

Attachment 3 – Comments from Community Sounding Board

Following are a complete set of comments from the Community Sounding Board, arranged by individual services (below). This is followed by the 'internal services' of Business Units and other 'enabling' or support services.

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It is important to note that this information and the summary comments in the body of the report has now reviewed by the Community Sounding Board following the final workshop on 8 December (an interim report was produced and reported to Council 11 December).

1. Aged and Disabled Support Services

Service level INCREASED
Consider Tumba as a prototype for replication in other towns. We do have an ageing population. Value the \$ contribution of volunteers. Do a costing - could be an opportunity to raise revenue.
Increase 25% aged care and disability services. Population is ageing and there is an increase in people with disability. All towns are somewhat isolated especially Tumbarumba, Rosewood and other surrounding communities. Services won't provide staff when they are based in Wagga etc. Lobby for increased Commonwealth funding.
Aged and disabled management plans to identify the need for expanding the Tumbarumba system to other small communities, where service providers are not available. Only extension to be self-funding as much as possible.
We need more facilities for people who can not look after themselves.
Growing need for aged care and disability accommodation and services. Not for profit, but commercial. Increase funds divert from street trees.
Elderly and transport disadvantaged need access to Council (LGA) and State services (Service NSW) in their local area. Each main centre should have a Council-sponsored retirement village operating on a cost recovery basis (non-profit). This would be for independent living. Government grants to establish independent living units.
Ageing demographic needs to be addressed. Tumba self-funding model looks well suited to follow into other towns.
It should be a priority and never decreased. More aged care units over the Council area. If anything, Council should fund. Tumba needs the 22 units that are planned. This could be a business and make more money and provide fantastic service.
More availability of care/housing to support those who cannot support themselves (Adelong, Batlow, various small communities). Community driving improvements. It is a priority because this group is growing disproportionately and hugely (older than average). Community nurses would be beneficial.
We have an ageing population and it is so important for us to look after them in whatever way we can.
I think keeping and caring for the elderly/disabled within the community they are part of is vital. If private enterprise makes big profits then Council can make some.
This is a priority and level of service should be increased. The need for aged care facilities and services are increasing and will continue to do so. Older citizens need to maintain proximity to their family and friends and this has implications for the whole social structure and keeping and attracting people to the region. Council needs to investigate private options as well as stimulate growth in this area, especially for small towns (eg Tumba model).
Increase by 25% aged and disability services to = \$100,000.
In conjunction with Snowy 2.0, a medical centre should be established with a view to it being developed to provide aged care and disability services in the years to come. Talbingo's peace, quiet and safety is conducive to there being such services.
Aged and disability services – more development in <u>public</u> enterprise for Adelong and Batlow (like Tumbarumba). Valmar suffices in Tumut, I think. Affordable options required. Council does need to play a role.
Take into consideration our region is an ageing population.

Please change 'disabled' to 'disability'.
SVC needs to provide policy on this issue. Should SVC be involved Y/N. Seek input from private developers – as we are in greying Australia.
Essential for smaller communities. At minimum, Council should be facilitator of these services.
Council should provide cost-effective aged care within communities where private operators do not operate (eg Tumba).
Aged care imperative for Tumba. Also was cost effective earning in excess of \$200k p.a.
A growing area council could be more involved in and at a profit.
Service level MAINTAINED
Continue existing services until State/Feds offer to take over their responsibilities.
Very important to maintain as it is.
Don't have information on what's provided privately in Tumut. It seems the current situation is okay. However, there needs to be awareness of: 1. what's available in communities - sometimes hard to know what services are provided in the community, whether by Council or by private organisations or government. 2. What is happening in the future, ie where the government's funding will be (ie nursing homes vs home care).
What we have seems okay but I'm not personally involved but I know of many who use these services and are satisfied.
Service level DECREASED
Should be privatised.
Not a local government core service, but it is self-funding. State and Federal obligation. Traditionally a 'not for profit' area.
Should be privatised - too many irons in the fire in Tumba. Too many individuals benefitting from the services. Don't have the expertise or motivation to provide appropriate care/support. Should not be run by Council as it's not being managed well.
Not a council matter – privatisation and other state and commonwealth govts to manage
Other commentary
Aged people and those with disability need community assistance to maintain independence and self respect.
The service in Tumba is fantastic.
I have concerns that this is an iceberg - we have no idea about the scope/extent of the services/infrastructure provided. What happens if volunteers are not available, what will the cost be to maintain Council's services? This is one of the areas where harmonisation needs to be considered - the Council commitment should be to prepare a transparent report to let the wider community know the whole story of who benefits and what the impact is.
Across this service area are many inputs (Fed Govt, State Govt, Local Govt, NGOs, private services, public and private hospitals) - what does it all cost?
Maybe a system where residential properties could be purchased at fair rates so as older people could live in a 'home' environment and have a reasonable degree of independence, as opposed to going into nursing homes etc.
Summary:
General support that people should be enabled to age 'in place' (ie stay within their community)

Not clear what proportion of aged/disability service provision across the LGA is provided by Council - is Council a major player or are many other providers in the mix?
Some support for notion that it isn't Council's business - encourage private enterprise to meet this community need.
If Council to provide aged and disability services, should be by way of grants and user pays rather than impacting budget.

