



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

COMMUNITY FORUM
TUESDAY 16 MAY 2023



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COMMUNITY FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY

16 MAY 2023

The Community Forum commenced at 6.30pm and was held at Bargo Community Centre and remotely via audio visual link.

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OPENING BY THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson, Cr Deeth opened the Community Forum at 6.30pm. The Chairperson welcomed all those in attendance at the Community Forum. The Chairperson introduced the Mayor, Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer, Directors and other staff to the Community Forum participants.

The Chairperson stated that the electronic recording of the Community Forum and the use of electronic media during the proceedings is not permitted including devices such as laptops, mobile phones, tape recorders and video cameras. The Chairperson requested that participants switch off their mobile phones.

WEBCAST NOTICE

Members of the public are advised that this meeting is Webcast live for public viewing on Council's website. Audio and video footage taken is of the elected body, senior staff, presenters and registered speakers only; your image and voice will not be recorded if you remain quietly within the public gallery. Submissions from registered speakers that do not want to be part of the Webcast will be read out by a Council representative.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chairperson acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land:

I would like to pay my respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which this meeting takes place, and also pay respect to Elders both past and present.

PRESENT

Councillors: Gould (Mayor), Gibbs (Online), Rogers, Deeth, Brandstater, Banasik, and Spearpoint.

Staff: Chief Executive Officer, Director Shire Connections, Director Shire Futures, Director Shire Services, Chief Financial Officer, Manager of Governance, Integrity and Ethics, Governance Officer and IT Officer.

APOLOGIES

Councillors: Briggs and Hannan



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DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

FORMAL COMMUNITY FORUM MATTERS

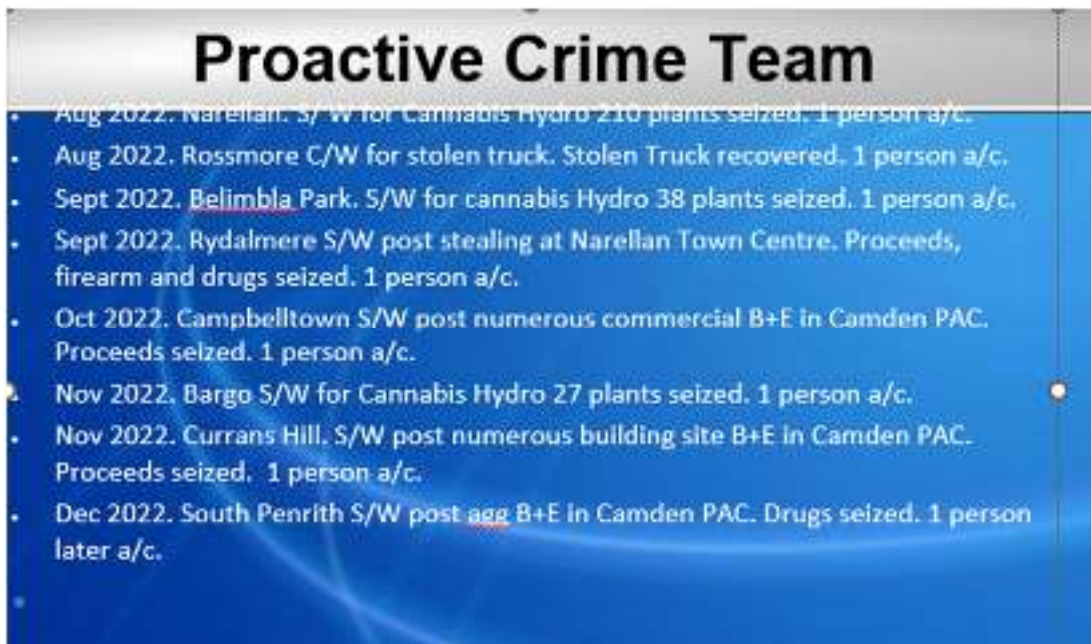
1. Community Safety

CM 1350

Representatives from Camden and Nepean Police Area Commands (PAC's) attended the forum remotely. An apology from Campbelltown PAC was noted.

