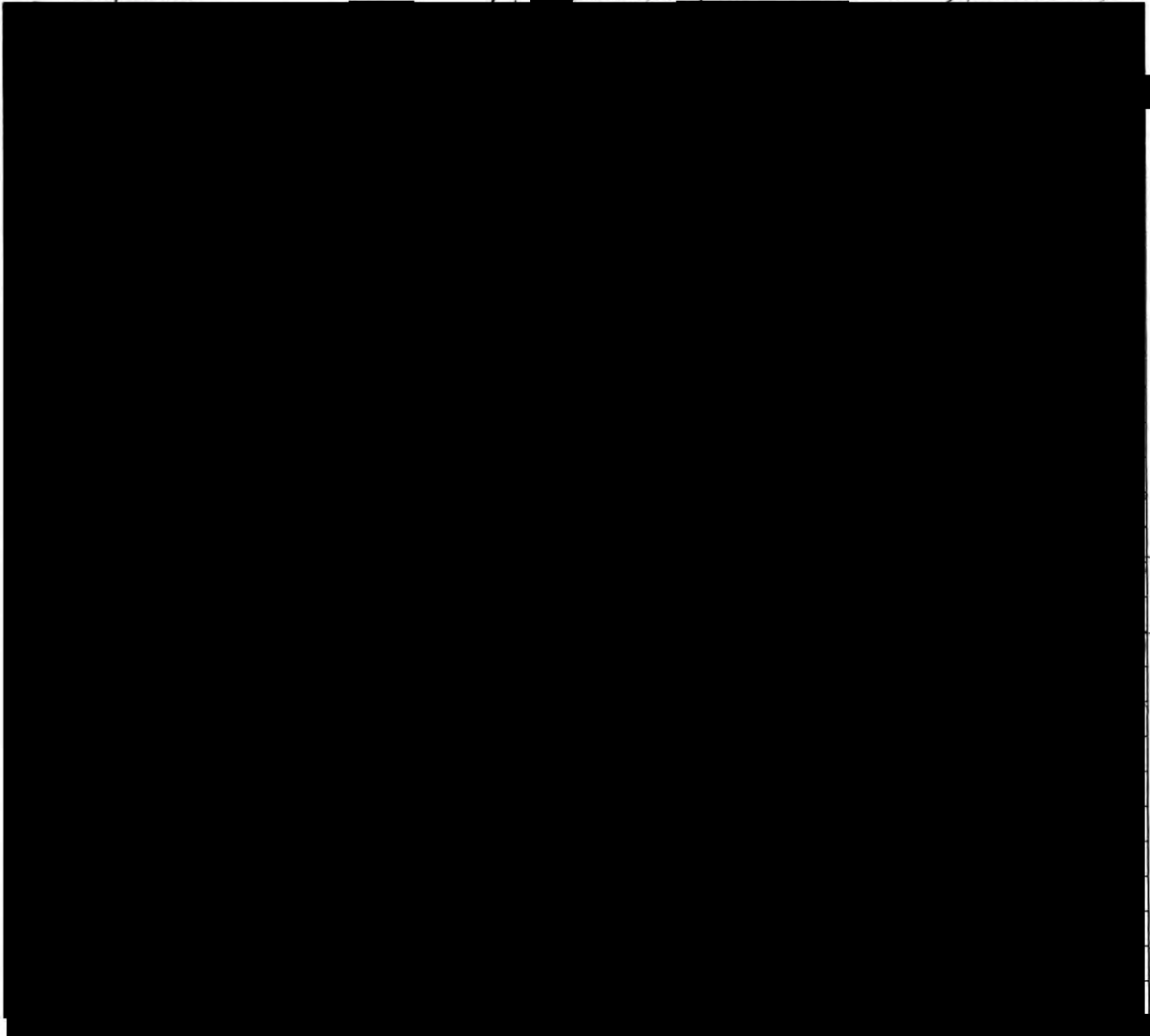
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# PETITION AGAINST KEMPSEY RATE RISE