2. Caravan Parks

Service level INCREASED
This is a business of the future and so should be developed. This is an area where the Council can make money if they invest wisely
A key facility to grow the Shire activity and revenue. Need to better promote this Shire to attract travellers (from the highway). RV friendly sites badly needed, most caravan parks difficult for large RVs. Don't ignore playing field locations for potential RV use. Charge-out rate should be break-even (subject to considering flow-on revenue benefits)
Batlow caravan park needs to be upgraded and facilities need to be increased. Old Cannery site to be used as RV and Caravan Park. All facilities should be well maintained and appropriate review of costs to be undertaken; all current caravan parks should be reviewed; more RV facilities to be made available; if Batlow-Tumut bike trail goes ahead there may be a need to increase caravan parks / RV within this area. Costs changes should reflect services
Needs to look nice in all parks - facilities need to be clean!
Where possible, operate as commercial ventures / business units. Respond to caravan trends e.g. free camping option. Vital tourism assets
Improved caravan parks (that aren't dodgy) is an obvious and easy way to increase local tourism as well as improve perceptions of the region. Adelong caravan park looks dirty and unprofessional. Need to improve cabin facilities.
Tumut Caravan Park seems to be well run and in good condition, leave as is. People who stay there shop in town and near enough to the CBD to avail themselves of gyms, garages, etc. Can be an introduction for/to new residents.
Essential tourism asset. Clean and well kept environment, suitably tree planted for shade, brings people back. Should be available in every town - very mobile society. Economic benefit to the towns and whole region. Should be user pays.
Comparisons should be done between Council and private caravan parks - this is not documented.
Important to provide first class facilities for visitors and growing tourism
Provide accommodation for seasonal workers and increasing tourist trade. The level of service in some caravan parks needs to dramatically improve (e.g. Batlow). With an upgraded facility income would improve. Tourists look at the current Batlow facility and just move on. It needs to be upgraded and/or relocated.
It needs to be great. We need it to be awesome to attract tourists to our town. Adelong's is great and we have free RV camping as well but we need it to be maintained as well.
Caravan parks – adequate; more strategic investment.
Tumba Caravan Park accommodation units need to be completed – seasonal workers provide significant income within the community.
Improve accommodation of RV needs

Service level MAINTAINED
An important facility for tourism and horticultural, agricultural industry
Council must understand the purpose and clientele of each park e.g. Tumbarumba park is mainly for commercial / horticultural manpower temporary accommodation.
At Rosewood, we use the old Golf Course as a Caravan Park or a small park for Tourists. During the music roundup we have up to 400 vans on course for a week or more. Other times we still use it for overnight camping. We look after the course.
The Batlow Caravan Park needs to be moved. Best site would be the old Forestry site. Currently RV users use this site to dump grey water etc. It is an excellent site with many facilities that can be easily converted. Tumba: charge the lessee more than is currently charged!!!
Batlow needs new Caravan Park. Free camp at Tumut and Batlow if bike trail goes ahead.
Service level DECREASED
Sell off - private enterprise
Sell all caravan parks - they would be better run privately. Caravan parks should not be seen as private accommodation for seasonal workers as noted re: Tumba works for blueberry farmer
Privatise caravan park in Tumbarumba
Privatise caravan parks.
Privatisation
Private parks are probably at a financial disadvantage to council – should be assessed in clear financial terms
Other commentary
Summary:
Caravan parks important for tourism. Some recognition of importance for horticulture, etc. too
Mix of views on running them as a business or privatising. Free camping / RVs also mentioned as important.
Batlow in particular was identified as needing investment or perhaps moving to another site.

3. Cemeteries

Service level INCREASED
Respond to minimum levels of presentation.
Services are ok - maybe add toilet facilities.
At Brungle cemetery a footpath and seating are needed. A public toilet near the cemetery is also needed. More trees are also needed. The records for Brungle cemetery need to be maintained by Council. The fence also needs to be maintained at Brungle cemetery. Divert funds from street trees
Pioneer Cemetery should be well maintained and signed, and information provided to the public. Perhaps community groups, eg Lions and Rotary, could have a working bee each year to assist in maintenance.
Tumut cemetery, the older part (1965 and >?) not particularly attractive but would be hard to improve without a lot of expenditure and no big deal.
Improved working on old graves and old sections.

Pioneer Cemetery in Tumut needs improved maintenance and beautification for appeal and to be inviting and in recognition of pioneers buried there. Pioneer Cemetery should have a map indicating where notable historic gravesites can be viewed. Response from table of 6.
Toilet facilities at Tumut cemetery opened and closed by staff preparing gravesite (ie open for funerals only). Well maintained - respect for the dead - community expectation.
Cemeteries should be given serious care, particularly the older graves should be maintained by Council.
Recognise Rotary – painting gates, trees, better signs.
Definitely need toilets
Service level MAINTAINED
Look at the possibility of putting toilets at cemeteries. Must not ever get to the point of treating cemeteries as 'war' cemeteries. Provide seats.
Maintain current standards and funding regime. Only increase in service levels if can be funded by charges.
User pays concept works well.
It's something we are all waiting to use. At times it is a tourist attraction and some people like to read the headstones. Increase the fees to pay for what is needed.
Cemeteries service level to be kept the same, except for Pioneer Cemetery which should be increased.
Seems to be adequate at the present time. Small Council deficit could be made up by the costs being reduced.
All cemeteries should be well maintained and appropriate index of all graves, past and present, maintained.
Maintenance is all fine just the way it is. Can Mannus do more?
It is culturally significant and would be unreasonable to not maintain them. Regardless of world view resources are and should be committed to the people. Some graves are not adequately maintained. Generally are maintained.
Maintain as has been, but look at having toilet facilities.
Cemeteries seem to be maintained well at minimal subsidy. Batlow cemetery is good. A small increase in fees would cover the subsidy.
It is important for the cemeteries to be well maintained. Many families come back to town to visit loved ones on important days such as Mothers Day/Fathers Day. Increase levies to cover the \$6K differential.
Maintain current service and increase fees if required to cover costs.
User pays, but fees should be kept to cost - death should not be a cost burden to the bereaved as a money-maker for Council.
Service level DECREASED
Should not be a responsibility of Council to develop a public plan of historic graves.
Other commentary
Lawns mowing to be contracted to private business.
Some Talbingo residents insist they wish to have their bodies interred in Talbingo. There is a columbarium wall maintained by Council on the 'church' property - perhaps this is a basis for Council to take over that property from the Christian churches.
Can community groups be formed to help maintain cemeteries?