Camden's Chief Inspector West presented the following Crime data:

Camden PAC Presentation



Proactive Crime Team

- Aug 2022. Narellan. S/W for Cannabis Hydro 210 plants seized. 1 person a/c.
- Aug 2022. Rossmore C/W for stolen truck. Stolen Truck recovered. 1 person a/c.
- Sept 2022. Belimbla Park. S/W for cannabis Hydro 38 plants seized. 1 person a/c.
- Sept 2022. Rydalmere S/W post stealing at Narellan Town Centre. Proceeds, firearm and drugs seized. 1 person a/c.
- Oct 2022. Campbelltown S/W post numerous commercial B+E in Camden PAC. Proceeds seized. 1 person a/c.
- Nov 2022. Bargo S/W for Cannabis Hydro 27 plants seized. 1 person a/c.
- Nov 2022. Currans Hill. S/W post numerous building site B+E in Camden PAC. Proceeds seized. 1 person a/c.
- Dec 2022. South Penrith S/W post agg B+E in Camden PAC. Drugs seized. 1 person later a/c.

Proactive Crime Team

- Jan 2023. Leppington. FPO search. Numerous firearms, ammunition and parts located. 1 person later a/c.
- Jan 2023. Campbelltown. S/W post numerous SFMV in Camden PAC. Proceeds seized. 1 person a/c.
- Jan 2023. Harrington Park. FPO search. Numerous prohibited weapons seized. 1 person a/c.
- Feb 2023. BRINGELLY. FPO Search. Indictable amount of cannabis, steroids and stolen property seized. 1 person a/c.
- Feb 2023. Currans Hill. S/W post pursuit. Large amount of cocaine and currency seized. 1 person a/c.
- Mar 2023. Thirlmere. S/W for cannabis hydro. 22 plants seized. 1 person a/c.
- Mar 2023. Leppington. S/W for cannabis hydro. Over 1300+ plants seized. Large scale cannabis hydro dismantled. 1 person a/c.
- Mar 2023. Picton. Seizure of stolen vehicle and firearm.



NSW Police Force

Proactive Crime Team



NSW Police Force

Disruption Team

- In September 2022, Strike Force COOMERA commenced targeting drug suppliers in particular the 'Dial A Dealer' attending licenced premises within the Camden PAC to distribute prohibited drugs in particular Cocaine.
- As a result, Strike Force COOMERA executed a number of search warrants within the Harrington Park, Spring Farm, Kirkham and Mount Annan areas. A number of arrests were made and offenders charged with a number of offences which included, the On-going supply prohibited drugs namely Cocaine. These matters are still before the Courts. Strike Force COOMERA is continuing.



Disruption Team



Business & School inspections

Police have conducted **72 x business inspections** in the Wollondilly Council sector over the past month of April to date.

Police have conducted **14 x school visits** in the Wollondilly Council sector over the past month of April to date (Buxton primary, Picton Primary (2), Picton high (x5), Bargo public, St Anthony's catholic Menangle, Thirlmere Public etc.



Community Awareness of Domestic Violence

Attending Liquor accord meetings, Community service organisations (nurses)
Presenting on what is Domestic Violence, how to report, and advise that help is out there.

Educating our youth in what domestic violence is.

- Physical force
- Verbal
- Psychological
- Financial
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Harassment and stalking
- Intimidation

NSW Police offer services and education programs to assist the community in understanding what constitutes Domestic Violence.

"If you see something, say something"