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CIVIL POST OFFICE NSW 1230

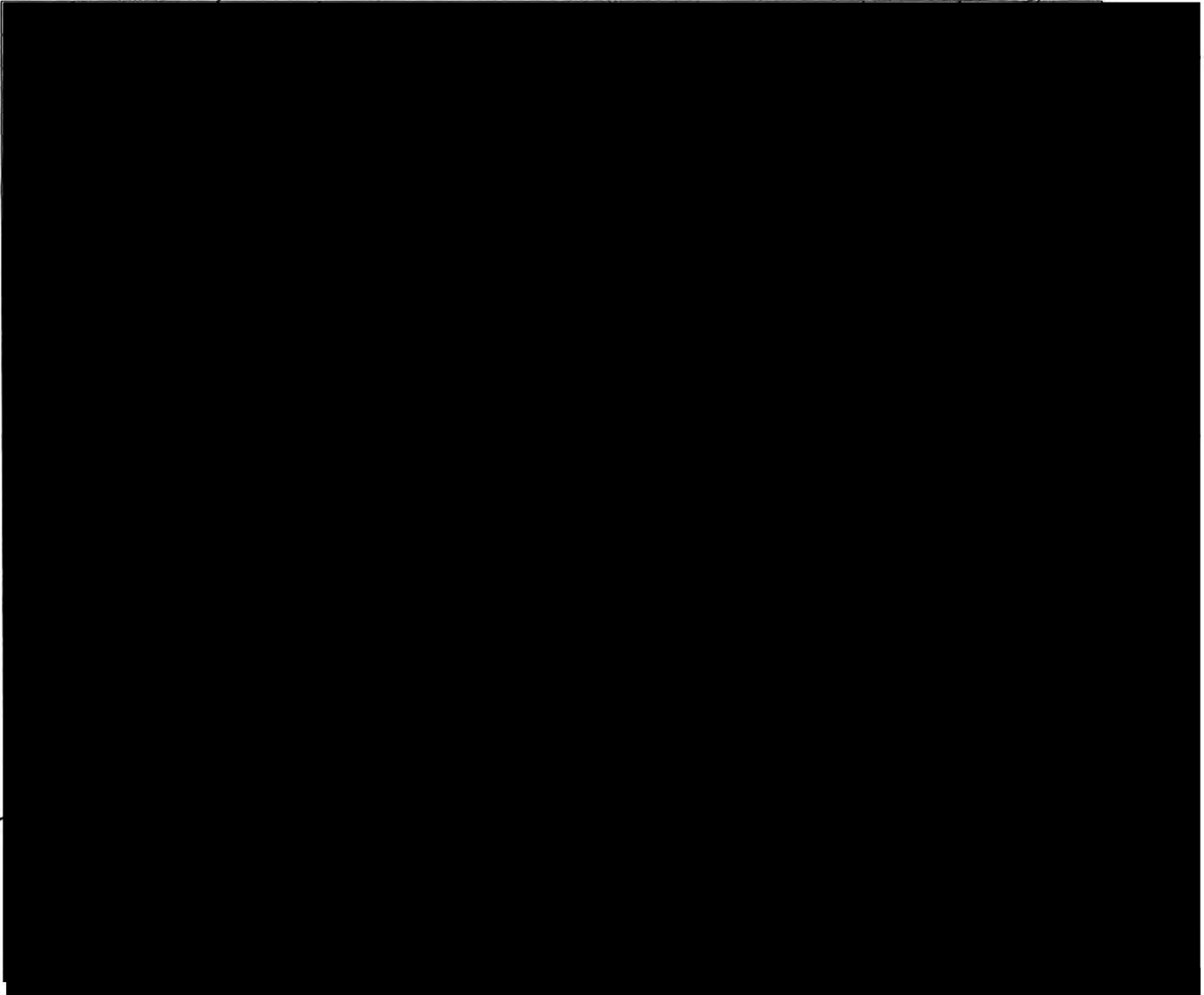
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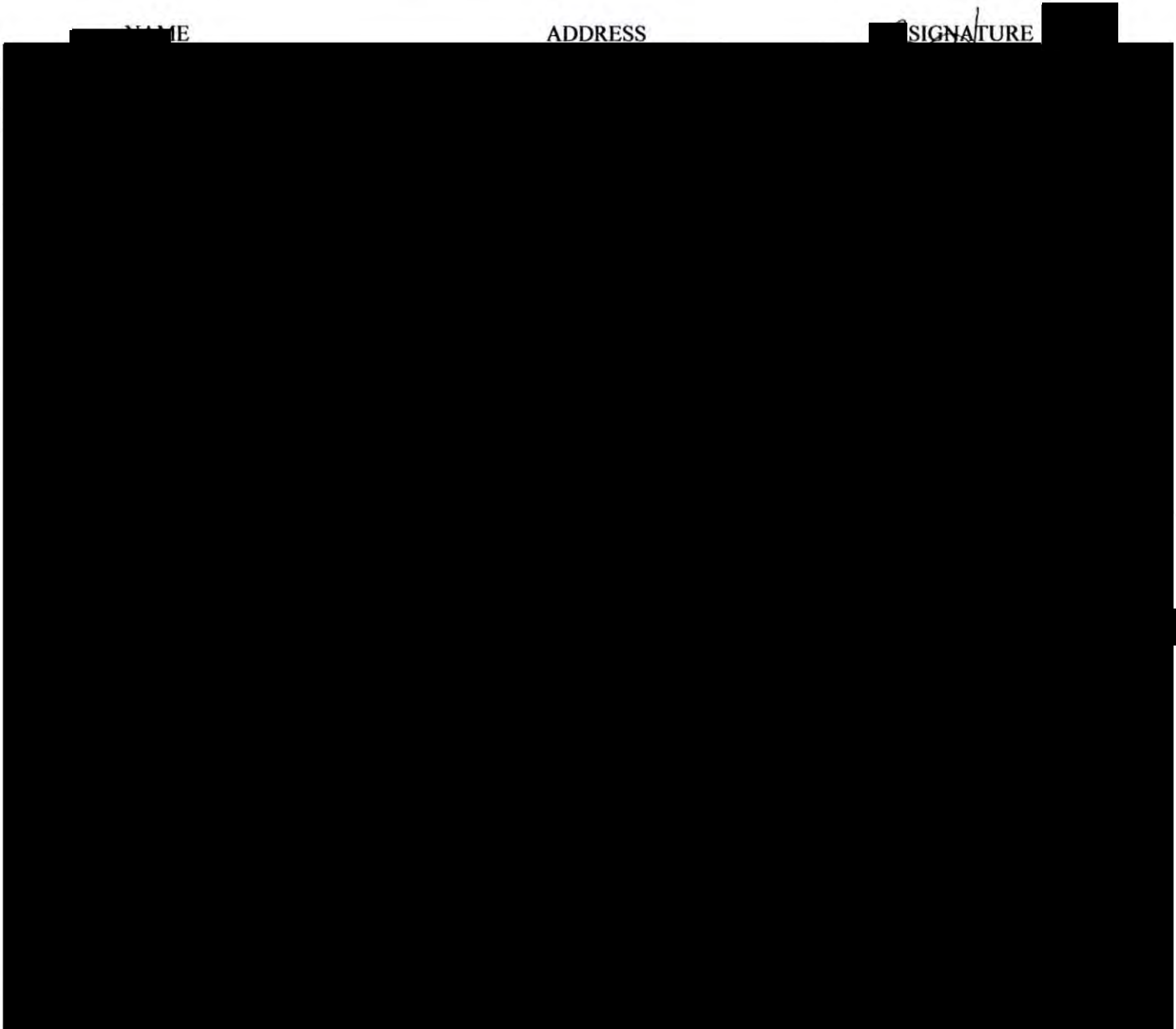
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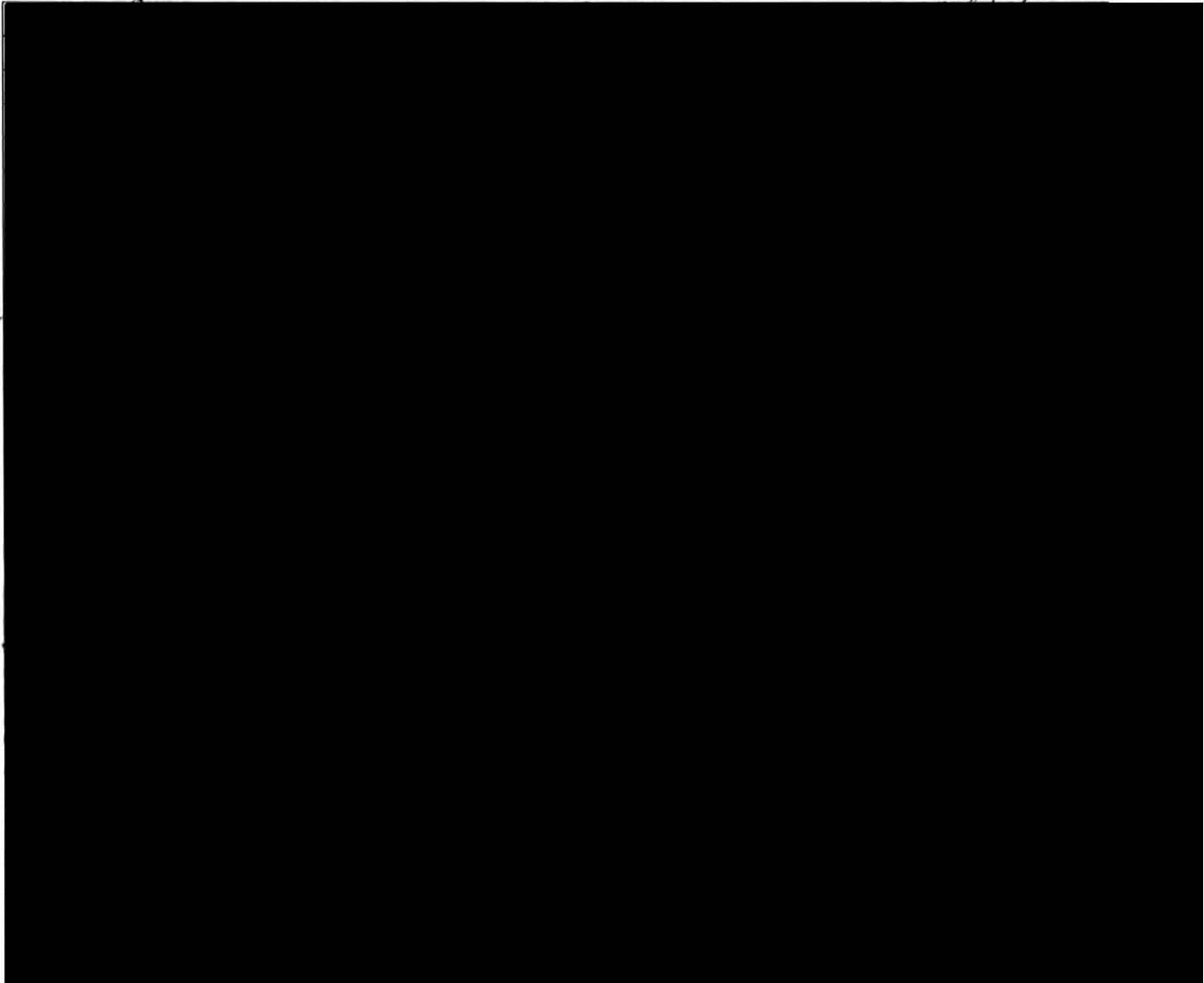
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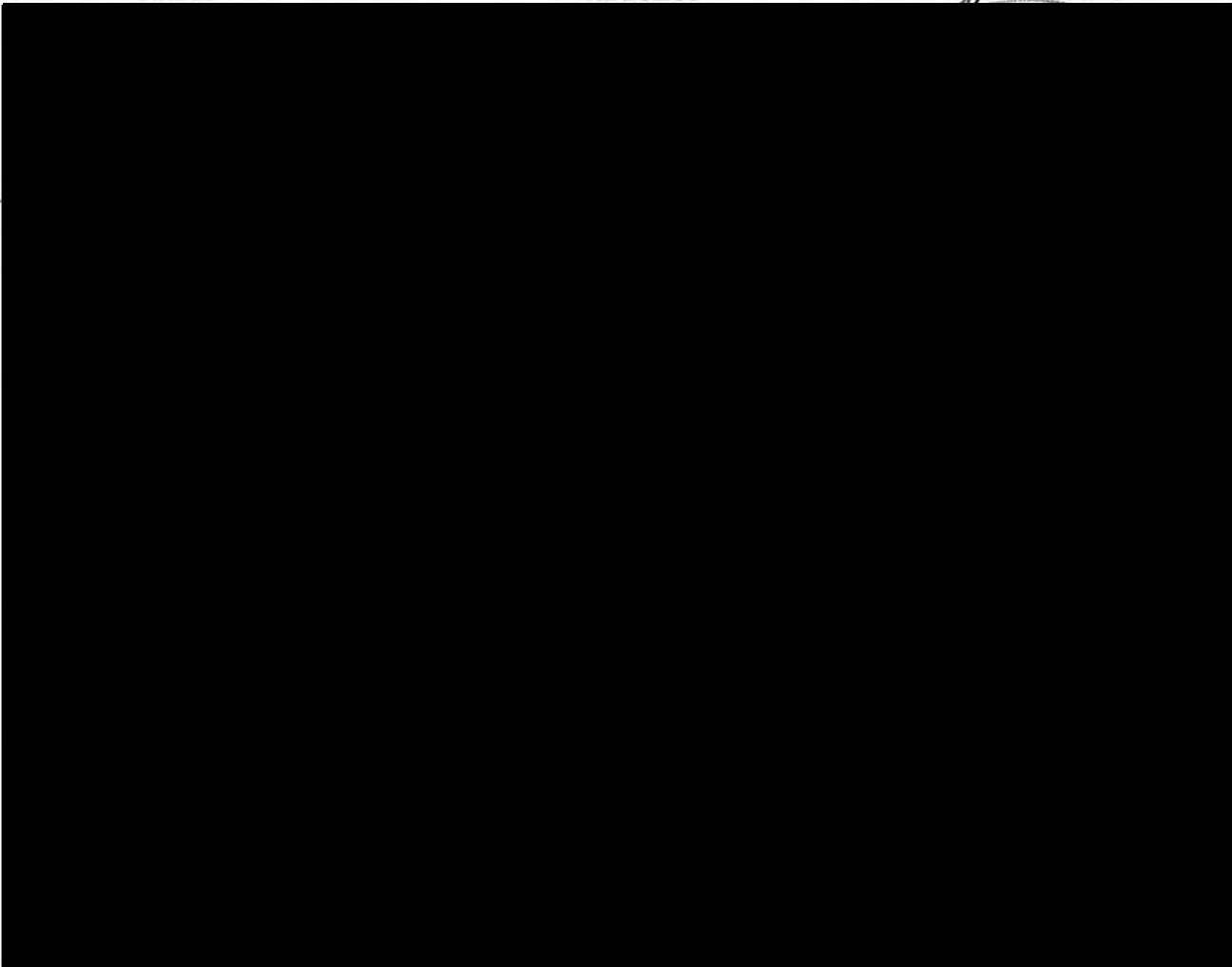
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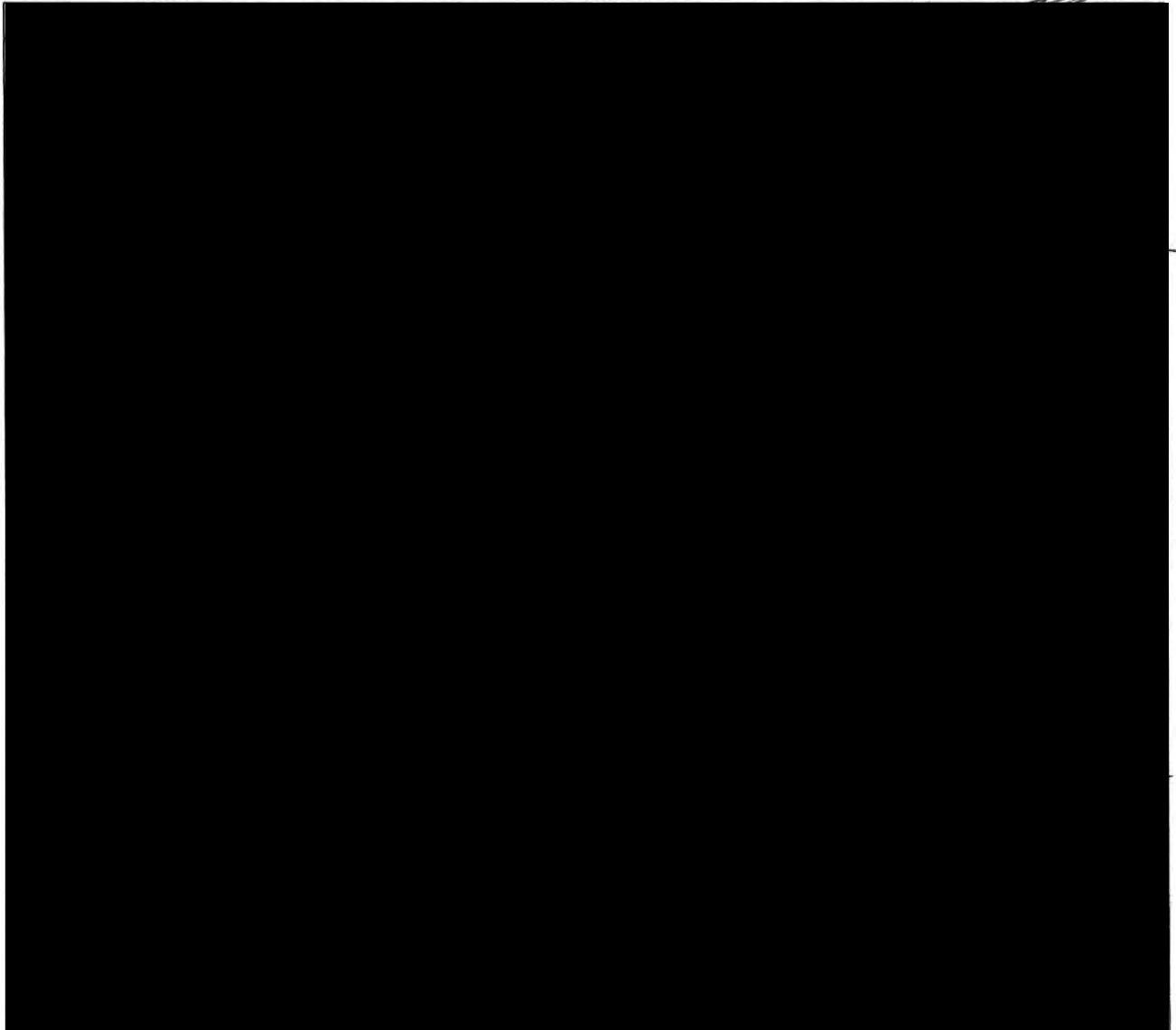
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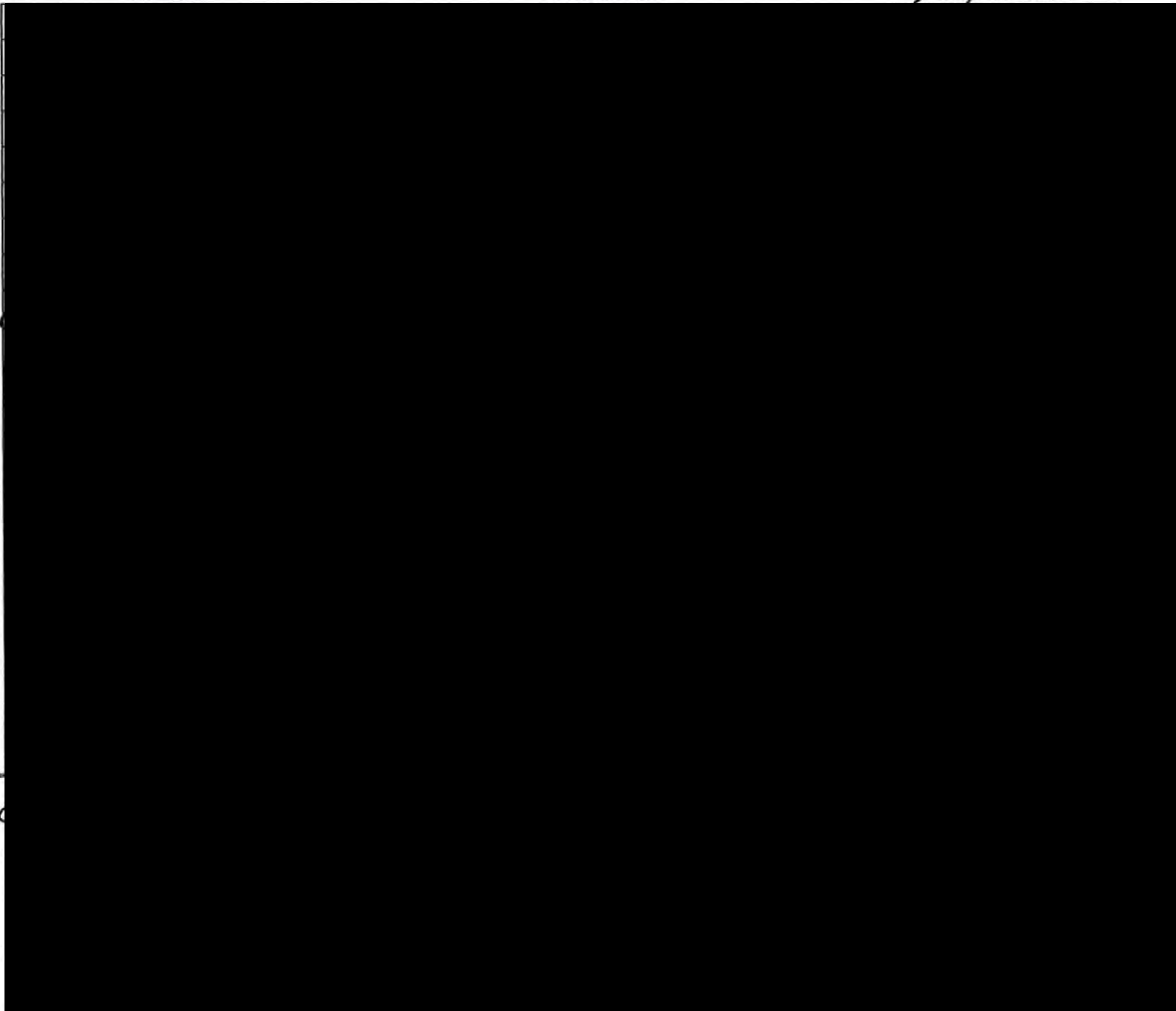
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PRIORITY	SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
1	LOCAL ROADS	Local road network comprising of sealed and unsealed roads, 1,123km across the Shire.
2	BRIDGES	146 road bridges, 23 timber bridges, provide connection for road networks.
3	STORMWATER AND FLOODING	Construct and maintain drainage infrastructure to control urban runoff to protect natural systems and private and public assets.
4	COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	This deals with managing processes within the coastal zone and development within sensitive areas. Also addressing the expected climate change and sea level rises.
5	ESTUARY MANAGEMENT	Managing the natural processes that effect the health of the aquatic ecosystems within the coastal creeks and estuaries.
6	FLOOD MANAGEMENT	Flood planning and modelling to maximise protection to public and private assets.
7	STRATEGIC LAND USE PLANNING	This is a key activity for Council having direct input into many other Council functions. This planning caters for an increasing population by providing adequate supply of land for a range of different uses and to facilitate employment generating development.