Summary:
Pioneer cemetery singled out as needing additional attention by Council.
Consideration to be given to public toilets, benches etc in cemeteries as a service to those visiting or attending funerals.
General agreement that a small increase in charges would help to be financially sustainable.
Opportunity for community groups to be engaged in assisting with maintenance and upkeep of cemeteries.

4. Children's Services

Service level INCREASED
Maybe insurance could be covered for people helping out in their own homes. Maybe after school care for working parents and others.
Increase on a needs basis. If all services are not currently available, Council to implement new services once again on a needs basis. Council could provide assistance via Grants/ Commonwealth assistance/State assistance. Council needs to be more proactive in securing funding from Commonwealth and State governments.
Tumba should have a preschool. Lobby government for funding.
Support for families who work is necessary to provide children with the best possible start. We should foster and incentivise families to grow if they want to. It'd be fine for Council to subsidise if necessary. It isn't a tangible investment (long term brings jobs and raises population).
Spend money on it, however I think it is a good service in Tumba. You're doing a good job Tumba/new Council :) Can you make money from it?
Current Tumba services set a fine example and should be continued. This should be expanded to Tumut regions as required. Continue to fund with grants and user charges. This creates local employment. This should be cost-neutral or make a profit for Council.
Tumut and other towns should investigate following Tumba model. This could assist in growing the SVC shire working population. These services provide work in the facilities. Follow the 'self-funded' model established by Tumba. Tumut Council was asleep at the wheel.
Children's services a priority for funding.
We need to provide for and attract young families to the region. It is a town planning issue Council needs to be involved in. It could be done on a cost-neutral basis.
There does need to be a focus on greater services going forward in order to entice young families to want to stay here or live here. Before and after school care services are lacking.
Toy library - users to pay membership fee and borrow a toy for a week - volunteers could operate this as a weekly service in a premises with storage space. Not-for-profit - childcare/activity centre to assist working low economic families. Youth drop-in centre with facilities for counselling/interview and social interaction. User pays would help/enable services.
Where commercial childcare services are not available could Council encourage communities to set up their own services.
Children's services – better access required to smaller communities; will raise population if done properly.
Need policy paper – plan.

Imperative for Tumba – earns income
Service level MAINTAINED
Important services to maintain community viability.
Run as is - maybe enlarge to make more space for children.
Cost recovery basis needs to be considered. The mobile services are essential for outlying areas, such as the toy library for Brungle and Rosewood.
Tumbarumba model should apply to all areas.
Maintain
It is good in Tumba - bring the same model into other towns.
Tumba looks good.
Keep as break-even.
Service level is good - stay as it is.
If it's not costing anything, I have no problem, but should be looked at across the shire. Again, if this just for isolated communities it further divides Council. We don't have enough detail to make comment.
Maintain current services. Should be on a cost-recovery basis.
I think the current services are okay.
Maintain service in Tumbarumba as it is largely self-funding.
Service level DECREASED
Privatise
I believe these services should be privatised. I don't believe it should be run by Council. I believe many decisions made to benefit staff or family members.
Other commentary
Not LGA core business. Leave as it is - State and Federal grants. User pays. Lack of private enterprise options. Larger communities like Tumut are fortunate in terms of economies of scale.
it is essential Council-provided services of this scale are properly motivated, scrupulously honest staff. The opportunities for corrupt conduct are numerous and very difficult to deal with. Perhaps LG should stay out of it.
Provides a sense of community for young families.
The cost of child care services everywhere are a huge problem and a major political football.
Summary:
General support for user-pays/cost recovery principle for provision of childcare.
Some commentary about equitable access to people across the LGA.
Note that access to childcare brings new families into the LGA and helps to sustain or grow the population.
Tumbarumba model could be expanded to other centres in the LGA.

5. Community Buildings

Service level INCREASED
Value the volunteers and contribution to the community these buildings provide. Maintain buildings - if no committee to manage, Council provide direction on how to obtain grant.

