

10th January 2012



B. GRANT-CURTIS

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
P.O. Box 290  
QVB Post office NSW 1230

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Port Macquarie/Hastings Council  
"SURVEY" - "How Will Council  
Fund Future Services"  
Proposals for Rates Increases.

I have lived in Port Macquarie for over 35 years and have observed Council amalgamations and exponential growth of the area etc.

Over the years Council has become "Big Business" and indulges in activities which are NOT CORE BUSINESS but are at the behest of TOURISM, Chamber of Commerce CBD interests etc, at the cost of general ratepayers and at the neglect of BASIC SERVICES within the WHOLE Local Govt. area.

Council has lavished huge amounts of ratepayers' monies on glamorous projects (such as "The Glasshouse" (which was proven by the Inquiry which eventuated in the dismissal of the Council and the appointment of an Administrator). Council is now looking to next year re-entry into an elected entity.

There have been at least 3 Administrators during Council's period under administration.

To my mind not much seems to have changed.

/s/

Council is FAT, TOP-HEAVY, WASTEFUL and INEFFICIENT, and seems to have forgotten its role in spending Ratepayers' money on CORE SERVICES such as FOOTPATHS, ROADS etc and has instead become a defacto TOURISM Promoter and Big Business supporter and subsidizer. Much of its time is spent in self-congratulatory glossy mail-outs and so-called "Public Consultation" processes, which are always couched in "loaded" terms designed to get the answers wanted to achieve the already determined results.

I am opposed to any rate increase beyond the "Pegged" increase (of 3.6%?) Council needs to learn to "live within its Means" - stop being wasteful and extravagant and glory-seeking, empire building.

GET BACK to BASICS - CORE COUNCIL BUSINESS

instead of relying on the concept of the Ratepayer being yet again a "Sitting Duck" each year, funding proposals and activities serving only a small section of the community at the expense of the lack of the basic services we really need around the whole area, not just the Tourist pathways & walkways and "beautification" projects, which seem to occur every year or two after yet another "REVIEW" or "CONCEPT PLAN." (Example attached - Annual Review: Disability Access, FIX the REAL THINGS that NEED fixing - Potholes, Paths, Pedestrian accessibility and amenities etc.

Yours,

P.S. The enclosed are only a MINISCULE Example of Press etc views!!

B GRANT-CURTIS

14th December 2011

Port Macquarie/Hastings Council  
Burravan St  
Port Macquarie 2444

Note: SURVEY  
Attached.

Dear Sir, Re SURVEY - HAVE YOUR SAY  
"How Will Council Fund Future Services"

Completed SURVEY is delivered by hand today (19th Dec) to your office, with some comments thereon in Question 9. I note the apparent discrimination against NON ONLINE Ratepayers as to the date for return of Survey, and also that Council did not put about this SURVEY/CONSULTATION until well into November, being a large part of the 2 months Consultation timeframe.

Further to the SURVEY Form itself I make these comments:

Council needs to prune waste and inefficiencies; Trim fat; Prioritize to attend to Council/Ratepayers' CORE BUSINESS; Streamline Management and get rid of overlapping duplicated Departments and excess Managerial Staff; Prune entertainment and catering costs; Require USER PAY principles with regard to SPORTING and TOURISM Events and the use of Sporting Fields, Skate Park "The Glasshouse" (in particular), and leave the Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Association to attend to the running and funding of purely TOURISM Events (USER PAY principle - such a Principle which is unversingly and universally applied to the Ratepayers in the provision of goods and services to us!!).

Council may see itself as an Entrepreneur and at times it seems, as a Charitable institution, (what with "grants" to this and that person (Sports person) or body or group. But it is Ratepayer's monies, paid to Council to provide CORE SERVICES!! (I note Council does not fund My BOWLS EXPENSES or whatever!!)

Noted: SKATE PARK - \$700,000 Capital Cost  
 ongoing annual costs \$?  
 Running/Management Costs  
 Public Risk Cover/Maintenance:

"GLASSHOUSE": Servicing of interest and Capital repayment  
 \$37m still owing - Interest thereon  
 Plus at least \$6m per annum running costs (and increasing?)

"SCULPTURE"?? at Highway gateway  
 (The Egg timer?)  
 What meaning - What relevance?  
 What artistic merit?  
 \$24000 Cost to Ratepayers  
 what Benefit?  
 Benefitting whom?  
 Ongoing maintenance \$? per annum.

EXLEY OVAL (in particular) as well as other sporting fields (and Parks) Damage to them)  
 Cost to ratepayers of maintenance and RESTORATION due to damage from purely TOURISM events.  
 BONDS Required (and enforced) to cover Damage Costs.  
 ("USER PAY PRINCIPLE!!")

What IS Council's CORE BUSINESS?

Is it catering to TOURISM, to Chamber of Commerce  
OR: To Ratepayers' Core services?

As to the forcible FLUORIDATION of our Water Supply -  
Why is Council picking up the Tab in bearing  
considerable Capital Costs, as well as (probably)  
\$1M per annum operating costs, to forcibly deliver  
to ALL Ratepays + citizens something they stated  
quite clearly (71% at Poll) that They DID NOT  
WANT, and which is a measure which quite  
clearly is a "HEALTH" measure (or so THEY  
maintain, i.e. NSW + Fed Govt + Dept of Health)  
and should not be COST SHIFTED from  
State / Fed financing, onto Local Government  
i.e. Ratepayers (the same people who so clearly  
voted AGAINST Fluoridation !!)  
who wants drinking water deliberately (or otherwise  
polluted), especially with a POISONOUS substance,  
i.e. Sodium Silicofluoride ??)

To note the expenditure in "resealing" Ocean  
Drive, under the funding achieved in last year's  
increased Rates (7.3%)

What was the priority for this?

Did not appear to be urgent, insofar as the  
surface was adequate, from my observations  
and there were / ARE more pressing needs!!  
Was this carried out "ahead of time" to cater to  
the BIKE section of the TRIATHLON(S)??

Once again - TOURISM!!

Once again - "USER PAYS"

After living at [redacted] for 35 years my observations have led me to the conclusion that ordinary Ratepayers are NOT getting value for their money by way of essential CORE SERVICES, and that a large proportion of Rate monies is being "diverted" to support Chambers of Commerce and CBD and Tourism activities!!

This area is socioeconomically disadvantaged. A Third(?) of the population is AGED. Scant regard seems to be had to their needs, after gathering in the funds (year after year) from their rates!!

Their needs are not being met:  
good roads, FOOTPATHS, Affordable and accessible PARKING (day to day needs)  
Bus service etc etc  
Their needs are NOT more TOURISM Agendas etc and the associated wasteful NON-CORE spending!!

It does not seem that Council has "mended its ways" very much after the Inquiry and sacking of the Council. More should be done to ensure the ordinary Ratepayer's basic needs are dealt with

GET BACK TO BASICS PLEASE!!

(Sgd.) [redacted]

Copy to: IPART (Independent Pricing + Regulatory Tribunal)

# HOW WILL COUNCIL FUND FUTURE SERVICES?

YOUR RATES IN ACTION  
CLIFTON DRIVE  
Asphalt  
Resealing Works  
\$400,000



have **YOURSAY**

*See Accompanying  
Letter.*

# SURVEY

## Have your say on a rate increase for Port Macquarie-Hastings

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council faces significant financial pressures on its future budgets.

Council's general rate fund could be reduced by almost \$2.5 million in July 2012 as a result of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) only granting a rate rise guaranteed for the current financial year.

Council is considering a new application to IPART in order to secure long term rate funding that would deliver the infrastructure and particularly roadworks that the community has identified as priorities.

To make any application to IPART it is vital that Council knows what the community thinks of the financial plan and the proposed options for a rate rise.

Council has developed rating options in response to the financial situation and taking into account the community engagement carried out over 2010/11.

### Options Snapshot:

- Reduce rates to base level and cut \$2.5 million in services.
- Secure funding – permanently apply the 7.3% rate increase that is in place this financial year, minimum change to residential rates from current charges.
- Additional rate rise for five year dedicated road funding program:

**Option 1** – approximately \$50 a year increase to rates to generate \$1.68 million for road maintenance and transport works.

**Option 2** – approximately \$75 a year increase to rates to generate \$2.52 million for road maintenance, transport works including parking strategy.

**Option 3** – approximately \$100 a year increase to rates to generate \$3.37 million for road maintenance, transport, parking and road construction works.

### Find out more:

- Download the Future Services brochure,
- Read the Fact Sheets that further explain the Rate Options, Services at Risk and Previous Consultation, or
- Join the Community Reference Group to participate in a workshop.

### Tell us which option you support:

- Complete the survey to lodge your opinion on the options and go in the draw to win an iPad.

### Important Additional Information:

- Future Services brochure
- Fact Sheet - Services at Risk
- Fact Sheet – Rate Options
- Fact Sheet – Previous Consultation

**COMPLETE THIS SURVEY ONLINE AT:**  
[www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices](http://www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices)



**PORT MACQUARIE  
HASTINGS**

# SURVEY

Information collected in this survey is confidential and will not be used or shared by Port Macquarie-Hastings Council for any other purpose other than this consultation exercise.