8	CUSTOMER SERVICES	Council's call centre, counter services and visitor information services.
9	PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Developing strategic relationships with businesses to maximise opportunities for economic development, including marketing the Macleay Valley as a tourist destination.
10	VEGETATION MANAGEMENT	Implementing programs to assist with Noxious Weed removal.
11	BEACH FORESHORES	Provision of Surf Lifesaving services at South West Rocks, Hat Head and Crescent Head.
12	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INSPECTION	Regulatory functions to ensure Public Health Act inspections and food surveillance programs for public safety.
13	LIBRARY SERVICES	Include book and electronic and internet services at Kempsey, South West Rocks, Stuarts Point and Hat Head. The provision of home delivery services and cultural exhibitions. School holiday activities.
14	SALEYARDS	Provision of suitable infrastructure to support cattle farmers of the Macleay Valley. Supports economic development through the sale of cattle and other livestock.
15	AIRPORT	Airport facilities utilised by emergency services, air ambulance and recreational flyers.
16	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION	Implements programs such as alcohol awareness, road safety and home security. Strong relationships with local law enforcement to assist with programs and provides community feedback.
17	CEMETERY FACILITIES	The provision and maintenance of 9 cemetery sites for public use.
18	ENVIRONMENTAL REHABILITATION	Undertake works to repair damage to the natural environment as a result of past land use practices. Impacts on water quality.