Aim to be self-funded by a mix of community service plus paid. Capital growth is an asset also.
Review cost recovery. Decrease the number of parks in Tumut.
Building upgrades - pay for by further utilisation of the buildings.
Essential services are run from many of these buildings and increased level of service will guarantee continued service. Divert funds from street trees
Address safety and risk issues. Facilitate/lobby further grant funds.
Assistance should be provided to ensure buildings meet current standards (risk assessment included).
Employ entrepreneur to boost economy, population overall, efficiency of Shire. We need a visionary.
Consider turning packing house (Batlow cannery?) into a special community based venue
Encourage use; make spaces such as the RH building as a gallery space and volunteer gathering space.
Better utilisation of community buildings is required.
Service level MAINTAINED
It is an asset for the public use. Council is providing a service that otherwise may not be met in private enterprise.
We help the Rosewood community with the income from the lease of the shed. This is the only building Council owns in Rosewood - we are going okay.
Yes, but ensure that the current assets are fully utilising the facility. May be at council cost or paid or combination.
Vast community investment and usage on a needs basis. Most buildings were funded initially by the community and possibly State funding.
We need community buildings - they need maintenance, but don't let it take too much money (eg Tumut Neighbourhood Centre).
Cultural significance is important to the community and should be maintained.
I think these community buildings are important in one way or another. They generally are the hubs of the community. It is important they are maintained and that Council work in with the community and volunteer groups.
Important for the community, where these buildings provide facilities and services needed within communities and virtually cover costs (or a reasonable amount.) . These are infrastructure that would not otherwise be available in the community . Should be maintained into the future while they are important to the community.
All buildings to be maintained.
Important part of the SVC social fabric. Reliance on grants. Emotive issues. Role of volunteers.
Social fabric - through the availability of various premises, community groups are providing a range of services that would not otherwise be available and are not provided by Council. Often it is the occupant groups/organisation who generally maintain the Council property in good order through fundraising and grants. Thus it is good value for Council to retain the buildings and assist with maintenance issues at minimal or zero rent.
Keep as is, maybe trying to have them used more so as to justify their maintenance. Maybe use as child-minding venues. Encourage local involvement in maintaining and use.
Many of these buildings have a very large community input to either maintain or upgrade them via fundraising or grants applied for by the community. Many of these buildings provide services and venues for cultural, sporting and social activities that are part of the social infrastructure of the region. They keep families in the region, attract visitors and are part of a country lifestyle.

Continue to support community committees/groups to maintain and manage the buildings to meet the needs of the community. Many grants can only be sourced if 'owned' by Council. Need to be careful making decisions without knowing financial details. Need to be aware of and be sensitive to the use of buildings before making long-term decisions about sales or removing support.
Community buildings – keep them going, don't sell off.
Montreal was a gift to the community. It is the only public performance space.
Not all Council buildings are available to Council to redesignate e.g. Montreal has agreements in place
Clear definition of agreements in relation to council 'owned' infrastructure. There is a lack of understanding of what Council's role/obligation/access/commitment/influence is to certain buildings e.g. Montreal Theatre in Tumut. There is a very specific agreement re: the building and the incorporated committee (also Sounds of the Mountains). It would appear most people in the community (including staff and elected reps) don't understand that they can't dispose of them at will
Service level DECREASED
Audit all community buildings to identify use and possibility of better utilisation of fewer buildings.
Sell Montreal Theatre to private enterprise. Sell Neighbourhood Centre - incorporate Neighbourhood Centre/Radio Centre into one building.
Note - some of these assets if not in use could and should be sold, eg Batlow Cannery, to attract new business to the region.
Other commentary
Most important at Talbingo is the 'church', previously a community centre and a multi-denominational religious meeting place. Three Christian churches (RC, Anglican, United) were 'gifted' the property for \$1. It should be ensured that the 'church' cannot be sold by the christian churches for private or commercial purposes. Talbingo needs a community centre, free of interference from other functions. The 'church' is insured, maintained and operated by the wider Talbingo community while a very small number utilise it for an occasional part of a day per month or so.
Tumbarumba Council at the time gave the old fire shed to Rosewood. A committee was formed, and we now keep the shed in good order and lease out for \$1,000 per year. We now use the income for the community.
If many of these buildings cease to be, the facilities of the towns would suffer.
User pays. Audit of stock. Sell unusable facilities as required.
Council to remember buildings have an increasing asset value
Ensure new community buildings have M&R allocation and depreciation
The sale of any of these buildings should only be done with community consultation and approval
Summary:
General sense that community members could be better enlisted to assist in the maintenance of community buildings.
Some suggestion that some key buildings could be sold for private enterprise to utilise to boost the economy and attract visitors.
Support for addressing the cost of maintenance etc through user-pays.
Suggest an audit of all buildings to identify usage and opportunities for efficiency.