NSW Police Force

Respect and Healthy Relationships Primary School Initiative



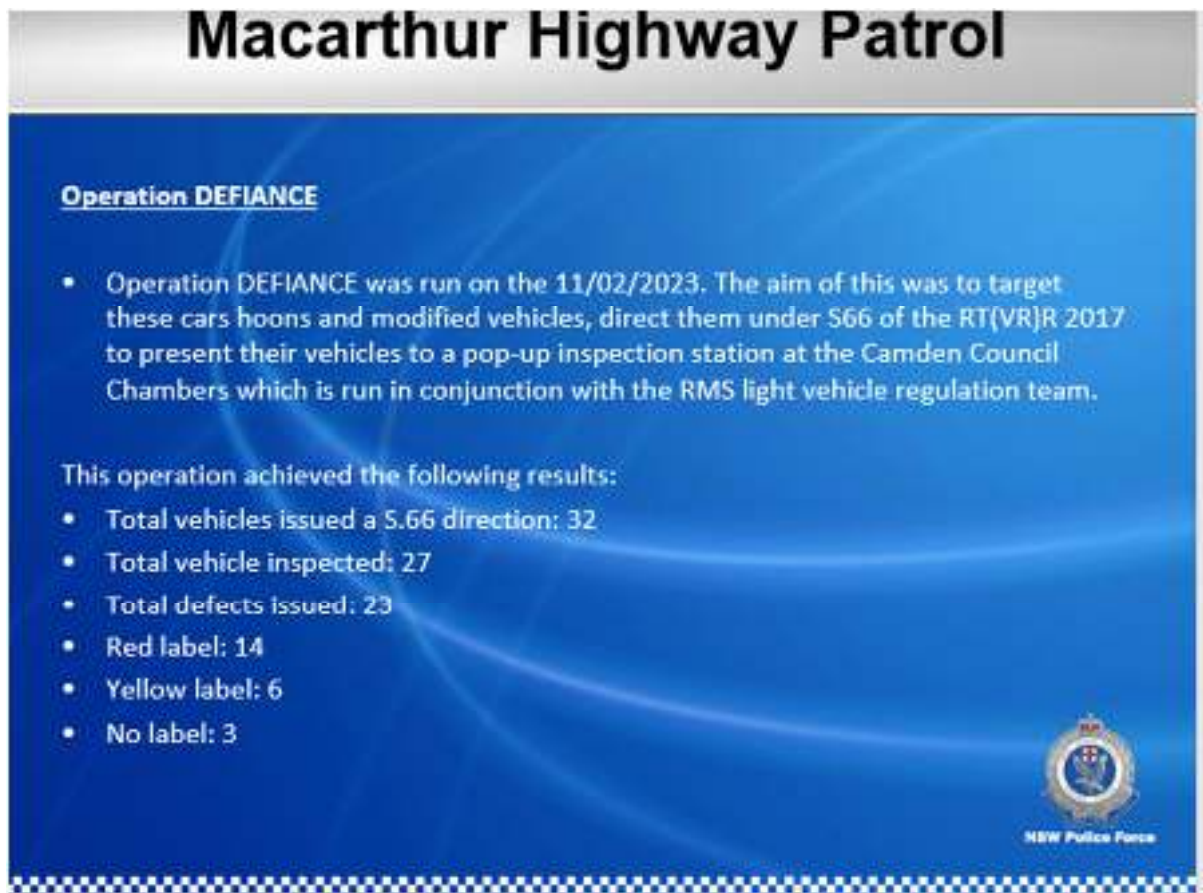
Business and Community Safety Audits



Traffic – Injury & Fatal accidents. This remains a key priority for Camden PAC. I can report there has been **1 x fatal accident and 11 injury collisions in the Wollondilly area over the past month of April to date.** The fatal accident was on the Hume Highway at Wilton on the 16/04/23 and involved a single vehicle accident with an international driver who lost control of his vehicle and a rear passenger was killed when the vehicle rolled over at speed. Drugs and alcohol were not a factor. Causal factor appears to have been lack of driving experience / familiarity with Australian Road Rules. The injury collisions mostly featured at Wilton (4 recorded incidents).

Traffic enforcement actions – 62 x enforcement incidents in Wilton, 51 x at Picton, 31 x at Razorback, 24 x at Bargo, 23 x at The Oaks, 19 x at Thirlmere, 16 x at Pheasants Nest, 15 x at Tahmoor, 12 x at Werombi, 11 x at Douglas Park and others at Buxton etc.

Below is some recent information and examples of our highway patrol run operations targeting unlawful driving behaviour and trail bikes over the past couple of months.