Tell us your preferred rating option by completing this quick survey:

1. What is your postcode? 2 4 4 4

2. Which answer best describes where you live?

- Urban (Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Camden Haven)  
 Rural (Comboyne, Kew, Beechwood etc)

3. What is your age?

- Under 18  
 19 – 25  
 26 – 35  
 36 – 45  
 46 – 55  
 56 – 65  
 Over 65

4. What is your gender?

- Female  
 Male

5. Are you a:

- Tenant / renter  
 Business owner  
 Property owner / ratepayer

6. Which best describes your work status?

- Student  
 Full time  
 Part time  
 Retired  
 Other



7. In the last two financial years Council has had a 7.3% rate rise in place to fund major road maintenance projects. Some of the projects that have been completed include:

- a)  Ocean Drive resealing *Unnecessarily early? To cater for BIKES/TRIATHLON?*
- b)  Hastings River Drive resealing
- c)  Additional maintenance grading crew
- d)  Clifton Drive resealing *GOOD ONE - AT LAST!!*
- e)  High traffic intersections resurfaced

Were you aware of these major road projects?

- Yes
- No

8. Have these projects had any impact on you?

- Yes
  - Positive
  - Negative
- No, as I don't use these roads

*BUT - Where are the FOOTPATHS?*

9. The services that Council provides are directly related to the amount of funding available. Which of the statements below meet your expectations for the services that Council could provide next financial year and into the future?

- I would pay the same level of rates as previous two years and want Council to continue to dedicate funds to road maintenance. (Go to Q 11)
- I would pay more rates compared to the previous two years so that Council can invest in more road maintenance and new transport works. (Go to Q 10)
- I want to pay less in rates and understand that this means road maintenance and other Council services will have to be reduced. (Go to Q 11) *WHY? Prime Waste and inefficiency. Attend to CORE SERVICES*

10. In order to achieve more than road maintenance Council is considering a five year financial plan that would involve borrowing money and increasing rates to generate funds specifically for road infrastructure. Considering the impact on your rates and the impact on services, which of the three options do you prefer?

NOTE: All of these options include maintaining the 7.3% increase currently in place for 2011/12 plus the standard 3% rate pegged increase.

- Option 1** – approximately \$50 a year increase to rates to generate \$1.68 million for ongoing road maintenance and transport works.
- Option 2** – approximately \$75 a year increase to rates to generate \$2.52 million for ongoing road maintenance, plus bridges, parking and road construction works.
- Option 3** – approximately \$100 a year increase to rates to generate \$3.37 million for ongoing road maintenance, bridges, parking and road construction works.

*STOP EXTRA CURRICULAR Activities & expenses  
Let the "USER PAY" Principle apply where appropriate*

PORT MACQUARIE  
HASTINGS

**11. What other information have you reviewed about Council services and the rates options?**  
(You can select more than one answer)

- Future Services brochure
- Fact Sheet - Services at Risk
- Fact Sheet – Rate Increase Options
- Frequently Asked Questions
- News items
- None of the above

**12. If you want to go in the draw to win one of three iPads please complete the details below**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## THANK YOU

Thank you for your feedback. Further discussion forum questions are available online at [www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices](http://www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices)

You can complete this survey online at [www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices](http://www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices) until Friday, 23rd December 2011.

Completed paper copy surveys should be returned to:

**Port Macquarie-Hastings Council**  
**REPLY PAID 84 (No stamp required)**  
**PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444**

Please return by Friday, 16th December 2011.

*Discrimination to those Ratepayers  
NOT ONLINE*

*Did Not give us the  
NOVEMBER Consultation  
period - late coming  
out to us.*

## your letters

### Rates rise should wait a year

PORT Macquarie-Hastings Council asks us, the ratepayers, to solve their present money problem by handing over extra funds on a permanent basis.

I believe that this is unreasonable because the present situation has been caused partly by the mismanagement and waste of money which led to our last council being sacked.

Surely we have the right to expect that nothing like that situation can ever happen again.

So let us wait and see how the council handles its problems over the next 12 months.

Instead of expecting ratepayers to simply fill the empty cash box by voting for the council to apply the extra rate as a permanent imposition now, I believe we should carry on as we are for the next year.

This would give us the opportunity to see how well the council has applied its learning-from-the-past strategy and whether it deserves our help then.

In next year's budget discussions, we would be in a far bet-

ter position to judge how finances have been managed before deciding to hand over any extra money.

If the council passes this test then perhaps one of the present options being suggested may be the way to go.

Expecting money to come as easily as by approving any of the ways the council is now suggesting will not solve any of our problems on a permanent basis.

Let them prove that help from the ratepayers is absolutely necessary and that the council has been doing its part to help sort things out intelligently.

This time next year is the time to ask us the questions being put to us at the present time.

*P.M. News  
30/11/11*  
**Brian Barry**  
Port Macquarie

### Climate change: still don't know

I DON'T often get the chance to listen to the Ray Hadley morning show but today I was able to do so. Is the show always of such a "high" standard?

I cannot believe that most of Ray's time on-air was taken up

# Network not a fan of rate rise

Lisa Tisdell

PM News  
25/11/11

THE head of a residents group is not a fan of another special rate rise.

Residents' Action Network president Rick Sharp said council administrator Neil Porter should not seek to raise rates next financial year and instead leave rates up to an elected council.

"If it means a few more potholes, we are used to it here, so I don't think it would be a big problem," he said.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council will gather community comment about rate options ahead of application to IPART (Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal) for a decision.

The council expects to make an application to IPART in late February.

People can have a say through an online survey at [www.pmhc.listening.com.au/futureservices](http://www.pmhc.listening.com.au/futureservices)

Council staff will also collect feedback at shopping centres in Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Laurieton, Lake Cathie and Lakewood village.

Mr Sharp said the consultation was really just a sales job.

"They have already decided to increase rates, but they are trying to convince us."

He said another special rate rise would put the financial squeeze on people already paying for price hikes in other necessities.

"I don't think it can be justified," Mr Sharp said about a special rate rise.

An application is under consideration to permanently apply the 7.3 per cent increase granted as a one-off

this financial year.

The council is also proposing a five-year plan to address the backlog of road infrastructure work and build new infrastructure.

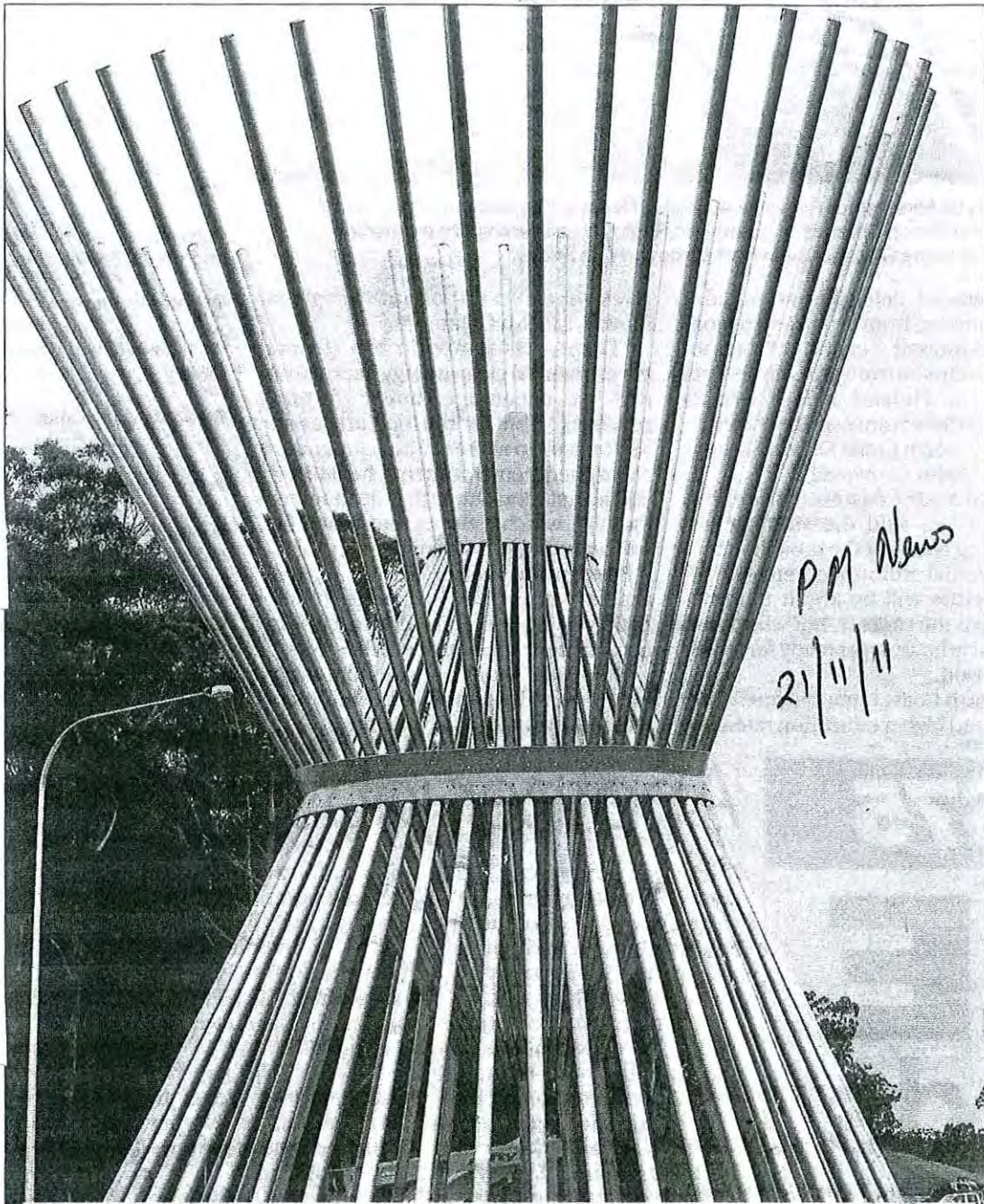
That would come at a greater cost.