6. Community Development and Events

Service level INCREASED

This is a growing area and closely related to tourism which has the potential to be a key income stream for the region. It really needs a re-think - community development needs to address 'capacity' in communities to run youth, cultural and sporting activities, as well as events attracting tourism. There is also an opportunity for Council to work with event organisers and develop funding streams from events. Or council to employ event organisers who devote time to each event, take pressure off volunteers and navigate through the applications, legalities and necessary paperwork.
What about strategic development? (in this area of service). Seems to be just running events - what is community development?? Need to have a more strategic approach to community development. Event support could be a separate service. This should all be linked to Tourism - no demarcation lines.
It should be seen as the link in developing a relationship with all communities across the Snowy Valleys region, as this has not occurred! Input by the community in developing and re-invigorating the cultural committee with guidelines and direction.
Youth Development Officer needs to put on more activities in town like dances or similar for kids to get together.
Cost currently sits at \$496K - major cost area, and continues to grow. Community perception that this area should not cost anything is wrong. Focus of aims of community development?
More participation from Council to all events, not necessarily increased funding. Provide organisations with assistance with grant applications. Community development is a vital aspect for all communities to liaise and support each and every event.
Time for a complete review of community and development definition, and look at events in terms of levels of service. Events coordinator could produce an events calendar to endeavour to avoid clashes of major events and share attracting visitors. Time for a review of the Youth Councils and their role/aims/purpose.
Council is community - specialist officers need to be employed to advise and assist event organisers comply with insurance, risk assessment and other requirements. The admin aspect is a 'too hard basket' for volunteers. Pay for increase via sponsors for events.
It's an important issue, but has to be driven by local communities, and not council. Council should be supportive and help where necessary. Could be structured a bit better to avoid events clashing and work together with accommodation, other businesses that could benefit or be affected.
Definitely a priority - it's essential to have community initiatives to engage a community that is increasingly disengaged. Events should be better advertised. Youth events need to better reach audiences with more efficiency.
Council's role is to offer assistance and advice but not fund or run events. Require a designated events organiser.
This area is so important. I find the service is fantastic. Is it possible to get an event coordinator paid by Council? Events are great for tourism and the area.
It is a priority as tourism is going to be a major contributor in the future. Council's role should be as support not driver. Disagree with the notion that Council should determine what works. Support through policy can guide where funds are prioritised.
Events are a major key to attracting visitors to the region. There is an opportunity for council to work with major events to help fund another events coordinator specifically for events that attract large numbers of visitors from outside the region.
Events run at a profit – special event manager to make enough to cover costs
Service level MAINTAINED
It provides an essential service in community cohesion and assisting groups. There is little in development. The additional services they provide - assisting with grants, maintaining websites and facebook.

Major social, cultural commitment?
These events are extremely important to all communities. They bring visitors/tourists who spend money within local community. At issue is that most stall holders come from outside the region and do not contribute to the local economy. While income for accommodation stays within each local area.
Events need to be strategically planned throughout the council and to highlight the natural beauty of the area. More events for young people. More event management classes to be held for committees.
Doing activities under control of Council. Set a budget figure then prioritise allocation. This would ensure those activities don't become an open-ended obligation for Council.
Community grants important to sow into the infrastructure that remains at the end of the day when community events are done and dusted. Calendar of events across the Snowy Valleys area would help ensure less overload (eg on accommodation availability and parking).
The Falling Leaf Festival became the Dead Leaf Carnival and then collapsed. It was no longer a community event. It should have been consigned to history and a new approach developed. Whether public facilities are suitable and sufficient for the various events needs better consideration (NB public toilets - too few, too difficult to find, inadequate standard).
Events run by communities speak to what's important for that community. Council should support with advice and practical support.
Generally satisfied. My big concern is that of the young children of people living in the poverty pockets in town. Terrible term but these people are losers and their children are the losers of the future. I'd like to see some help for these families, maybe tailored to each family. Education (informal) could make a big difference. I want them to be able to join community groups and to realise that there is more going on than their limited knowledge.
Community development and events – less red tape; Council supports development; toilets seem reasonable; emphasis should be placed on events to support small events; profit isn't necessarily gaugeable and should be viewed long-term.
Fee for service for an events officer by those planning and holding an event.
Should SVC be involved and to what extent? Appoint events manager – consider cost recovery for SVC-run events.
Shortage of helpers for events – maybe plan to involve younger people and new residents.
Council needs events officer to be funded by events.
Service level DECREASED
A growing commitment needs major community input.
Other commentary
Community development needs to be separate from events.
Properly define 'community development' and separate from Events. Great care is needed in chasing a mega-event (eg Harden Kite Festival 2018 - it went on Facebook, the crowds arrived, and it was a disaster in respect of, especially, toilets, traffic management (and who knows what else). But next year the numbers will be massively down.
Events officer is unnecessary cost on a financial system already in deficit.
Summary
General desire to separate 'Events' from 'Community Development' into two distinct services (Events may be better joined with Tourism).
See Council's role to support the community to do, rather than do itself.
Support for an 'Events' officer to be employed by Council to support community groups with grant applications, insurances, risk management, coordination and publicity etc.
Desire to see children and young people supported through community development activities of Council.

Reference to public toilets as key to successful events.