Macarthur Highway Patrol

Operation DEFIANCE

- Operation DEFIANCE was run on the 11/02/2023. The aim of this was to target these cars hoons and modified vehicles, direct them under S66 of the RT(VR)R 2017 to present their vehicles to a pop-up inspection station at the Camden Council Chambers which is run in conjunction with the RMS light vehicle regulation team.

This operation achieved the following results:

- Total vehicles issued a S.66 direction: 32
- Total vehicle inspected: 27
- Total defects issued: 23
- Red label: 14
- Yellow label: 6
- No label: 3



NSW Police Force

Macarthur Highway Patrol

Trail bike investigation

- Due to the large amount of trail bike/driving complaints the Camden PAC has received since January 2023, the Macarthur HWP and Camden PAC staff have commenced investigations into these riders. I have started case to track these individuals, identify and prosecute them. Current position is 2 x trial bikes seized (Application to forfeit to crown), 1 x youth caution being delivered, 1 x youth conference being delivered and one rider being charged with multiple driving offences.



Person & Vehicle stops / searches


Police have conducted 17 x person searches and 9 x vehicle searches in your sector over the past month of April to date.

Several questions were asked and answered on the night. The Chair thanked the Chief Inspector for the presentation.

The Chair welcomed Acting Inspector, Darren Riley of Nepean PAC who gave the below presentation.



(Silverdale and Warragamba)



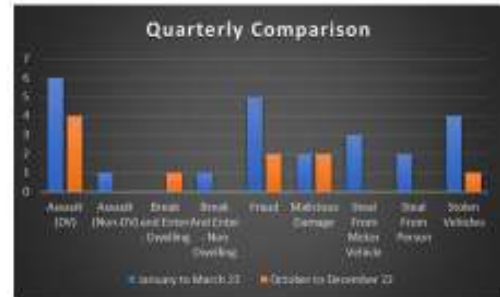
The slide features the Nepean Police Area Command logo in the top left corner. The title is **CRIME OVERVIEW – JANUARY 23 to MARCH 23**. A comparison note at the top right states: **Comparison to Oct to December 2022**. The table below lists various crime categories with their respective incident counts and trend indicators (upward arrow for increase, downward arrow for decrease, and a horizontal bar for nil).

Crime Category	Incident Count	Trend
Assault (non-DV)	1 incident	↑
Assault (DV)	2 incidents	↑
Break and Enter – Dwelling	1 incident	↓
Break and Enter – Non Dwelling	1 incident	↑
Fraud	3 incidents	↑
Malicious Damage	Nil	—
Steal From Motor Vehicle	3 incidents	↑
Stolen Vehicles	3 incidents	↑
Steal from Person	2 incidents	↑

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COMPASS Category	January to March 23	October to December 22
Assault (DV)	6	4
Assault (Non-DV)	1	
Break and Enter - Dwelling		1
Break And Enter - Non Dwelling	1	
Fraud	5	2
Malicious Damage	2	2
Steal From Motor Vehicle	3	
Steal From Person	2	
Stolen Vehicles	4	1



CRIME OVERVIEW

JANUARY 23 to MARCH 23

The Acting Inspector spoke to the above data and noted that while some of the crime categories had increased this period they represented a very small percentage. For instance, steal from Motor Vehicle and Steal form Person made up 1.02% of this crime category for the PAC.

Participants were encouraged to continue to report crime.

Questions were asked and answered on the night.

The chairperson thanked the officers for their attendance.

2. 2023-2024 Proposed Rate Structure

CM 84

The Chief Financial Officer, Rob Seidel gave the following presentation on the 2023-2024 proposed Rate Structure and Opportunities for Consultation.

Presentation to the Community Forum

2023-2024 Proposed Rate Structure

The Proposal

- Council has resolved to consult the community upon the proposed streamlining of the rates structure.
 - Reducing the number of rate categories/sub categories from 7 to 4.
 - Move from a minimum rate structure to a base rate structure.
- The proposal does not increase the total \$ value of rates that Council can levy.
- The structure determines how the total value of the rates levied are divided across the categories.
- Outcomes for each individual assessment are determined by the land value and the rate structure.