A range of options are up for discussion, with each option holding implications about service levels.

Administrator Neil Porter said he would look to the community to let the council know whether it would support a special rate increase or not.

It would be a disappointment, he said, if the council did not retain the existing 7.3 per cent special rate rise.

Mr Porter said not seeking a special rate rise to cover next financial year and allowing a new council to set the rates direction would only delay the inevitable.



## Work of art or eye sore?

A SCULPTURE with distinctive tapered poles is the latest addition to the Oxley Highway upgrade.

Sculptor Rick Reynolds, from Elands, created the public artwork to take pride of place in the roundabout at the western approach of the Oxley Highway deviation.

The piece has 100 aluminium poles and stretches 8.5 metres high.

The sculpture's poles create two distinct forms; one standing firmly on the ground and the second reaching outward and upward.

The Roads and Traffic Authority funded the gateway sculpture to the value of \$60,000.

have your say?

tell us about it online @  
[www.portnews.com.au](http://www.portnews.com.au)

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council provided funding at the planning stage to the value of \$10,000.

Preparation of the concept brief, the contract documents and administration of the contract with the artist for the design development, fabrication of the sculpture elements up to the installation stage was also funded by council at a cost of \$14,000.

# Rates formula feedback

Have your say on rates

Options under Part Two

23/4/11

## Option 1

P-M News

Option one in part two would keep the 7.3 per cent permanently in the rate base, and a 3 per cent rate cap increase, plus an average \$50 rate a year rise or 4.43 per cent increase. The \$50 a year for an average ratepayer would generate \$1.68 million for road maintenance and transport works.

## Option 2

Option two would keep the 7.3 per cent permanently in the rate base, and a 3 per cent rate cap increase, plus an average \$75 a year rate rise or 6.6 per cent increase. The \$75 a year for an average ratepayer would bring in \$2.52 million for road maintenance, transport works including parking strategy.

## Option 3

Option three would keep the 7.3 per cent permanently in the rate base, and a 3 per cent rate cap increase, plus an average \$100 rate rise a year or 8.86 per cent increase. The \$100 a year for an average ratepayer would bring in \$3.37 million for road maintenance, transport, parking and road construction works.

COMMUNITY consultation on future rates is in two parts.

At first, the community is being asked whether to scrap the 7.3 per cent special rate rise or permanently apply it to the rate base from July 1 next year.

Retaining the 7.3 per cent would allow services

## Work achieved so far, progressing

COMMUNITY consultation in 2008 and 2009 showed priorities were sealed road maintenance, car parking and value for ratepayers' dollars.

The council was granted a 7.36 per cent special rate rise for 2010-2011.

This generated \$2.45 million, of which \$1.95 million was allocated to roads and \$500,000 to parks.

Significant road maintenance projects completed as a result of this rate increase:

- Ocean Drive resealing between Matthew Flinders Drive and Lake Cathie; \$500,000
- Hastings River Drive resealing between the Pacific Highway and Humptyback Creek Bridge; \$250,000
- Extra maintenance grading crew on rural roads; \$500,000
- Asphalt/hotmix resealing of Ocean Drive between Hindman and Gordon streets; \$250,000
- Asphalt/hotmix resurfacing on sections of William Street, plus intersections on Lake Road at Central Road, Savoy Street and Hill Street; \$250,000
- Heavy/deep patching on Bago road; \$200,000

The council continued to work with the community throughout 2010.

It developed a number of scenarios and applied to IPART for a special rate rise.

IPART granted a 7.3 per cent rise for one year only.

Extra funding was directed to parks maintenance, surf lifesaving education programs, and tree

to be maintained at existing levels.

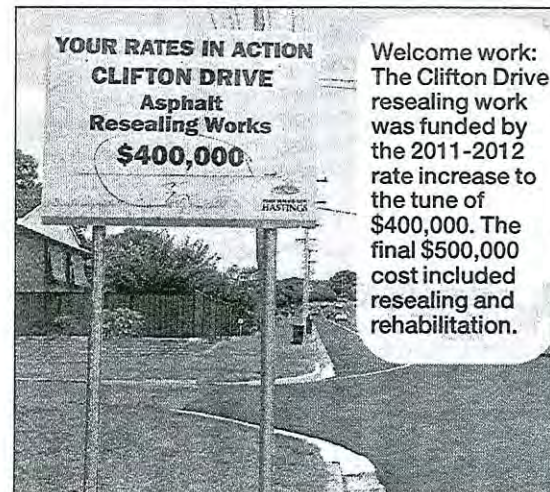
It would cost ratepayers, including the rate cap amount, \$33 more on average than they paid this financial year.

The part two option would be sought for five years and would only apply if an ongoing 7.3 per cent figure had support.

management work and road maintenance.

Road projects directly funded by the rate increase:

- Clifton Drive resealing and rehabilitation; \$500,000 (final cost)
- Continuation of third maintenance grader for unsealed roads; \$500,000 (ongoing)
- Resealing Ocean Drive between Bonny Hills and North Haven; an estimated \$300,000 (February next year)
- Ocean Drive resealing between Laurieton and Kew; an estimated \$500,000 (February next year)
- Continuation of high traffic intersection resurfacing including Beechwood Road; \$150,000 (ongoing)



from p1

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council general manager Tony Hayward said community feedback was critical for the council to secure the necessary funds for road maintenance and improvements.

"We ask everyone in the community to have a voice during this consultation process, whether you agree with the rate rise proposal or not," he said.

The council yesterday launched its online survey at [www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices](http://www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices) to gauge community opinion.

Residents can log on to the survey online through computers at the council's customer service centre in Burrawan Street and the council's libraries.

Paper copies are available at the libraries and council offices.

Council staff armed with iPads will also be on hand to help people fill out the survey at shopping centres in Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Laurieton, Lake Cathie and Lakewood village.

They will have paper copies too and a brochure will be mailed to all ratepayers.

The survey closes on December 23.

A report will go before the council early next year ahead of an IPART application in

For details, see [www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices](http://www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices)

to the chairman

RATEPAYERS TO CHOOSE THEIR OPTIONS

# RATES: YOUR SAY

PM  
News  
23/11/11

... a decision to not pursue a 7.3 per cent special rate rise would translate to a \$2.5 million drop in revenue

Lisa Tisdell

LOOMING rate decisions will shape our community for years to come.

Options for the next financial year up for discussion range from an average \$40 rates dip up to an average increase of \$133 compared with this financial year.

Each option has implications about what level of services Port Macquarie-Hastings Council would be able to provide.

And the community has an important role to play.

The council wants people to have a say about next financial year's rate options over a five-week consultation process.

Next financial year's rate

## which option for you?

tell us online @  
[www.portnews.com.au](http://www.portnews.com.au)

levels will depend on community feedback, our council's preferred approach and final decision maker, IPART (Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal).

The council is considering a fresh application to IPART to secure long-term rate funds and with that comes a new wave of community consultation.

An application is under consideration to permanently apply the existing 7.3 per cent increase that was approved as a one-off this financial year.

The council is also proposing a five-year plan to

address the backlog of road infrastructure work and build new infrastructure to meet future needs.

That would come at an extra cost to ratepayers.

A decision not to pursue a 7.3 per cent special rate rise would translate to a \$2.5 million drop in general rates revenue from July next year.

The council says service cuts would then have to be made.

Feedback suggests the success of a special rate rise application is linked with council's ability to demonstrate community understanding of the rate impact and support for the works program funded through rate revenue.

continued p6



Community views: Port Macquarie-Hastings Council project officer Kathy O'Neale and council's economic development manager Trevor Sargent (right) speak with Les and Angela Chapman about rates.

# Survey samples views on rates

*P.M. News 07/12/11*

Lisa Tisdell

MORE than 500 people had their say online within about the first week of a community consultation push about rates.

And Port Macquarie-Hastings Council wants to hear from even more people.

The council is considering an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to secure long-term rate funds to deliver the infrastructure and particularly roadworks previously identified as priorities.

Council staff also provided information and helped people fill out a survey at shopping centres in Port Macquarie, Laurieton, Lake Cathie and

Lakewood, as well as in Wauchope's main street.

Lake Cathie self-funded retirees Les and Angela Chapman said they would complete the survey after speaking with council staff on Wednesday.

"My message to council is rates shouldn't go up," Mr Chapman said.

"They should look at their overall expenditure in other areas and put more into the infrastructure side of things and less into donations and grants."

The couple will consider leaving the area if rates become unaffordable.

The council will also gather feedback in rural areas on visits

to key outlying communities.

Council's community development manager Jaclyne Fisher said there had been a wonderful response to the community consultation to date. She said the shopping centre visits provided the chance to present the information in a more personal way.

A brochure will soon be mailed to all ratepayers.

People can complete the survey at [www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices](http://www.pmhclisting.com.au/futureservices)

Paper copies are available through the council.