7. Community Engagement

Service level INCREASED
This is essential for effective outcomes. Community consultations need to be continued but the community feel that their comments or positions on Council projects are sometimes ignored - this results in comments like "Why go? What you say doesn't matter". The Council needs a feedback mechanism that is clear and effective and one that also states what it can do or can't do within a budget.
The staff should be given a mechanism to be part of the feedback because the councillors cant adequately cover the area. Eg no Council rep south of Tumbarumba, buty there are staff in the areas who could give feedback on behalf of residents. It is clear from broadcast Council meetings that decisions have been made before the meeting. The Council doesn't seem to take any notice of the feedback they receive. A lot of money is going into advertising but there is very little media reporting of Council which is critical. Chambers of Commerce are in the 'collaboration' part of the process, but many submissions made by the Tumba Chamber have not changed the Council position at all. Difference of opinion is being shut down. Batlow feedback re library facade is being ignored.
Has been incredibly poor in the past - we need to do it better. Don't just have consultation for the sake of consultation though - it needs to be informative. Council meetings - most of the discussions around issues are done in closed meetings - why is the community not able to see the discussion? Although I will say that the Council can consult at a cost to the ratepayer as many times as they like, and they still will get complaints that people are not informed - it is always the same people who show up.
Culture change required as Council treats residents with contempt. What they say and what they do are north and south pole. Instigate what community meetings want, not what Council wants. Say what you mean and mean what you say". Councillors to get out and meet the people to then fully understand what the community and business needs are, and what they want from Council. Allow councillors to express opinions in newspaper or on radio etc. Council meetings - there is no transparency as too many decisions made behind closed doors.
A major change of attitude needed at all levels. Engage all communities. Meet the people strategy required now from Engagement Officer. Communication is the name of the game. Inform the community of issues/actions. Engage all stakeholders. What is result of recent telephone survey? - public needs to know. Results-focus is needed. How can Council help you - rather than put up brick walls. Can-do attitude needed. Stop being Tumut-focussed - this was a major problem with previous Tumut Shire Council and it appears to be heading the same way with SVC. Council promotes "Leading, Engaging and Supporting strong and vibrant community" - this needs to happen. What is Council's Mission Statement? Report to community on Council meetings - actions, discussions, issues (in the newspapers - Tumut and Adelong Times etc). How can an ex-Mayor say what is happening in Council when she was part of the previous Council closed-door culture. It's all about the attitude within SVC from the top.
Community engagement = Vision. Fundamental role in the partnership of Council and the community. Need to define principles of community engagement and commit to them - transparency, customer service attitude (helpful), understand what community engagement means (inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower). Commit to action. Invest in the process. Expand the Community Sounding Board concept and apply it consistently to major community-based service decisions (eg a CSB to analyse/provide opinions on car parking).
I think placing ads in papers and on the Council webpage should be enough to advise people of what is going on in towns, whether it be replacing trees etc. I have seen one councillor in 11 years after the last floods, and what he tole me Council would do has still not happened.

Consulting or telling/informing people is not sufficient - should also give the reasons/strategic approach for taking a course of action. Community engagement will depend on what activity, projects, events are being dealt with. Too much 'consulting' to me means that maybe the councillors are not taking responsibility for decisions that they should be making. Councillors should have a wider view of the needs for the LGA and the trends at all levels of government. There needs to be leadership from councillors and for these councillors to be in touch with the State and Federal politicians. Decisions of Council meetings - summarise for dissemination to anyone who would like to see it. Too much is dealt with 'in confidence' and we need more information about decisions.
Transparency. Agendas on social media and newspapers. Available opportunities for community discussion.
Ensure decisions of Council impacting on communities are reported in the two community newspapers (report on outcomes of Council meetings). Also the Mayor to periodically have in the newspaper a 'Message from the Mayor' to give his view on where the Council is going on major issues. Council meetings should better reflect the opinions of individual councillors rather than 'move/second/passed'. The Council should be a closed society.
Both Council staff and councillors need to engage in community more. Let them know what is currently happening. They need to be more transparent with what's being discussed. Council meetings need to be more detailed and we should receive more information derived from meetings.
The increase can be in staff and council development. Council needs to be aware of governance. It can be handled in a non-financial way, but by providing better informed council staff and councillors. The roadshows were good but at what cost and of what benefit?
Communication - inform communities of intended works (other than day-to-day maintenance) and consequences, further actions.
This is a critical area that needs to be developed for the future not as a 'one-off'. Hard because final decision lies with Council, so can seek input but doesn't necessarily mean info will be acted on. Develop an ongoing focus group to be a consistent sounding board - don't always have to meet in Batlow - can be smaller groups in various communities. There is an enormous lack of transparency in the current Council, compounded by an apparent lack of understanding re governance. Most discussion occurs in briefings closed from the community. Reports are pulled from the published agenda. Confidential reports that may not meet the Act criteria are being included in 'closed' meetings. Ensure staff and councillors undertake mandatory training in governance, especially responsible manager/director.
There is no transparency at what goes on at Council meetings. Councillors thoughts and opinions are being silenced and decisions made prior to meetings so residents have no idea what is going on and who is in favour of what. We do not see any debate or discussion so live streaming is pointless. Less consultants needed. More consultation between councillors and residents. Little notice taken of suggestions.
Restart Brindabella meetings – 1 per year
Expand community sounding board concept to all major future decisions e.g. pools
Make known just what councillors do – what is their commitment meetings, council and committees, RERO, etc.
Submissions to Council should go to Council, not be denied to Council by way of a staffer decision
Community engagement is a must.
Community engagement – open it up for decision-making; doesn't need to be formal.
Service level MAINTAINED
My experience has been good. Good that Council has a designated PR person. Good idea for Council to publish in dot form results and issues which were addressed at the meeting.