19	PARKS	The provision and maintenance of public parks for recreational activities.
20	PUBLIC TOILETS	Council maintains 32 separate toilet facilities within the Shire.
21	SPORTING GROUNDS	The provision and maintenance of sporting fields.
22	ART GALLERY	The gallery provides space for local and visiting artists to display and sell their art. Cultural venue for visiting exhibitions.
23	ONSITE SEWERAGE MANAGEMENT	Supports commitment to quality water supplies and public health through the inspection of on site sewerage treatment facilities.
24	STREET SWEEPING	Selected urban areas.
25	SWIMMING POOLS	Provision of public swimming pools at South West Rocks, Crescent Head, Gladstone and Kempsey.
26	YOUTH SERVICES	Development and implementing local youth programs to celebrate young people in the Macleay and provide activities for young people. Also supports the Youth Advisory Council.
27	STREET LIGHTING	Ongoing network and electricity fees paid for by the community.
28	CYCLE WAYS AND FOOTPATHS	The network of footpaths and cycleways provided for the community use.
29	COMMUNITY BUILDINGS / HALLS	The provision and maintenance of public halls for community use.
30	BOAT RAMPS	There are 20 separate boat ramps maintained by Council on the Macleay.
31	FESTIVALS / CULTURAL EVENTS	Support for existing events and the provision to establish a new festival for the community.
32	VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES	Providing visitors with information on the Shire located at South Kempsey and South West Rocks.
33	COMMUNITY SUBSIDIES / DONATIONS	Community financial support to local organisations in the way of rate subsidies, donations. Community groups also provided the opportunity to apply for grants for particular projects.