The survey closes on December 23 and a report will go to the council early next year ahead of an IPART application in late February.



*This is from  
(Reverse of attached page)*

# No council rate rise now, argues group

04/01/12.

Lisa Tisdell

*P.M. News*

A PROGRESS association opposes any special rate rise application – at least for now.

Wauchope Community Progress Association has three main difficulties with the council's consultation process and subsequently any proposed application to IPART (Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal).

The group's submission said the consultation process was not balanced, it was rushed and it did not adequately inform ratepayers of the full impact of the proposed increases.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council will consider an application to permanently apply the existing 7.3 per cent increase that was approved as a one-off this financial year.

The council also proposed a five-year plan to address the backlog of road infrastructure work and build new infrastructure.

Ratepayers would have to dig deeper to pay for that and the Wauchope Community Progress Association says it would be simply unaffordable for many Wauchope and district ratepayers.

The Wauchope Community Progress Association submission said to identify roads as the number-one priority for ratepayers and then say that to get them fixed in a timely manner ratepayers would have to pay extra was misguided.

"The matter cannot be consid-

ered in isolation from other budget priorities," the submission said.

"Nothing should be off limits when it comes to budgetary restraint and decision making."

The association said more time should have been given for community education, consultation and decision-making because of the substantial financial implications of the proposed increases.

"Survey results are only meaningful if those whose opinions are sought are fully informed of the implications of each of council's proposed scenarios," the submission said.

"In this case, council has failed, in our opinion, to give ratepayers adequate information about the ongoing effect of their proposed rate hikes."

The association opposes any special rate rise application until the matters referred in its submission are properly addressed.

The council says IPART criteria dictated the consultation timing.

Some 2424 people responded to a council survey about rate models.

Council staff were on hand in shopping centres to promote the survey, all ratepayers were sent an information mail-out and more than 50 community groups were contacted with the survey information.

Survey data will be analysed early this year ahead of a report on the consultation to go before the February 15 council meeting.



PORT MACQUARIE  
HASTINGS

**AGENDA ITEMS**

PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS ACCESS  
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

2.00pm Monday 14 November 2011

**Port Macquarie- Hastings Council  
Administration Building  
Function Room**

Corner Lord & Burrawan Streets, Port Macquarie

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Acknowledgement of Country
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of Minutes
4. Disclosure of Interest
5. (2.15pm) Presentation by Mr Jeff Condron and Ms Barbara Grant-Curtis from Country Labor Branch (15minutes)
6. Business arising from previous meeting
  - 6.1 Update about North Harbour tidal pool (Julie/Liam)
  - 6.2 Update - International Day of People with a Disability event. Wheelchair Cavalcade Friday 2 December , allocation of roles & responsibilities and schedule for the day
  - 6.3 Invitation - Party on the Pier with Bago Magic 7pm Friday 2 December
  - 6.4 Discussion about Yellow Brick Road concept (Nik)
  - 6.5 Footpath review – Wauchope (George)

- 6.6 Owen Street kerb ramp follow up (Julie/Tom)
- 6.7 Haven Waters Holiday Park pathway (Julie/Mike)
- 6.8 Discussion about Access Friendly initiative and feedback about 'mystery shopper' exercise.

## 7. General Business

- 7.1 Review of plan of proposed traffic signals (Hastings River Drive / Airport intersection)
- 7.2 Update about Access Committee involvement with Logistics Group for Port Macquarie Base Hospital Building expansion (Nik/Brian/Julie)

## 8. Any Other Business Arising



*The next activity of the Port Macquarie Hastings Council Access Subcommittee is **9.15am Friday 2 December Wheelchair Cavalcade**, marshalling at Settlement City.*

*The next meeting of the Port Macquarie Hastings Council Access Subcommittee is **2pm Monday 12 December 2011** at the Function Room at the Council Administration Building.*

To enable your participation Council is committed to providing free accessible transport to and from meetings and respite care for the duration of meetings. If you would like this assistance please contact Julie Priest Community Development Officer – Aged & Disability Ph: 6581 8480 or Email: [julie.priest@pmhc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:julie.priest@pmhc.nsw.gov.au)

Town & Country 12-page liftout inside today

page 5

# Port Macquarie News

pages 3, 14

Monday, May 9, 2011 \$1.50 (inc GST)

We pay tribute to our midwives and our newest mums

ROAD RAGE OF A DIFFERENT KIND

# Scooters on the road to nowhere

Lack of paths, plus poor condition, equals danger

by Brie Snare

PATHWAYS in our town are not up to scratch, say residents who use mobility aids.

Garden Village Port Macquarie resident Brett Greyling, who has cerebral palsy, uses a motorised scooter to get around town.

Brett is often forced to travel on increasingly busy roads because there are no pathways.

His dad Chris is always nervous while is travelling around because of the and poor condition of paths.

"I've seen people fall off their scooters, particularly when going up hills, so I can't relax until Brett gets home," Mr Greyling (senior) said.

Nanette Lewis, 85, used a scooter twice on the pathways, but decided to get rid of it after the trips caused her debilitating pain, which left her bedridden for three days.

"I've got arthritis and have had two back operations, so I can't be bumping around on these paths to run my errands," Mrs Lewis said.

Access Committee chairman Nik Sandeman Allen said the condition – and lack – of paths was "a major issue" in a

### are you affected?

Do the lack of paths or the condition of existing ones impact on you?

Email

editor.portnews@  
ruralpress.com

or comment on this article online @

www.portnews.com.au

town where 30 per cent of the population was over the age of 60.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council technical services manager Cliff Toms said the council had included pathways in its community works program, which aims to upgrade sections of paths – including on Ocean Dr, Lighthouse Rd and Kennedy Dr – within the next four years.

Mr Toms said the council was "very much aware" of these issues and intended to address them as soon as suitable fund-

ing became available.

"The upgrades are ongoing, and we will try to design shared facilities for pedestri-

ans and cyclists and, consequently, those using motorised scooters will also benefit from these paths," Mr Toms added.



Now where? Scooter driver Brett Greyling comes to the end of a path and is left to ponder his fate.

## STACKS // THE LAW FIRM

### Compensation Specialist

motor vehicle claims • workplace claims • negligence claims

Suite 2 Macquarie Park 27 Grant Street, Port Macquarie 6583 8366



IAN SMITH

## Social

Meeting Date: 28/09/2011 - Social

---

### Item 11

**Subject ANNUAL REVIEW - PMHC DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (1992) ACTION PLAN 2009 - 2018 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT**  
**Director LESLEY ATKINSON (CCD)**

---

*To provide a summary of actions which have been implemented to July 2011.*

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council accept the Implementation Progress Report.
2. That Council continues to incorporate disability, aged and families access within all areas of Council work, including physical and social infrastructure, communication and services.

### Discussion

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 Action Plan 2009-2018 will be reviewed on an annual basis and a progress report submitted to Council.

In this way, the initiatives identified in the plan will be monitored. This tracking will assist those responsible for action to develop future plans and identify funding opportunities to realise the delivery of this plan.

It is intended that nearing the completion of the ten-year plan, in 2018, that a formal review is undertaken and the framework for the next period be developed.

Some highlights of the actions which have been implemented so far include access upgrades to Laurieton School of Arts, increasing the large-print book collections at the Libraries, the adoption of the Parking Strategy, the construction of an accessible viewing platform at Lighthouse Beach and the Council Chamber fitted with a hearing loop.

Ongoing actions include staff training, EEO management plan measures, ongoing compliance with Australian Standards for design of new works, communication materials are "Plain English" and available in access friendly formats, annual International Day of People with a Disability event, Hastings Access Sub-Committee meetings and the Glasshouse Companion Card Program.

Some exciting projects going forward into 2011/12 include the design and construction of the All Abilities Playground at Bain Park, construction of an access entry ramp and accessible toilet at Wauchope Indoor Stadium, construction of the Flynn's Beach accessible ramp, and a series of mobility scooter safety workshops for seniors.

*But nowhere to ride them on*

Whilst only three years into the ten year plan, a continuing issue of concern which requires an injection of major and ongoing funding is the implementation of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans (PAMP). Due to our unique demographics the lack of community connecting infrastructure across our LGA remains the largest barrier to access for our community (ie lack of footpaths and kerb ramps, interrupted and discontinued footpaths).

Other actions not yet started and requiring significant funding include access improvements for community buildings and facilities ie. accessible toilets in reserves amenities blocks at Sancrox, and Henry Kendall, access upgrades for the North Haven, Pembroke and Long Flat Community Halls, access to Lighthouse Beach, Flynn's Beach Surf Club, North Haven baths and Lasiandra Park.

Please note that seven (7) of the actions in the attached document have been determined as no longer applicable such as Timbertown and the Kew Visitor Information Centre or due to change of technology.