The Proposal

Current Structure		Proposed Structure	
Category	Minimum Rate	Category	Rate Base
Residential Town Centre	\$1,470	Residential	\$970
Rural Residential	\$1,598	Farmland	\$970
Residential	\$1,598	Business	\$970
Farmland	\$1,341	Mining	\$970
Business	\$1,598		
Business Light Industrial	\$1,598		
Mining	\$1,598		



Why the need for change?

- The current structure
 - Is not equitable (Residential Town Centre Minimum rate lower than Residential & Rural Residential \$1,470 / \$1,598)
 - has not been subject to detailed review since it was implemented in the 1990's
 - Is not easy to understand
 - Includes arbitrary Town Centre boundaries which require review due to continued growth and new development across the Shire.
 - Requires future ongoing annual review
 - Town Centre rate boundaries
 - Minimum rate within categories

Why the need for change?

- Impact of new valuations disproportionately affects some ratepayers more than others
 - 52% of the increase is borne by 26% of ratepayers
 - 1,275 additional assessments would not receive a rate increase
 - More than 700 assessments would receive increases of more than \$600 p.a.
- With the need to adjust Residential Town Center boundaries in the future, assessments above the minimum will subsidise;
 - Existing small lot developments across the Shire
 - Ratepayers within growth areas as they come on line
- Current structure not permissible under NSW Government rating guidelines as too many residents on minimum rate (more on next slide)

Why the need for change?

- The number of new assessments that are rated in a year is increasing rapidly;
 - 940 new assessments for the 2022/23 Financial Year (21,254 total assessments)
 - 257 in the first half of the year, 683 in the second half.
 - 389 new assessments rated in the last 2 to 3 weeks.
- This means there are too many assessments on the minimum rate (if there is no change) across three categories;
 - Residential Town Centre – 49.3% on the minimum
 - Residential – 72.1% on the minimum
 - Business Light Industrial – 53% on the minimum

Rate Assessment Examples

Suburb	Category	LV Increase	22/23 Rate	23/24 Proposal	23/24 Current
Picton	Residential Town Centre	76%	\$1,418	\$1,555.51	\$1,470
Buxton	Rural Residential	89%	\$2,610.07	\$2,831.91	\$2,754.74
Warragamba	Residential Town Centre	75%	\$1,418	\$1,555.51	\$1,470
Bargo	Residential Town Centre	89%	\$1,418	\$1,732.33	\$1,729.42
Pheasants Nest	Rural Residential	97%	\$1,541	\$2,107.05	\$1,682.30
Bargo	Residential Town Centre	39%	\$4,670.77	\$2,878.75	\$4,330.19

Rate Assessment Examples

Suburb	Category	LV Increase	22/23 Rate	23/24 Proposal	23/24 Current
Silverdale	Business	176%	\$4,339.43	\$6,659.99	\$7,373.58
Picton	Rural Residential	16%	\$7,160.63	\$4,108.31	\$4,643.21
Mount Hunter	Farmland	170%	\$3,599.37	\$4,602.01	\$4,877.28
Theresa Park	Rural Residential	109%	\$2,597.67	\$3,019.17	\$3,051.95
The Oaks	Business	129%	\$1,541	\$1,476.83	\$1,598
Bargo	Rural Residential	46%	\$2,172.99	\$2,164.43	\$1,767.19

Some Further Analysis – Average Increases by Category

Category	Current Rate Structure		Proposed Base Rate		Change p.a.
	Average p.a.	Average p.w.	Average p.a.	Average p.w.	
Residential Town Centre	\$ 125.76	\$ 2.42	\$ 133.48	\$ 2.57	7.72
Rural Residential	\$ 538.39	\$ 10.35	\$ 380.51	\$ 7.32	-157.88
Residential	\$ 466.98	\$ 8.98	\$ 435.52	\$ 8.38	-31.46
All Residential	\$ 229.06	\$ 4.41	\$ 228.90	\$ 4.40	-0.16
Farmland	\$ 650.71	\$ 12.51	\$ 544.45	\$ 10.47	-106.26
Business	\$ 639.56	\$ 12.30	\$ 815.09	\$ 15.67	175.53
Business Light Industrial	\$ 1,199.85	\$ 23.07	\$ 1,887.43	\$ 36.30	687.58

Is the proposed structure consistent with other Councils?