Transparency at Council meetings regarding what is confidential and what is not. The meetings that are live streamed are just a tick and flick - moving and seconding without discussion. Council briefings are 'closed' and not made public about what discussion by councillors that take place. Community needs to know what was discussed and how the councillors voted. More councillors 'meet and greet' and time to speak individually to community members.
The community in general needs to be informed. In general the officers at the front desk are excellent, however there is a great deficiency in the back room.
Businesses need to keep staff informed, onside. Council is the same - keep in touch with the community. Councillor briefings, workshops are beneficial for councillors to pull apart issues, seek info and be prepared - however, the issues should be aired at Council meetings. 'In confidence' sessions should be strictly confined to genuine matters. Any submission/enquiry by residents/businesses should be acknowledged.
Service level DECREASED
Road shows are a waste of time and resources.
Other commentary
Transparency is paramount. Community questionnaires have been an excellent way to gather opinion. Council support of services within smaller communities, where the service is not provided by the private sector, is imperative. I have heard it argued that all should be equal across the new SV Council area, but it cannot be all equal when the services offered in smaller communities will never match what is offered in the larger centres.
Before any answers are considered, the environmental differences between localities needs to be recognised. In Talbingo, a significant issue flows from former TSC insistence that all street and park trees (planted by Council) have to be deciduous. This attitude, dictated from Tumut, sees trees unsuitable for Talbingo's conditions, especially geologically, but also environmentally. Talbingo is about the natural environment, not an environment our colonists sought (and seek) to transplant the environment from somewhere in Europe - not on! Councillors, due to their little or no exposure to Talbingo, seem happy to adopt that which suits a larger community, rather than recognise the differences across the Shire. Following the 'Administrator days', Council meetings are more of a rubber stamping session (Administrator days were days of total community disengagement).
Was phone survey (results) made public?
Communication – really hard to see how this can be improved in a genuine way. We are already being bombarded by press releases or full page advertisements. Individual councillors being accessible is critical, as is a willingness to advocate on behalf of ratepayers. Lack of <u>real</u> debate in Council meetings is a concern.
Councillors already attend many council-related meetings that the public don't know about. Having them travel around this huge and often time consuming LGA is increasing their workload for little reward. Most roadshows would have the same people attending repeating the same issues. Encourage residents to email councillors with issues
Councillors already have a big workload attending meetings, functions etc. Maybe we need some way of getting information out to the public so they know and understand what they are already doing, as opposed to wanting councillors to be more visible
Summary
Significant passion around this issue.
Concern that much of the debate in the lead up to councillor decision-making occurs in closed briefing sessions, instead of as part of the meeting.
Interest in an ongoing 'sounding board' mechanism for future issues of significance to be discussed with the community.
Desire for councillors to be more visible and available across the whole LGA.

Some interest in seeing a brief summary of outcomes of council meetings published in newspaper, social media.

8. Customer Service

Service level INCREASED
Firstly, face to face over the counter is working very well - staff are friendly and cooperative. Customer service is lacking in some areas behind the scenes, eg letters being sent to home addresses that don't have a mail delivery; letters stating inspection re sewerage/septic systems will be inspected at a cost, then no follow-up inspections. Finance and invoicing needs attention - this is not clear. Some invoices just have a number (eg Invoice 520 and the amount with no explanation). Rate notices being mixed up.
The info@ email address is not fully sorted. It seems correspondence is too often directed to the wrong place/person. I suppose this will sort itself out in time. Some issues may be due to certain remaining TSC staff who have failed to maintain their previous position, simply being unhelpful to their effective replacements.
I think this is a very important part of Council. If you walk in at times staff stand around talking before serving you. Staff should be made leave their personal phone at home, especially when you see a block on a Stop & Go sign texting, or office staff.
Customer service must be improved - ensure staff have a helpful attitude. Establish customer service KPIs (measures, outcomes). Frontline customer service is good. Senior/middle management customer service is poor.
There is a lack of customer service. Staff and management do not acknowledge receipt of letters, emails etc. Phone calls often take days to reply to messages left. Counter service is good at Tumut. Website - many policies, forms etc not up for viewing. Often feel interrogated when asked what the reason for phone call is.
Customer service starts with attitude and training. Must be top driven and it appears this is not the case. Be outcome-focused: "how can we help you?". Management needs to be open and honest which will develop better customer service. Robert at Batlow Library is very helpful and provides good customer service. What are the rules now between Tumut and Tumba office in regards to services eg DAs, water, sewerage? Acknowledge customer communications - telephone, email, fax and letter. Staff at front counter in Tumut have been pleasant and helpful (5 stars). Had a recent (12 month) issue with water - officer inspected issue and reported issue will be rectified ASAP (Batlow). Remove dead wood at all levels of Council.
Often first contact by visitors seeking info relating to possible investment in or moving to Tumut is with people at the counter, on the phone, email etc. Everyone working with direct contact with the general public and need to answer enquiries/questions should be briefed on a regular basis (possibly weekly) on what to expect as major issues/questions/topical/likely concerns etc. If the right person is not available, others should respond/answer phones etc and either should assist or commit to pass a message on to the right person who will respond. There is no point having pleasant people at the front counter if there is no one behind them, or if they do not follow up with communication.
Aim to respond to any enquiry within 24 hours, even if it is just an acknowledgement of receipt, and a contact person for future communications.
Improvement needed. Need to stop getting differing or incorrect advice. Those in higher positions need to be more available for consultations with ratepayers. Returning communication whether it be phone, text, email etc.