## TO THE HOUSEHOLDER

Do you live in the Kempsey Shire?

**There are changes about to happen which will affect YOU.**

Please read...

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

DATE	TOWN	VENUE	TIME
Tuesday 22 Feb	STUARTS POINT	Stuarts Point Hall	5.30 – 7.00pm
Wednesday 23 Feb	HAT HEAD	Surf Club	5.30 – 7.00pm
Tuesday 1 March	WILLAWARRIN	Willawarrin Hall	5.30 – 7.00pm
Wednesday 2 March	CRESCENT HEAD	Surf Club	5.30 – 7.00pm
Tuesday 8 March	SMITHTOWN	Smithtown Hall	6.00 – 7.30pm
Wednesday 9 March	BELLBROOK	Bellbrook Hall	5.30 – 7.00pm
Tuesday 15 March	FREDERICKTON	School of Arts Hall	5.30 – 7.00pm
Wednesday 16 March	KUNDABUNG/DONDINGALONG	Kundabung Hall	5.30 – 7.00pm
Tuesday 22 March	SOUTH WEST ROCKS	SWR Surf Club	5.30 – 7.00pm
Wednesday 23 March	KEMPSEY	Council Chambers	5.30 – 7.00pm





Kempsey Shire Council is currently facing a shortfall in funding and in order to maintain the level of services that it currently provides Council will seek approval for an **average** extra \$5.00 per assessment per week rate rise (to be phased in over a three year period e.g. 2011/12 \$2.00; 2012/13 \$2.00; 2013/14 \$1.00).