### Alignment With Strategic Direction

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Action Plan

Is consistent with the "Looking after our People" focus area in the Towards 2030 Community Strategic Plan

### Consultation

Consultation in this matter has occurred across sections with input provided by the following staff listed below:

Communications - Lyndal Harper  
Community Development - Jaci Fisher, Julie Priest  
Corporate & Business Services - Kristian Enevoldson  
Cultural Development - Joe Conneely  
Customer Service - Fiona Sainsbury  
Development Assessment - Dan Croft  
Development Contributions - Tim Molloy  
Economic Development - Trevor Sargeant  
Executive Services - Stewart Todd  
General Works - Grant Burge  
Information Services - John Peasley  
Library Services - Jim Maguire  
Property Services - Jeff Walton  
Organisational Development - Juliet van Oirschot  
Rangers - Ian Chetcuti  
Recreation & Buildings - Liam Bulley, Brian Ross, Mike Olzomer  
Strategic Planning - Peter Cameron  
Technical Services - Cliff Toms, Peter Jenkins  
Tourism & Events - Linda Hall

*a good illustration  
of TOP HEAVY  
TALK FEST  
WITH LITTLE  
REAL OUTCOME*

### **Planning and Policy Impact**

There is an ongoing requirement for all areas to include in their plans and / or work programs appropriate actions to support the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992).

### **Financial & Economic Implications**

Attached below for information is the following report, outlining each area for action, resources & financial impact, and completion status.

There are ongoing financial implications for Council to implement the plan.



DDAProgressRpt2011.pdf

### **Options**

That Council ask for further information on the attached report .

That Council not accept the report.

**NOTES FOR JC ADDRESS – COUNCIL ACCESS – COMMITTEE MEETING –  
OCTOBER 12 2011**

**PORT MACQUARIE BRANCH OF COUNTRY LABOR HAVE BEEN  
AGITATING FOR THE PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS COUNCIL TO  
IMPROVE ACCESS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY WHO  
RELY ON THE USE OF MOTOR SCOOTERS AND WHEELCHAIRS TO MOVE  
AROUND OUR COMMUNITY AND GAIN ACCESS TO PUBLIC PLACES  
WITHIN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ESPECIALLY PORT MACQUARIE.  
THIS ISSUE WAS FIRST RAISED BY THE BRANCH IN 2007 – FOUR YEARS  
AGO.**

**OVER TWO YEARS AGO, THE BRANCH WROTE TO COUNCIL ON 30 JUNE  
2009, AGAIN RAISING THE CONCERNS OF THE BRANCH AT THE  
INADEQUACY OF ACCESSABILITY FOR THE AGED, INFIRM YOUNG  
PEOPLE AND MOTHERS WITH PRAMS, AROUND THE STREETS OF PORT  
MACQUARIE – REFER TO JUNE 30 2009 LETTER.**

**COUNCIL RESPONDED ON 22 JULY 2009 ADVISING COUNCIL HAD  
DEVELOPED A PEDESTRIAN ACCESS MOBILITY PLAN (PAMP) IN 2001.  
THE PLAN HAD IDENTIFIED NUMEROUS WORKS TO IMPROVE ACCESS  
FOR ALL USER GROUPS. COUNCIL ALSO ADVISED IT WAS PLANNING**



TO UNDERTAKE A MAJOR REVIEW OF PAMP BY 2011, TO ENSURE CURRENCY FOR ALL USERS AND INDIVIDUALS. IT'S PLEASING TO NOTE THAT COUNCIL HAS PRODUCED THE PMHC DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (1992) ACTION PLAN 2009-2018.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT JULY 2011 WHICH HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO COUNCIL – WE NOTE THE REPORT TO COUNCIL EXPRESSED CONCERN WHICH REQUIRES AN INJECTION OF MAJOR AND ONGOING FUNDING IS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND MOBILITY PLANS. DUE TO OUR UNIQUE DEMOGRAPHICS THE LACK OF COMMUNITY CONNECTING INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA REMAINS THE LARGEST BARRIER TO ACCESS FOR THE COMMUNITY (THE LACK OF FOOTPATHS AND KERB RAMPS, INTERRUPTED AND DISCONTINUED FOOTPATHS. THE REVIEW DOES NOT CONTAIN ANY FORWARD PLANNING TO OVERCOME THIS PROBLEM.

FOLLOWING OUR AUGUST 3 MEETING WITH COUNCIL, THE BRANCH WROTE TO THE CEO OF THE SIX AGED CARE FACILITIES MENTIONED IN OUR SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL.

**WE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING REACTION TO OUR LETTER:**

**GARDEN VILLAGE HAS 350 RESIDENTS, 40 OF WHICH DEPEND ON "GOPHERS" FOR TRANSPORT, MAJOR PROBLEM CROSSING HASTINGS RIVER DRIVE FROM FINLAY AVENUE OR GARDEN CRESCENT TO ACCESS SETTLEMENT CITY SHOPPING CENTRE, PANTHERS CLUB, OR TO ACCESS GORDON STREET SHOPS, MEDICAL CENTRE AND/OR PHARMACY.**

**THIS IS A MAJOR PROBLEM THAT NEEDS URGENT ATTENTION.**

**SIMILAR PROBLEMS AT PARKLANDS VILLAGE. SEVERE LIMITATIONS FOR RESIDENTS WHO DEPEND ON TRANSPORT BY MOTORISED SCOOTERS OR WHEELCHAIRS, WHO NEED TO ACCESS PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS. RESIDENTS WILL NOT USE ROADWAYS. – URGENT ATTENTION NEEDED.**

**SIMILAR STORIES FOR LOURDES AND LEGACY VILLAGE:**

**IN A RECENT COPY OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION GUIDELINES FOR COUNCILS, ON PAGE 19 OF THE PUBLICATION, IT PRINTED THE DETAILS OF A DISABILITY ACCESS BASE. ...4/**

THE UPSHOT OF THE COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE COUNCIL WAS THE COMPLAINANT WAS AWARDED \$10,000. THE COUNCIL EXCUSE, THAT MRS TAYLOR'S IDEAS WERE UNSAFE OR TOO COSTLY WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE COMMISSION.

ON BEHALF OF THE PORT MACQUARIE BRANCH OF COUNTRY LABOR WE RECOMMEND THIS COMMITTEE DO EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER TO ENSURE THAT THE RESIDENTS OF ALL AGED CARE FACILITIES IN THE PORT MACQUARIE-HASTINGS LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ARE ABLE TO ACCESS MOST PUBLIC PLACES INCLUDING SHOPS, CLUBS, HOSPITALS, PLACES OF WORSHIP - BY EITHER WHEELCHAIRS OR MOTORISED SCOOTERS.

JEFF J CONDRON

OCTOBER 7 2011

Independent  
Survey a joke 08/12/11

We have just received PMHC's "Have Your Say - A MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY", regarding increasing rates.

So we logged on to www.pmhclisting.com.au.

We were absolutely disgusted, but not really surprised, at the way the survey was put together. Please give the ratepayers some credit for intelligence enough to see through this ploy to get more money out of them.

We were under the mistaken impression that "listening" meant that you were interested in what your ratepayers had to say. But no, the "options" given in the survey were those of the Council - we will agree to this, or this, or else. Where is the section asking for our comments?

Again, you people are trying to dictate to your ratepayers, just as the sacked Council did. They did not listen!

Instead we are lumbered with a building that seats only 650 people. And now the thousands of ratepayers who objected and were not listened to are expected to continue to pay.

By the way, we have some questions for the Council regarding relocation of the "Aquatic Centre", instead of repairing and upgrading it. Currently, it is on Council-owned land. If the Council sells the site they stand to realise quite a lot of money from it. They have given three options (yes, three of their options) to re-locate the Aquatic Centre, one of them being Stuart Park. We are under the impression that Stuart Park was left to the people of Port Macquarie, not to the Council, as sporting grounds. The park is surrounded by private homes. The bird life there is prolific (33 species identified from mid-2007 to date).

Can Council sell or lease a big chunk of Stuart Park, or any other park to a private company for a park, to a private company for a...

new massive Aquatic Centre? Yes, we probably need a better Aquatic Centre. But show us the location options before it's a "done deal". Takes us back to pre-Glasshouse days - here we go again.

If, and that's an if, Council were to sell the current Aquatic Centre site, and sell or lease part of Stuart Park, or any other park, then they would be extraordinarily greedy by wanting to raise the rates as well.

Council has told some of the residents that there will be "community consultation".

Oh yeah?

Name withheld

Aquatic Centre (years in the Making, except heated? -> Nothing done: 10 years or more!!)

WE DO NOT NEED  
ANOTHER GLASSHOUSE!!  
(MONUMENT - EDIFICE !!)

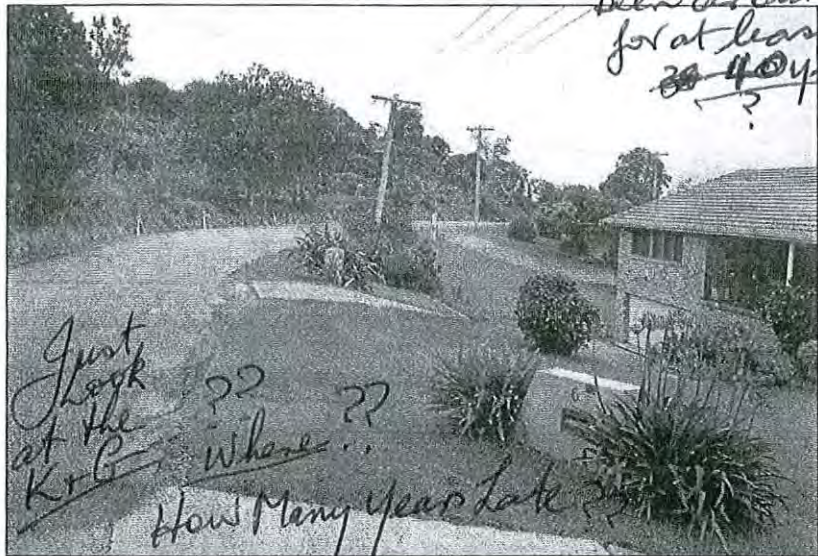
We need BASIC  
Affordable  
Serviceable

- Functional -  
- ACCESSIBLE -  
(PUBLIC TRANSPORT)  
(PARKING)

Catering to ALL Needs  
especially ELDERLY  
and CHILDREN

No More STATUS SYMBOLS  
for the ELITE SPORTS  
& TOURISM ETC.