- Councils have three rate structure options available to use;
 - Rating entirely on land value;
 - Rating entirely on land value, subject to a minimum amount
 - A combination of the properties land value and fixed (base rate) amount.
- The proposed (base rate) structure is consistent with that used at Camden, Hawkesbury and Cessnock Councils.

Why does it appear that rates are increasing by more than the IPART approved rate peg of 3.7%?

- This proposal does not generate more rate income for Council
- Councils total rate income is capped at 3.7% as per the IPART approved rate peg, well below cost increases driven by inflation and mandatory staff Award increases.
- As part of the Operational Plan currently on exhibition Council is proposing to increase its total rates income by the rate peg.
- The way in which Councils total rate income is split between individual properties is determined by the rateable valuation as provided by the Valuer General and the rating structure.
- With the valuation for each property being different there will be a range of impacts upon individual assessments including increases less than 3.7% or greater than 3.7%

Where Council are proposing to reclassify rural residential land, does it become eligible for sub division?

- The proposed rate category changes relate to the calculation of rates only.
- The rate category under the Local Government Act and zoning under a Local Environment Plan are separate; and
- The rate structure changes will not cause any change to the zoning and permitted use of land.

If the value of land increases does this mean that Councils total rate income will also increase?

- An increase in the value of land will not increase Councils total rate income
- Councils total rate income can only increase by the percentage set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).
- For the 2023-2024 year the rate peg for Wollondilly is set at 3.7%.

What is a “Base Rate” and how does it work?

- The base rate is a fixed amount per property.
- A base rate contributes towards Councils administrative costs and the costs of common services from which all ratepayers benefit.
- Under the proposal each assessment would pay a base rate of \$970.
- The base rate can only yield up to 50% of the total income from a category (e.g. Residential) with the remaining income from the category calculated based upon the land value.



My land value has increased, will this affect the rates that I pay?

- The valuer General has completed a general valuation and council must use this when calculating rates.
- The total land value across the Shire has increased by more than 80% with increases of 185% or more being seen across a range of properties.
- With the requirement that Council calculate rates with reference to land value, individual ratepayers who see a significant increase in land value may find that their rates increase by more than 3.7%. This is offset by others with a lower increase or a decrease in their rates.



Is there a typical increase that will apply to all residential homes?

- The new land values as provided by the Valuer General to Council have resulted in some land increasing in value by more than other land.
- Due to the different valuations applicable to each property this will result in some properties receiving rate increases more than 3.7%, some less than 3.7% and some will receive a decrease in rates payable.
- So for 2023/24 there isn't a typical increase in rates due to the variances in land values resulting from the general valuation.

Recommendation

“It is the strong recommendation of staff that Council implement the proposed streamlining of the rating structure” to;

- Improve the equity of the structure with more ratepayers bearing a portion of the increase.
- Decrease the number of ratepayers receiving an increase of \$600 or more p.a.
- Remove current issues with existing ratepayers subsidizing growth
- Reduce the impact of the valuation upon individuals through a flattening in the structure
- Address inherent issues in the existing structure (breaching the 50% minimum rate threshold)

Whats next?

- Submissions close at the end of 18th May, all submissions received will be included as an attachment to the report to Council.
- If you have questions about your individual assessment please call or drop in to Council and ask to speak to a member of the revenue team
- For queries in relation to the valuation of your property, call the Valuer General (details should be on your valuation notice)
- When you receive your rates notice, if you think you may experience difficulty in paying the amount assessed, please call the revenue and they will be able to provide options as per the Hardship policy.

Questions were asked and answered on the night. The Chair thanked the CFO for the presentation.

COMMUNITY QUESTION/STATEMENT TIME

In line with the Community Forum Guidelines matters must be submitted on the *Community Forum Question/Statement Form* in order to be addressed. The Record of Proceedings will only record the name of the person who raised the Question/Statement, who they represent and the topic discussed. Any additional documents handed in on the night will be noted. No verbal comments from the speaker will be documented.