**WHAT CAN I EXPECT IF COUNCIL GAINS APPROVAL FOR AN EXTRA-ORDINARY RATE RISE?** The Shires' average ordinary rates will rise by \$5.00 on average per assessment per week. Residents and ratepayers can continue with the current level of services Council provides, with improved road network surface.

**IF COUNCIL DOES NOT GAIN APPROVAL FOR AN EXTRA-ORDINARY RATE RISE WHAT SERVICES WILL THE COMMUNITY LOSE?** Councillors have identified what they consider to be the most essential services through to those that are less essential. The less essential services will be the first to be reduced or in some cases cease. A full list of these services is outlined on the opposite page. Further explanation is available on the back page.

**HOW WAS THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES DETERMINED?** In October and November 2010 Council held nine community meetings where the shortfall of funding was discussed. Residents and ratepayers were then asked to fill in a survey to identify their priorities. The Councillors considered the results of the survey, compared them to a 2008 survey and then at two meetings compiled the prioritised list of services.

**HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?** Council will be undertaking a round of ten community meetings commencing on February 22, 2011 at which General Manager, Senior Council staff and Councillors will be present to discuss this issue. Details will be included in the Macleay Valley Happynings and the Macleay Argus. Alternatively, visit our website [www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au) or phone the Customer First Centre on 6566 3200 and request an information package.

**HOW CAN I MAKE A SUBMISSION?**

You can forward your comments to Council in writing PO Box 3078 West Kempsey or via the website [www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au).

The table below lists the major services Kempsey Shire Council provides. Council has ranked these services in order of priority (the highest being Roads and lowest being Community subsidies/donations). This ranking was compiled in conjunction with the results of two recent community surveys. The key below highlights the different considerations related to each of the services.

MAJOR COUNCIL SERVICES	Final Priority	COMMUNITY SURVEYS			Required Funding ('000)	Services that can be provided at varying levels of rate increases					
		2010		2008		None	With \$2.50	With \$3.50	With \$4.00	With \$4.50	With \$5.00
		Priority	Inc or Retain			0.0%	15.7%	22.5%	25.7%	28.9%	32.1%
LOCAL ROADS	1	1	98.68%	2	7,929	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BRIDGES	2	2	97.95%	2	740	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STORMWATER AND FLOODING	3	4	89.86%	3	555	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	4	30	52.00%	7	0	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
ESTUARY MANAGEMENT	5	27	54.05%	7	250	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
FLOOD MANAGEMENT	6	13	70.75%	N/A	300	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STRATEGIC LAND USE PLANNING	7	23	60.27%	10	600	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CUSTOMER SERVICES	8	12	70.75%	5	843	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	9	24	60.00%	11	350	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT	10	16	69.80%	N/A	157	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BEACH FORESHORES	11	14	71.33%	N/A	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INSPECTION	12	25	57.05%	N/A	200	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LIBRARY SERVICES	13	11	75.00%	6	960	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SALEYARDS	14	22	60.40%	21	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
AIRPORT	15	17	67.57%	N/A	98	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION	16	8	77.62%	1	128	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CEMETERY FACILITIES	17	5	83.89%	N/A	28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ENVIRONMENTAL REHABILITATION	18	28	53.69%	7	0	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
PARKS	19	10	77.33%	13	990	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PUBLIC TOILETS	20	3	91.33%	4	321	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SPORTING GROUNDS	21	7	78.00%	15	481	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ART GALLERY	22	32	40.82%	20	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ONSITE SEWERAGE MANAGEMENT	23	29	53.10%	7	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STREET SWEEPING	24	19	65.75%	N/A	389	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SWIMMING POOLS	25	9	77.33%	14	762	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
YOUTH SERVICES	26	26	55.26%	12	108	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
STREET LIGHTING	27	6	83.67%	N/A	430	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
CYCLE WAYS AND FOOTPATHS	28	20	66.22%	8	201	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
COMMUNITY BUILDINGS / HALLS	29	15	71.03%	16	336	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
BOAT RAMPS	30	18	66.89%	19	96	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
FESTIVALS / CULTURAL EVENTS	31	31	46.62%	N/A	61	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES	32	21	62.59%	9	142	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
COMMUNITY SUBSIDIES / DONATIONS	33	33	37.58%	N/A	63	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓

✓	Continue to provide
✗	No longer provide long term

Blue	Provide on basis of no rate subsidy	Yellow	Can provide at this level of funding
Orange	Can afford once loans are paid out	Red	Not affordable at this level
Green	Legislative Service	Dark Blue	Previously Committed to



## The Macleay **ARGUS**

# Celebration time after pool heated

01 Apr, 2011 09:58 AM

THE Crescent Head Pointers Swimming Club members and management of the Crescent Aquatic Centre are in celebration mode.

Today is the first day of their extended season after pool heating was installed during the week.

This exciting upgrade is the result of the Pointers being recipients of the NSW Government Community Building Partnerships Grant, along with contributions from the Kempsey Shire Council and others.

Crescent Head's pool will be open for an extra four months of the year, closing only for June and July for yearly maintenance.

With the pool being heated to 28 degrees, this means the enthusiastic and excited swimmers can continue their training for a longer period and compete in winter carnivals and development sessions.

Crescent Head Pointers members are happy to share this wonderful upgrade to their home pool.

They are looking forward to seeing others enjoy the warm water.

Lap swimming, triathlon training, aqua fitness classes and of course the very important learn-to-swim lessons can also continue throughout these extra months.

Contact the pool to see how you can enjoy this wonderful community asset on 6566 0466.

- The heated Kempsey Swimming Pool will be open for six days a week for the next couple of months.

The pool will be closed Sundays, and will be closed during the months of June and July.



# No rate rise yet

## Council boss to push for delay

By Luke Horton

A SPECIAL \$5 per week rate rise may be delayed until the 2012-13 financial year.

Kempsey Shire Council general manager David Rawlings will recommend at next week's meeting that council delays its push for a special rate variation for 12 months.

Mr Rawlings said he had found an extra \$3 million in council's budget, which would allow the council to "keep limping along" for another year without placing further pressure on ratepayers.

He said budget cuts, plus a significant Natural Disaster payment from the RTA for damage caused by the 2009 floods,

Continued: Page 2

### Plan to move Cup

THERE is a strong push to bring the Kempsey Cup back home to the Warwick Park Racecourse this year.

Kempsey Race Club hopes to move the Cup



Healthy eating: Smithtown Public School students Jayden Devlin, Brock Rosten, Shannon Bakker, Tasmen Gaskell, Isabella Gardiner and Erin Sanders proudly show off their pumpkins. Picture by Jarrod Lipscombe

## School reaping rewards of a bumper harvest

CHILDREN at Smithtown Public School are reaping the rewards of a bumper pumpkin harvest.

tifully with the help of regular summer rain and sunshine.