Not a New area  
been around  
for at least  
~~30~~ 40 years  
?



Work on the way: A project will improve stormwater drainage on a stretch of Lighthouse Road.

P.M. News  
21/4/11

# Properties gain relief

RELIEF is in sight for Port Macquarie properties on a stretch of Lighthouse Road historically plagued with stormwater during heavy rain.

Work is expected to start shortly to improve stormwater drainage on Lighthouse Road from Matthew Flinders Drive to Davis Crescent.

Properties in this area of Lighthouse Beach have historically experienced significant quantities of stormwater during heavy rain.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council awarded the job to civil construction company

MCRS (Midcoast Road Services) after a tender process.

The \$145,470 project will include the construction of stormwater drainage lines and pits, retaining structures, kerb and guttering, footpaths, driveway replacement and road widening.

MCRS general manager Mark Pilgrim said there would be up to eight people working on the project at any one time.

He said the project represented a reasonable size civil job for the company.

"It is good for us," Mr Pilgrim said about the project.

This is NOT !!  
unique !!  
this particular  
area is only  
one side of street

There are areas  
all over Port  
Macquarie  
which are densely  
settled even  
with Multi storey  
Barric units and  
flats and going  
back to original  
historical area  
which still don't  
have K&G or  
Bitumen right  
across

and as for  
FOOTPATHS  
— FORGET IT!!

PEDESTRIANS  
are and  
always have  
been SECOND  
CLASS CITIZENS  
in Port Macquarie

— UNLESS it is a  
TOURISM WATERFRONT  
OCEAN FRONT AREA  
when we have NO  
trouble putting in  
... WALKWAYS !!

# YOUR LETTERS

email your letter to news@p-m.com.au

## What a waste

I wanted to bring to our community's attention the waste of Council assets (our assets) that seems to go un-noticed. The temporary Tourism Office on Gordon Street was vacated in June 2009, and has sat empty for the past two and a half years. When you look inside this site through the window you can clearly see it was left uncleaned and no doubt with usable office equipment still in it.

This site is a prime piece of real estate on one of the busiest streets in our town.

So my question to our Administrator is who is responsible for not leasing this out and getting a rental income over the past two and a half years? The money this could have generated could have funded the filling of more pot holes in our town or repaired other poorly maintained infrastructure.

At worst case, if they were not

able to lease it (which I would find hard to believe) surely this could have been given to one of the many not for profit organisations that lack a place to assist those less fortunate than us in our community.

It is clear to me that what is really lacking here is business people involved in Council. The problem with Administrators is it's not their money that is being wasted, it's ours. So one of the options Council should be looking at instead of the

easy one (raising rates) is looking at not wasting our money and do the job they are being paid to do and manage the assets and limit the waste.

I'm not suggesting the rent from one property would solve all our problems, but who knows how many other council assets could be better utilised and could provide an income stream.

Name withheld

*Independent 26/11/11*

**THE Buller Street boat ramp has been closed permanently on the eve of the busy summer season.** Port Macquarie-Hastings Council's recreation and buildings manager Liam Bulley said the council had considered its options when assessing the ramp structure and it looked like a complete rebuild was required. However, this comes at a considerable cost.



“ It's hardly like the condition of the boat ramp deteriorated overnight. Yet another FAIL for our council. Leslie Williams, are you going to get some funds or a grant from somewhere to sort out this mess? @ron

“ Council's reluctance to ensure repairs to this ramp is another example of its (Council's) attitude to boat owners. There has never been an appreciation of boat owners' needs in this town. Have a look at other towns (South West Rocks has good access for trailer boats as has Crowdy Head). This town is supposed to "live off" the tourist - or so we are told!!! Welcome to NSW's worst boating facilities everyone!!! P.M. News 21/11/11 @jo

“ It's a shame the ramp has deteriorated but I'm sure those who use it would gladly give it

up for 12 months to make sure funds were available rather than close it for good. Westport ramp would be nicer if boaties respected others more and moved their boats well away from the ramp rather than pull the boat out and park it right in front of the ramp limiting access to others. @deeson

“ As a regular user of the Westport boat ramp I am astounded at the number of times people cannot launch their boat and leave a vehicle & trailer in the car park due to it being full from some event on in the vicinity. Perhaps trailer only parking is required. On the other hand, perhaps it's the Glasshouse carpark overflow! @Vicky Round

## Simple remedy for state of decay

THOSE who are complaining about council's intention of increasing rates have not done their sums.

The largest increase will provide only \$3.37 million additional revenue.

The council is paying \$12.5 million annually to service the Glasshouse debt, and maintain and administer the building.

This hopeless situation will be our reality for the next 16 years unless the state government steps in with a one-off payment towards the debt.

Prior to the recent state election The Nationals promised \$75 million would be set aside in case it was needed to complete the fourth and fifth stages of Port Macquarie Base Hospital.

Hastings people would be eternally grateful if this amount was applied to the Glasshouse debt. A failure to do so will see the Hastings' road system and other infrastructure deteriorate to a third-world standard.

Published by the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council  
A Fairfax Media or Regional Limited, ABN 200

Australia Post

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council  
© copyright of the Council  
All rights reserved  
No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the Council.  
Our websites and conditions

*What Buller St. Some walk to the Glasshouse car park where*

*in the News*



Fed up: Lorraine and Jim Reynolds with their grandson Jay, 9. Their home, on Burrawan Street, has been inundated with water four times this year.

# Repeat floods a 'health hazard'

*02/12/11* *P-M News*

Kate Prideaux

BURRAWAN Street residents say ongoing flash flooding is not just costly but a health hazard.

State Emergency Services have rushed sandbags to homes on Burrawan Street twice this month – on November 12 and 18 – after heavy rain caused flash floods.

Homes and a motel on the street were also inundated with water in March and September.

Long-term resident Lorraine Reynolds, 68, said she rarely gets sick but was struck down by a virus after the most recent flood.

"I was up at six this morning wiping the walls down with Dettol and bleach," Mrs Reynolds said. "Even the SES man said 'When are they going to do something?'"

But Mrs Reynolds said she was more concerned the toll it took on her grandson, 9, who lives with the couple.

"He gets scared when the water comes in, he's my number one priority at the moment," she said.

Margaret Smith, 70, of Burrawan Street, arrived home from Wauchope to find knee-deep water at her door.

"It was scary walking through the water. "I had to hold my shoes and bag over my head," Ms Smith said.

"Lucky I had four sand bags left over from last time."

Rubber supports have become a permanent fixture under many pieces of furniture in Ms Smith's home.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council infrastructure manager Gary Randall said earlier this year that the council had plans to address the problem by raising the footpath and driveways along the southern side of the street

A Port Macquarie-Hastings Council spokeswoman this week said final design for the works was due in early December.

"Work will commence as soon as the design has been finalised," the spokeswoman said.

James Reynolds, 77, said he had almost given up.

"There's no doubt it'll happen again before they do anything," he said.

## New business director appointed

*Independent* *28/12/11*

Former Council employee Craig Swift McNair has been appointed to the position of Director of Corporate and Business Services for Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.

General Manager Tony Hayward announced the appointment to staff yesterday, following a selection process conducted after 44 applications were received.

"Following an extensive assessment of the applications and depth interviews with a number of shortlisted candidates, the interview

panel made a unanimous decision to offer the position to Craig. I'm delighted that he has accepted," said Mr Hayward.

Mr Swift McNair, who was previously employed as the Manager, Business Services with Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, is currently with Greater Taree City Council as the Executive Leader Resource Planning.

The new Director will commence in Port Macquarie on 13 February 2012. *MORE TOP HEAVY staff*

Relax & enjoy a night at the luxury air conditioned  
**RAPKIEV INN MOTEL**

*3*  
*This is NOT a NEW area or Problem it is an old area opposite school*

# Residents share rate option views

## Survey receives 2424 responses

isa Tisdell

ABOUT 2400 people shared their opinions about rate options in one of our council's most comprehensive community consultation exercises.

Some 2424 people responded to a survey after Port Macquarie-Hastings Council sought community opinion on rate models.

The council is considering making a special rate rise application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

A survey collected feedback online while others chose to submit paper copies which were entered into the database.

More than 960 documents were downloaded from the website.

Council staff also took iPads to the streets so residents could complete the online survey on the spot.

Staff spent almost 30 hours in shopping centres around the area offering residents the information and a chance to take part in the survey.

All ratepayers received a mail out and more than 50 community groups were contacted with the survey information.

Fact sheets on the rate options, the services at risk and [www.portnews.com.au](http://www.portnews.com.au)

### Extraordinary meeting

AN extraordinary council meeting will be held on January 4.