A copy of all questions submitted by the cut off time is given to Councillors to consider regardless of whether they are addressed during the proceedings.

The Chairperson stated that Community Question/Statement Time is for matters that relate to items in Council's Ordinary Meeting Agenda. Reports are written by Council officers and reflect the views of the applicants' proposal, community views, legal aspects and where appropriate, comments.

All questions must be submitted in writing prior to 12pm on the day before the Forum. There will be a maximum of 2 speakers for and against a matter with each speaker limited to 5 minutes.

The Chairperson reinforced that Community Forums are to provide information and to allow comment and are not a debate night. The Chairperson asked that speakers address them and Councillors on all occasions, to stay on the subject matter and avoid making personal remarks about individuals.

CM 9568

Ques 1 Mrs Sue Gay representing self
Item 16.1 - Public Exhibition of the Draft Social Media Policy
Mrs Gay addressed the Forum.

CM 2583-17

Ques 2 Mrs Sue Gay representing self
Item 17.1 – NOM – Dam Murals
Mrs Gay addressed the Forum.

CM 2583-17

Ques 3 Mrs Sue Gay representing self
 Item 17.4 – NOM – Developer Forum
 Mrs Gay addressed the Forum.

The CEO responded to Mrs Gay's address to advise that if she has any comments or concerns about Council staff or any issues, we will happily look into them. Alternatively, he also listed the State Government bodies including the Office of Local Government or the Independent Commission Against Corruption if she has concerns in these areas.

INFORMAL QUESTION/STATEMENT TIME

In line with Council's Community Forum Guidelines matters must be submitted on the *Community Forum Question/Statement Form* in order to be addressed. The Record of Proceedings will only record the name of the person who raised the Question/Statement, who they represent and the topic discussed. Any additional documents handed in on the night will be noted. No verbal comments from the speaker will be documented.

A copy of all questions submitted by the cut off time is given to Councillors to consider regardless of whether they are addressed during the proceedings.

The Chairperson stated that this section of the Forum is for general issues which are not on the Council's current Ordinary Meeting Agenda.

All questions must be submitted in writing prior to 12pm on the day before the Forum. There will be a maximum of 2 speakers for and against a matter with each speaker limited to 5 minutes

CM 7884-1

Ques 1 Mr Rowland Ware representing self

Topic – Tahmoor Gorge

Mr Ware addressed the Forum.

Additional documentation was handed in on the night.

CM 97

Ques 2 Sue Johnson representing self

Topic – Rate Increases

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) addressed the Forum on behalf of Ms Johnson.

The CFO responded to Ms Johnson's questions on the night. Included in his answers was clarification on Council rate peg figure for last year of 1.3%, and the fact that we had made a submission to IPART for consideration were none of our proposals has been taken up.

CM 4818

Ques 3 Sue Gay representing self

Topic – Appin War Memorial

Mrs Gay addressed the Forum.

The Director Shire Services responded to Mrs Gay's address on the night to provide an update on this project.



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CONCLUSION AND INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

The Chairperson thanked those present for attending, for the feedback provided and interest shown in the matters discussed.

About 30 people present.

The Forum closed at 8.06pm.



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COMMUNITY FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY

16 MAY 2023

YOUR COUNCILLORS

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16 MAY 2023

COMMUNITY FORUM DATES

Community Forums will generally be held on the third Tuesday of each month and will commence at 6.30pm either in the Council Chambers, Wollondilly Shire Hall 44-62 Menangle Street, Picton or at another specified location across the shire

Dates for the Community Forums for 2023 are as follows:

- Tuesday 20 June - Council Chambers, Wollondilly Shire Hall
- Tuesday 18 July - Wilton Community Centre
- Tuesday 15 August - Council Chambers, Wollondilly Shire Hall
- Tuesday 20 September - TBA
- Tuesday 18 October - Council Chambers, Wollondilly Shire Hall
- Tuesday 15 November - TBA
- Tuesday 6 December - Council Chambers, Wollondilly Shire Hall