Year 4 student Jayden came into school each day during the holidays

produced a bountiful crop of more than 60 pumpkins.

Some were sold to parents and the remainder were sold to local fruit and

Two pumpkins have been cooked and frozen ready to make pumpkin soup in the school's upcoming Kids in the Kitchen program.

Each week near support groups





□ David Rawlings

□ From Page 1  
meant council could do without a special rise in 2011-12.

But he said the reprieve was only temporary and a special rate rise would still be required in the years to come.

Council has managed to find:  
□ \$1 million in savings from the 2010-11 budget.

□ \$938,000 after a decision not to apply for any loans to fund capital works projects.

□ \$736,000 after a reduction in its administration costs from 13.6 to 12 per cent.

□ \$1.2 million from the RTA for flood damage repairs.

"It's about the same amount we have gone to the community to ask for," Mr Rawlings said.

Mr Rawlings said there were upsides and downsides to delaying a rate rise for a further 12 months.

"It allows the community a 12 month break with no rate rise," he said.

"The downside is council will need to hold over projects that were planned for this year to be able to resource operations in the coming 12 month period.

"Projects such as (the Clyde St Mall) and town improve-

ment works would need to be deferred, rather than council bringing in contractors to achieve the workload by the June 30 deadline."

Mr Rawlings said he did not think he was exacerbating the problem by increasing the backlog of capital works projects.

"I don't think one year's going to kill us," he said.

"There's no denying we're going backwards at the moment.

"But we can't afford to fix the backlog today.

"We have to start somewhere

and that should be the place where most ratepayers get the benefit, then slowly creep out.

"It doesn't matter if things take a bit longer as long as you're successful."

Community consultations on the need for a \$5 per week rate rise - to be introduced over three years with \$2 per week increases in the first two years, then a dollar the year after that - will continue regardless of council's decision.

"Council has to set a long term direction and the determination on the appropriate level of services that will be funded

is fundamental," Mr Rawlings said.

"It should be noted that council will still be going backwards, financially, at a significant rate.

"It still isn't possible to sustainably provide all of the services and the figures that have previously been provided are still relevant as they refer to the long term position of council, not the short term."

□ Have your say: email to editor.macleayargus@ruralpress.com

# FUNDRAISER

## for Point Plomer Burns Victims

Wednesday March 16

### TWILIGHT BOWLS

5.30pm Start  
Mufti Dress

Thursday March 17

### GOLF DAY

4 person Ambrose  
Tee Times: 7.30am - 8.30am  
or 12noon - 1.00pm

Friday March 18

### BOWLS DAY

9.30am Start  
Mufti Dress

Sunday March 19

### ENTERTAINMENT RAFFLES AUCTION

7.00pm Start

To enter call John in the Sports Shop 6566 1211  
or the Club 6566 0268

Cash donations welcome at any Westpac Branch

Account Holder: Crescent Head Country Club Ltd

Account: Burn Victims Trust - BSB: 032580 A/C No. 206676

Donations of Prizes & Auction items welcome



# CRESCENT HEAD COUNTRY CLUB

www.chclub.com.au • BOWLS • GOLF • TENNIS



"The Choice you make in paradise"

Club: 6566 0268

# Ramps, halls, parks may have to go

BOAT ramps, public halls, cycleways and footpaths, sporting grounds, parks and public toilets could all be lost in the next five years.

A report from general manager David Rawlings to come before council next Tuesday gives a clear indication of what could happen if a special rate rise is not supported next year.

It details services council feels it can continue to provide as well as those that will be streamlined, or in some cases perhaps lost altogether, should current levels of funding be maintained.

"My gut feeling is there is not many services a lot of people want to do without," Mr Rawlings said.

"I don't want to see a reduction in services."

The services council feels it can continue to maintain include roads, bridges, stormwater and flood mitigation, environmental projects, customer services, strategic land

use planning, development of employment opportunities, the library and the airport.

In a worst-case scenario, those services at risk could be streamlined or phased out over the next five years starting from July 1.

Sporting grounds could be sold off or placed under the care of community trusts, while parks could also be sold.

From July, low use boat ramps would be closed, with those that remain staying open only until a lack of maintenance makes them unsafe.

Footpaths would remain until the point when they need replacing, upon which they would simply revert back to unpaved ground.

Public toilets would be closed and street lights would no longer be provided in some areas once council contracts run out.

Swimming pools would be decommissioned during the winter season.

Contracts with operators would be paid out by council.

Community subsidies and donations, already cut back, would cease, while public halls would revert back to being the responsibility of the groups that use them.

The visitor information centre would be closed if the business community could not come up with an alternative funding source.

Festivals and cultural events, such as the Australia Day awards and ceremony, would be stopped.

Cemetery services could fall back on the community or families.

As many as five council staff would be made redundant if all the changes were implemented.

Council is looking to apply for a \$5 per week special rate rise - introduced over three years - to overcome a spending gap of \$8.9 million.

Even if a rate rise is approved there is likely to be a reduction or cessation of some services.

## A big spend at the airport

KEMPSEY Airport looks set to be a significant financial drain in the next 18 months.

Council's general manager David Rawlings said it was likely the council would have to spend a considerable amount of money on the airport in the next financial year.

Mr Rawlings said the airport runway required resealing while the announcement of the federal government's \$1.4 billion regional development fund last

"There'll be a big spend out there either way," he said.

The \$22 million centre of excellence project involves the expansion of airports and aviation services in the Port Macquarie-Hastings, Taree and Kempsey local government areas.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced the aviation hub would be a priority project under the fund as part of a deal to form government with rural independents Tony Windsor and Rob Oakeshott.



The General Manager  
Kempsey Shire Council  
PO Box 3078  
West Kempsey  
NSW 2440



30th July 2011

Dear Mr Rawlings

I wish to express my objection to the proposed Special Rate Variation. Clearly, as stated by you previously and observed by me, there has been an overwhelming objection by the community to your proposal. The mysterious finding on your part of an extra \$3 million dollars, which in turn enabled you to defer your application for the Special Rate Variation for this year, is indeed a wonder. I question if having missed the 2011 application date had any bearing on this. It certainly, in my mind, raises questions on the management of community funds which are apparently floating about unbeknown to anyone, while most of the community is trying to cope with the financial strain of paying their bills in the current economic climate of dramatically increasing living costs.