The meeting has been called to deal with an administrative matter associated with the free car parking agreement which Port Macquarie-Hastings Council is entering into with Coles Group Property Developments.

Coles Group Property Developments require council's common seal to be affixed to the free parking agreement however this was omitted from the council report on December 14. It is recommended the common seal of council be affixed to the free parking agreement.

the previous consultation were also available.

Analysis of the survey data will occur early in the new year in preparation for a report on the consultation to go to the February 15 council meeting.

Administrator Neil Porter is expected to make a decision at the February council meeting about the funding model to be sought for the 2012-2013 financial year onwards.

Mr Porter said he would make the decision very

carefully after receiving the community feedback and talking to the Division of Local Government.

"It will be a very well considered decision," Mr Porter said.

Council's general manager Tony Hayward said part of the challenge in conducting consultation of this nature was meeting the IPART requirements in preparation for a potential rate increase submission.

IPART has the final say.

"While it is the administrator's final decision as to whether we seek a rate rise, in preparation we have to make sure our consultation meets the IPART criteria," Mr Hayward said.

"This criteria dictated the timing of the consultation, as an application would be due by late February 2012.

"It also means we have to demonstrate that we have informed the community of the opportunity to have a say, which led us to mailing the future services brochure to all ratepayers," Mr Hayward said.

He said although the analysis on the results of the survey was yet to be done, he was thrilled with the level of participation.

The community consultation closed on Friday.

www.portmacquarieindependent.com

# You!

### Council rate options

The requirement to read and accept pages of conditions before making a comment on the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council's 'future services website is enough to put some people off making any comment.

The Council's options don't give us much of a choice. All involve significant increases and try to get us to agree to them based on the emotive issue of fixing the roads. Where are the other options that detail what would have to be deleted from Council's program if, for example, only the IPART pegged increase was allowed.

The impact of the options cannot be effectively assessed because the basis on which they are predicated is the 'average ratepayer'. What is the average ratepayer? This figure is not provided. Therefore, it is impossible to assess the impact on an individual ratepayer.

It should not be overlooked that the Council's proposition is that these increases are not just for 2012/13 but for the long term, thereby compounding the increases to even greater amounts in future years.

Furthermore, what other Council increases are in the pipeline e.g. water and waste collection. On top of these there will be further significant increases in electricity and gas charges. All of these have to be considered in the context of the household budget.

In managing a household budget sensible people forgo items that they would like to have but can't afford. Council should adopt the same approach and keep the increase to the IPART figure.

It is reasonable to suggest that the road network has reached the stage where it is unfixable without the injection of hundreds of millions of dollars, which as a community we can ill afford.

My view is that the rates should only be increased at IPART's 3.6% allowing marginal improvements to the more important sections of the road network while maintaining the remainder at current standards.

Independent  
05/01/12 Ron Brown  
Port Macquarie



? WE? Need?

anything for SPORTS  
and/or TOURISM  
AND ELITISM



# We need new pool complex

28/12/11

P.M. News

Lisa Tisdell

WORLD champion James Magnussen (pictured) has thrown his weight behind a push for a new pool in Port Macquarie.

The home-grown swimming sensation said our town definitely needed updated facilities.

"We've got a strong culture of fitness up here and the pool is always packed," Magnussen said during a Port Macquarie visit over Christmas.

His comments come in the lead-up to community consultation about just where a new pool could be built and its design.

Magnussen shot to international fame this year when he became the first Australian to win the 100m freestyle world title

## your opinion counts

Comment online @ [www.portnews.com.au](http://www.portnews.com.au)

He said a six-lane pool was just not enough and the Port Macquarie Swimming Club deserved better.

"It's not just for the swimming club though," he said.

"The surf clubs and triathlon club would use it to their advantage, too."

Port Macquarie Olympic Pool's popularity causes congestion at peak times.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council confirmed its support in late October for the development of a new pool and the allocation of feasibility study funding in

## the 2012 to 2013 budget.

The council will investigate previously proposed sites and other alternatives.

Funding opportunities will also be explored.

The council acknowledges the pool is less than satisfactory in some components.

The joints and tanks are leaking and the pool needs separate filtration and water treatment systems to comply with guidelines.

The community will have a say about pool options next year.

Council's manager recreation and buildings Liam Bulley said the community engagement plan for the upgraded Port Macquarie aquatic facility had not yet been developed.

"The plan is to undertake the site selection process in the period between April and June 2012 before moving into facility design phase in the 2012/13 financial year," he said.

It would cost \$4.5 million to replace the complex at its existing capacity at the Gordon Street site.

Other possibilities are in the mix.

Macquarie Park, Stuart Park and land on the corner of Burrawan Street and Pacific Drive are among the possible locations for a new pool.

Meanwhile, Magnussen went one step further than simply supporting a new pool.

"The space is an issue, but if they could also incorporate a gym there somewhere, that would be great," he said.

for ME and HALF The Population!  
PLEA for MORE FOOTPATHS and PROPER PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

# Cyclist hit-run

Not just "REFUGES" leaving pedestrian stranded!



Banged up: Cyclist Mark Cornish in hospital late yesterday afternoon with injuries from the accident on his early morning ride. Inset: A picture of Mr Cornish's damaged bike on the roadside at the accident scene.

(with a view to possibly doing some thing in 2018?)

(Perhaps they will have yet ANOTHER REVIEW! (AUDIT))

# victim

and at RISK (and even THEY are RARE - 12 Refugees

Chris Ward

P.M. News 11/01/12

CYCLIST Mark Cornish was lucky to be alive after he was hit at 6am by a car that a witness said swerved towards him.

He is in Port Macquarie Base Hospital with a number of injuries and lacerations.

The bruised and battered cyclist spoke to Port News from his hospital bed. He is nursing a broken shoulder for which he will need corrective surgery.

Port Macquarie Triathlon club president Andrew Lister has called for calm between cyclists and fellow road users after two recent hit and runs.

His wife Michelle was hit by a motorist and left on the side of the road in the

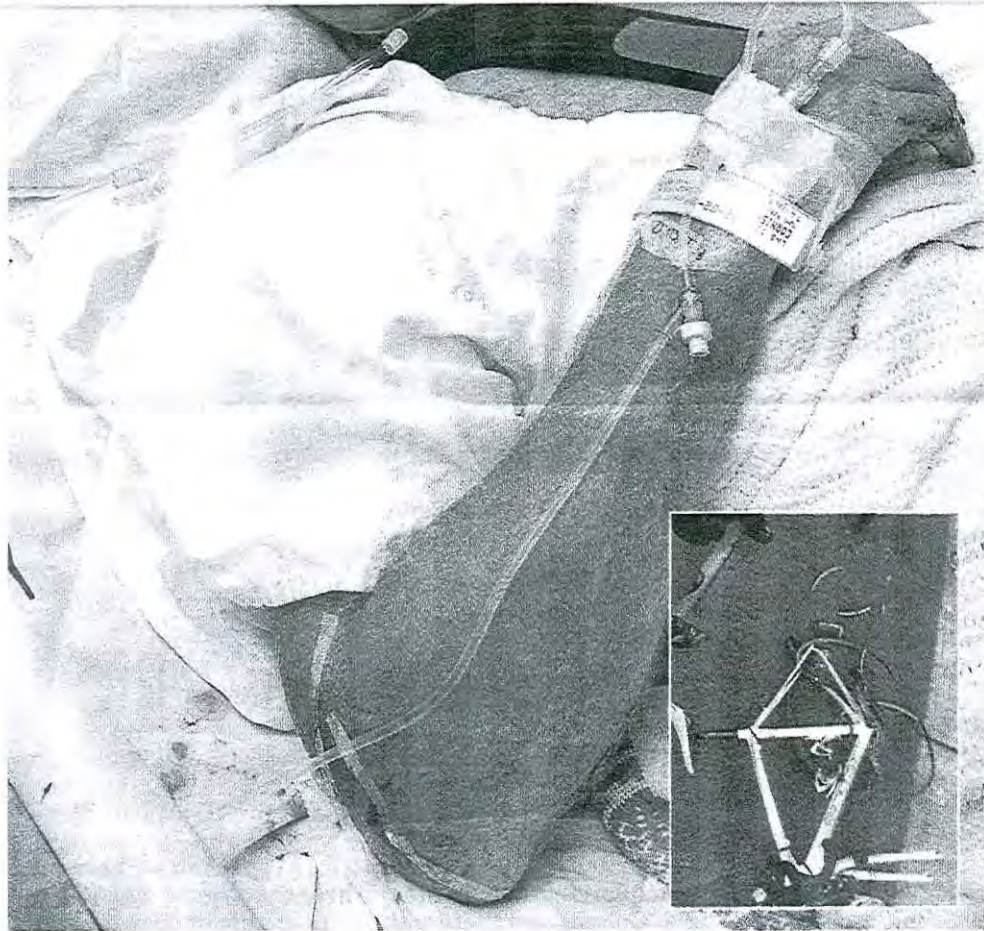
street (and) should be shown by all road users," he said.

"We are aware there are times that cyclists can be at fault but most of the time we are being very careful because we are also aware that our lives are at risk each time we are on the roads.

"But the attitude shown towards cyclists lately is terrible, particularly to drive away from the scene not knowing if the victim is badly hurt or even dead."

Mr Lister said more education and road works would go a long way to making Hastings roads safer for everyone.