I cannot help but think while you are increasing your income at the community's expense that you and those councillors, who are also not representing their community on this issue, have lost perspective on the type of impact this will have on a large proportion of the community. Times are tough and we all need manage what we already have more efficiently rather than further burdening this low socioeconomic area forcing the community into financial hardship.

The community stated their preference was reduced services rather than the rate increase. What was the point in wasting community money on surveys and meetings that clearly never were to have a bearing on the decision to apply for the Special rate variation?

Sincerely







Ref: 483 (455165)  
KEO:lms

29 August 2011

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

**Proposed Special Rate Variation**

Thank you for your letter received 2 August 2011 objecting to the proposed Special Rate Variation. I note your objection to the proposed rate increase.

With reference to your statement concerning the \$3million in funding, this sum is the amount received by Council through the Natural Disaster Funding as a result of the 2009 flood damage, extensive delays and appeals to the NSW Government held up the release of these funds.

Council did consider the responses to the surveys, letters and face-to-face meetings when determining whether to apply for a rate variation. In weighing up community services required by the Macleay Valley, Council resolved to proceed with an application.

Your objection has been recorded.

[Redacted]lly

[Redacted]  
Kathy Oliver  
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



# from the MAYOR

## KEEP AUSTRALIA BEAUTIFUL

The Clean Beaches program is to be conducted again this year with awards in respect to beaches, waste management, environmental protection, water conservation, community partnership and young legends.

The awards will acknowledge the outstanding achievements of councils, community groups, schools, businesses and dedicated individuals.

Our areas have been successful in gaining awards in the past and we look forward to further recognition.

## COUNCILLOR NUMBERS

I am pleased with the decision to maintain the status quo and have nine (9) councillors to represent our community.

From my point of view the major concern is Council's ability to provide services to the expectations of the community and to maintain the infrastructure to the acceptable standard.

The saving of \$50,000 per annum in a reduction of two councillors would not go far to address these concerns.

Council must be prepared to explore other avenues of increasing income from sources, other than the ratepayers, and/or by reducing overheads across the board.

## YOUTH

It was good to hear from Paul Hernage, Regional Director, and Tracy Gibb, Project Officer, Department Sport and Recreation, when they made a presentation to council last week on the Macleay Valley Youth Project.

Together with the Youth Advisory Council the project has increased opportunities for our youth to participate in sport and recreation which enhances personal development, community cohesion and pride.

There is a wide variety of upcoming programs details of which are available by contacting Councils Youth Officer through Customer Services or by access to Councils website.

Hopefully the proposal of the North Coast Academy of Sport to introduce specific youth programs in our area will contribute to this project.

## RIVERSIDE PARK – ACQUATIC ACTIVITIES

As reported in last Tuesdays Macleay Argus a proposal to apply for funding to upgrade Riverside Park was to provide for activities associated with the Macleay River.

The project was to include the enlargement of the Crescent Head Surf Club building so as to accommodate the dragon boat and other river craft and improvements to the wharf ramp and foreshore area.

This could well have facilitated sporting activities for our youth.

Council resolved to defer consideration of the matter which will now deny us the opportunity to apply for a grant through the Build Better Boating Facilities which closes on Friday 29 July 2011.



Councillor John Bowell

## CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The major political parties have agreed to have a referendum in 2013 to allow the community to have their say as to whether local government should be recognised within the Australian Constitution.

However, in my opinion, it will be up to local government to convince our communities that they should vote YES to support this reform.

Local government is no doubt the level of government that is the closest to the people.

It is the government that the community looks to for basic services and to the provision and maintenance of infrastructure.

Local government, however, requires additional funding which is not at the expense of the ratepayer.

By inclusion in the Australian Constitution local government can legally be provided with direct funding from the federal government.

## MELVILLE HIGH B.E.R. PROGRAM

It was a pleasure for Fay and I to be invited to Melville High to unveil a plaque in recognition for the \$1.8m in funding provided by the federal government for the refurbishment of the science rooms.

Senator Chris Evans acknowledged the work and effort Principal Rob Bourke and staff had invested in the school.

## ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Council has resolved to make further representatives to the State Government in an effort to ensure the appropriate financial assistance is provided to support our farming and business community.

PN2164546

## Story times

THE Stuarts Point Library has begun a regular story time program for young children on the last Thursday of each month during term time.

Storyteller Sharen invites you to join her on Thursday, July 28 at 11am at the Stuarts Point Library for stories and activities.

Everyone welcome. For inquiries call 6569 0289.

Kempsey Library's next story time for preschoolers will be held on Friday, July 29 at 10.30am.

Join storyteller Rozzi for a book reading and craft. Everyone is welcome, no need to book.

For inquiries phone the library on 6566 3210.

## Family History

THE next meeting of Kempsey Library's Family History Group will be held on Monday, August 1 from 10.15am.

This group has been in operation for more than a year and has a core of dedicated and experienced family history researchers who enjoy sharing skills and knowledge.

Everyone with an interest in family history is welcome to attend and share morning tea and tales with the Kempsey Family History Group.

Inquiries can be made to group co-ordinator Phyllis Wooderson on 6562 4992 or the Kempsey Library on 6566 3210.

## Calling knitters

CALLING all knitters.

You are invited to join the 2011 ABC Knit In by coming into the Kempsey Library on Friday, August 5 from 10am to 5pm to knit and natter.

Kempsey's local knitting group, Hook with Love, will be there with refreshments, wool and needles and plenty of good company.

If you can't make it on the day, you can still contribute by knitting squares at home and dropping them into the library.

The Hook with Love group is also asking for donations of 8 ply wool, and number 10 (4mm) needles - if you can help please drop these into the library.

Patterns for squares can be collected from Hat Head, Stuarts Point, South West Rocks and Kempsey Libraries, or posted out on request.

The squares are made into wraps to give warmth to those less fortunate and to people who have been affected by disasters.

For inquiries please phone the Hook with Love co-ordinator Adrienne Burton on 0401 306 713 or Kempsey Library on 6566 3210.

## Art Collective

THE meeting of the Art Collective held on Friday, July 15 decided on a date for the upcoming Silk Screen workshop to be led by Jim Peck.

All members of the collective are therefore invited to attend the workshop on Sunday, July 31 beginning at 9am.

The venue is the home of the Thrings in Lawrence Crescent, Kempsey.

Anyone wishing to attend please call Shirley or George on 6562 6004.

Numbers are limited to the first 12 people who book in.

Please bring some art paper, watercolour would be best, or good quality cartridge paper would suffice.

All other materials will be supplied.

□ VACANCIES exist in the Monday Art Group for anyone interested in art classes.

Everyone is welcome, so please ring Shirley on 6562 6004.