"And more improvement to our roads. Cycle lanes have been promised for years but nothing has come of it



alive after he was hit at 6am by a car that a witness said swerved towards him.

He is in Port Macquarie Base Hospital with a number of injuries and lacerations.

The bruised and battered cyclist spoke to Port News from his hospital bed. He is nursing a broken shoulder for which he will need corrective surgery.

Port Macquarie Triathlon club president Andrew Lister has called for calm between cyclists and fellow road users after two recent hit and runs.

His wife Michelle was hit by a motorist and left on the side of the road in the Lighthouse Beach area on Sunday. She had minor injuries.

Late yesterday, Mr Cornish was unable to recall anything from the incident on the corner of Gordon and Lord streets.

His wife Nicole said a witness said Mr Cornish was riding alone when he was struck.

"The witness said he was even within the cycle lanes," she said.

"He wasn't doing anything wrong. This car apparently just swerved and hit him."

The car was described as small and green with three surfboards on the roof.

Mr Lister said he was surprised there had been no cyclist fatalities on our roads in recent years but warned if the trend continues it was only a matter of time.

"Courtesy and respect is a two-way

cyclists can be at fault but most of the time we are being very careful because we are also aware that our lives are at risk each time we are on the roads.

"But the attitude shown towards cyclists lately is terrible, particularly to drive away from the scene not knowing if the victim is badly hurt or even dead."

Mr Lister said more education and road works would go a long way to making Hastings roads safer for everyone.

"And more improvement to our roads. Cycle lanes have been promised for years but nothing has come of it.

"Even the road surface is bad.

"I've just come off a broken collar bone myself after an accident because of the poor surface."

NSW Police Port Macquarie say two similar accidents have been reported in the past three months.

They have CCTV footage of the accident yesterday and are reviewing it as part of their investigation.

Port Macquarie Cycle Club president Kevin Fletcher said cyclists should report even minor incidences to the police.

"There has been talk about cycle lanes around here now for 15 years or more," he said.

"If there are more reports made it would support the argument to finally get more lanes."

COUNCIL CORE BUSINESS? and Council is the TOURISM PROMOTION BODY with Ratepayer Money

PLANS TO KEEP PORT MACQUARIE POPULAR WITH VISITORS AND LOCALS

# Events hold key to more people, cash

04/01/12

P-M-News

P.M. News 04/01/12  
Culture festival next big thing in council plan

Reports by Kate Prideaux

BIG events will inject millions into the economy next year, says the council's tourism manager.

Seven sports events – the Port Macquarie Festival of Bodyboarding, Ironman 70.3, Australian Formula Powerboat Grand Prix, NSW Longboard Titles the NSW Women's Bowling

Association 83rd State Carnival, NSW State Cup (touch football) and Australian Surf Festival – will bring an estimated \$40 million to the Hastings next year, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council Tourism and Events Manager Linda Hall said.

The state cup alone would bring an estimated \$4.5 million, Ms Hall said.

"Out of the seven major

events to be held in Port Macquarie next year, four will fill our calendar for a minimum of three years," Ms Hall said.

More than 20 local and international events, are locked in for next year, many returning to the Hastings for a second, or third time.

However some inclusions in 2011 will not return in 2012.

The Saltwater Freshwater Festival, held in Port Macquarie in January 2011, will be held in Taree and rock 'n' nostalgia festival Wintersun will shift to Coffs Harbour.

However, council planned to add to the calendar, Ms Hall said.

"We've got at least three more events in the pipeline," she said.

HASTINGS council plans to launch a new event inspired by a local festival.

Port Macquarie Hastings Council tourism and events manager Linda Hall, pictured, said aspects of the Festival of the Sun would be used as a model for a council-run cultural event.

The festival's promotion, logistics and cost management were commendable, Ms Hall said.

About 3000 people attended the privately-operated music festival held annually at Sundowner Breakwall Tourist Park in Port Macquarie.

"I think it's a fantastic event; I take my hat off to the organisers.

"It attracts an audience that we might not otherwise get," Ms Hall said.

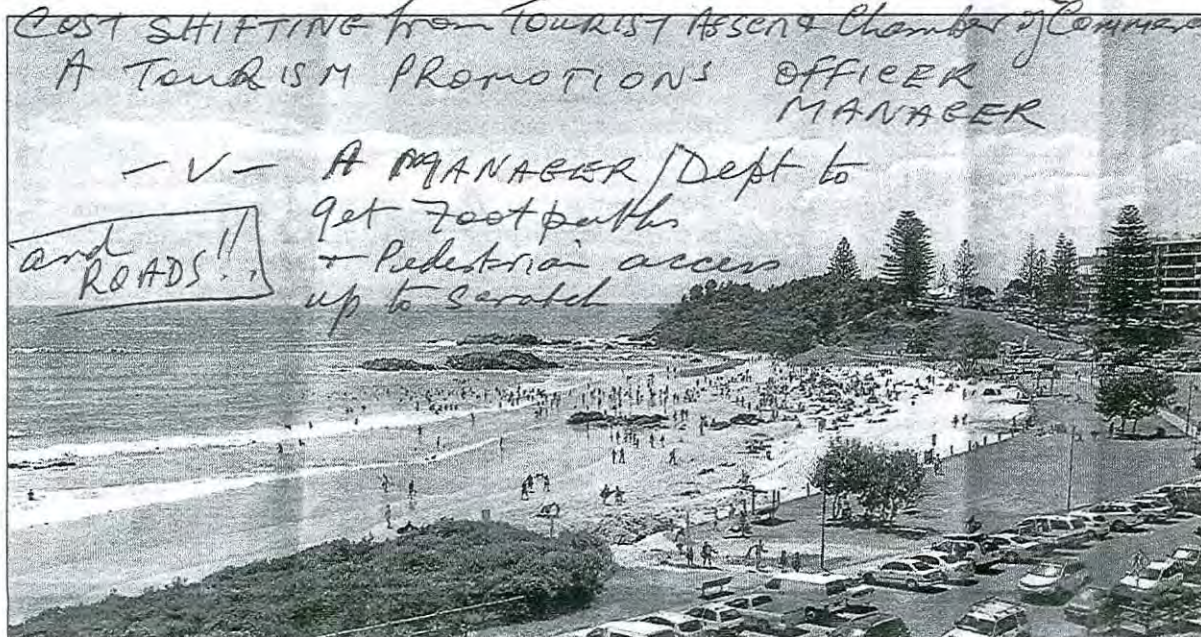
The comments came after the release of Council's 2012 events calendar which Ms Hall admits is heavily-weighted towards sport.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council will host several annual sports events this year, including The NSW State (touch football) Cup, Festival of Bodyboarding, the Ironman 70.3, Australian Formula Powerboat Grand Prix, NSW Longboard Titles and the NSW Women's Bowling Association 83rd State Carnival.

Host rights for sports events were simply more attainable than for other events, she said.

"It's certainly not that we're discounting cultural events but we had to look at what was out there," she said.

An inaugural cultural event was planned to address the imbalance, Ms Hall said.



Beach time: Hundreds of holiday makers flocked to Town Beach and Flynn's Beach in Port Macquarie in recent days to take advantage of sunshine after the earlier December cloudy weather. Pic: Town Beach.

NOTE: The only interest shown...



*shown by Ms Hall when addressing the Access Committee Meeting was about Business and MOTELS*

An inaugural cultural event was planned to address the imbalance, Ms Hall said.

While the exact nature of the new event could not be revealed, it would be staged in a tourism low season and take some inspiration from the Festival of the Sun, she said.

"It's about finding the right venues... and we have to be realistic about costs and revenue," she said. "But it'll be a start up event that's specific to our region."

(Cultural) elements, based around cars and music, were also planned for the Australian Surf Festival in August, she said.

*disabled accessibility + advertising their status as such in NRMA Travel brochures etc*

# Fotsun finds fine formula

LOCAL organisers have fine-tuned the festival formula.

Festival of the Sun co-founders Simon Luke and Scott Mesiti say they've tweaked many aspects of the festival – such as staging, lighting and waste management – while retaining others since the festival began in 2003.

The annual two-day music event is held at Sundowner Breakwall Tourist Park in Port Macquarie.

Two kilometres of fencing, four site offices, 15 marquees, 17 market stalls, lighting and a stage were trucked into the venue in December.

Festival lights were amped up two years ago, Mr Luke said.

"The first year we had some pretty old equipment because the budgets were a bit lower. We've evolved with a lot of the equip-



Smooth sailing: Festival of the Sun co-founders Scott Mesiti and Simon Luke have worked to achieve the right festival formula.

ment we've used," he said.

A discount on fees to pick-up recyclable waste was this year arranged with Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.

A strict capacity of 3000 allowed more accurate forecast of the budget, Mr Luke

said.

"By keeping it as a smaller event means we've got more stability," he said.

About 20 acts took to the festival stage in 2011. Spiderbait, The Panics, Little Birdy, Operator Please and Calling All Cars are among the bands to

perform in the past.

Co-founder Scott Mesiti said retention of good managers was key.

Many started as volunteers, he said.

"We've had the same management from the start. Everyone knows how everything has to go," Mr Mesiti said.

www.portnews.com.au

**Kempsey's CRAZY DAYS**

**Thursday Jan 12 & Friday Jan 13**

**Don't Miss Out! SPECIALS GALORE!**