Customer service is the forefront of the Council business itself, so it is imperative that they have good skills and can direct service and messages to the correct area. However, it seems from conversation that the next level in council is not being responsive. This service has deteriorated rapidly since merging - they need to be more accountable.
These people are our first impression and it is important that this service be improved. I find most of the staff are very helpful. It is difficult to navigate Council and who you should be talking to. I think the 1300 number is great and I do think Council are trying to improve.
Tumut front office reception always polite, cheery and helpful. They passed on message (name/phone number) to person you want to see who is unavailable, but in one case in particular the contact is not returned. The level of service needs to be across the organisation.
All contact with council should be recognised.
Better services in responding to correspondence etc, following up phone calls, acknowledgements. Inform community of outcomes/issues.
Reply to letters! And invitations!
Feedback needs improving badly. Mobile phone service needs improving
Introduce proper customer request management system ASAP and establish meaningful KPIs so that community can see improvements
Service level MAINTAINED
The front desk at the people and the coal face of Council who are not backed up by the council officer responsible. Council officers need to be far better informed and act immediately answering questions and enquiries. Reply/acknowledgement of any enquirey be it email, letter etc. All staff should respect all enquiries.
Good front desk customer service at Tumut office and also at Library. Are forms available online that can be printed out and returned, either in person, by email or post? More seating could be available at Tumut office.
Limited experience. No problems.
Better trained staff to take more responsibility for handling business without always having to pass matters on with the prospect of long delays in response, if at all.
Customer service to be consistent across all townships. Personally I have only good experiences with customer service from Council.
Maintained' is the wrong wording - it's about providing staff with broader knowledge and skills. Multi-skill and cross pollination enable greater career opportunities and customer service satisfaction. Another area where harmonisation is necessary to break the 'Tumba/Tumut' cycle - 2 1/2 years on still appear to operate as separate centres. Succession planning important for all areas, but fails when the senior executive do not have the knowledge/skills/expertise to guide.
Customer service is important. The Council/staff are there to support the residents - their customers.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
The level of customer service should be improved rather than increased.

Front counter service in Tumbarumba is excellent. Would be helpful if Tumbarumba/Khancoban end of Council region could continue to deal with Tumba office for enquiries, Das etc. The Tumut/Adelong end of the region dealt with by Tumut office - particularly where face-to-face transactions/discussions are necessary. NDIS have outsourced their first contact enquiries and this is a disaster for anyone attempting to communicate with them - please DO NOT outsource communication!
Tumut staff are generally wonderful at front of house (have not gone into Tumba office to comment). In general, initial customer service very positive, friendly and welcoming. Need to acknowledge receipt of letters, emails, phone calls and deserve a response of some kind.
Customer service officers are critical to perceptions of the Council. It should be a priority focus for Council. Hear a lot of stories about staff not getting back to customers.
Summary:
General consensus that front-of-house/reception customer service is of a high quality.
Concern that messages/correspondence is not responded to in a timely way by other staff in the organisation.
Need to ensure frontline customer service staff are regularly briefed on current issues and how to respond appropriately.

9. Economic Development

Service level INCREASED
Upgrade of Brindabella Road. Starting with Yass Road, needs to be cut out just over Tumut River, Create a causeway as water was held back in last flood creating houses to flood for no reason. Water was 2 foot higher on east side of road. Water was going over road like a waterfall. Brindabella Road has been talked about for years - need to just get on with the job.
Council need to change attitude to this issue - people shy away from dealing with 'Tumut' (previous Tumut Council). Council needs to develop community-lead discussion strategy for development of new businesses - not only for Tumut but for whole region of LGA. No strategy = no more funds available. Less consultancies - focus.
Extremely important! Need to diversify if we want to survive into the future - buck the trend of other regional towns - cannot rely on a single industry. Need to sell our unique beauty and a great place to live.
Economic development needs to be increased to support current businesses and also start-up businesses. It often gets confused with tourism but should be a stand-alone service to increase each community's business facilities.
Council should facilitate a service to help new and existing businesses to go forward, but then not necessarily involved with ongoing management. Softwood should come under softwood industry not Council - big enough to support themselves.
I think businesses are not well supported in the beginning. I think the \$275K that we spend in this area shows why we are not great at it. More support and information for new businesses and less red tape is what is needed. New business means more tourists. Softwood Centre of Excellence - not sure what this is but would think Forrestry should chip in for this.

Support to help new businesses to get established - advice and practical support. Greater efficiency in assessing and approving proposed investment.
This is an important service at both the Big end of business but it is also vital for small businesses that are already established or potentially new to the region. Small business currently does not feel supported by Council and some potential small businesses have been lost to the region.
Most important role is being the 'go to' person for business. Be able to provide information about grants, resources etc for existing and potential businesses. Get out and attend Country Change and other regional forums where potential businesses may attend. Many of the strategic projects are pie in the sky unless a business case can demonstrate they are viable on an ongoing basis. Industrial land should happen.
Need to get building department to assist not hinder development.
Seek funding from philanthropy and industry
Encourage Charles Sturt University to have a campus in Tumut, eg forestry, nursing, wine making (in Tumba).
Advocate with rural and regional councils to increase funding as per financial sustainability.
Work with neighbouring councils to advocate and improve and welcome business and visitors.
Need for SVC to be more engaging and proactive in securing new businesses to LGA. Cut red tape – should be <i>how we can help you</i> not <i>no, it cannot be done</i> - too many issues. Open for business concept – not closed door.
Better mobile coverage across LGA.
Advocate to RMS for Courabyra Road bypass for trucks to remove them from the Tumbarumba CBD – to create a safer main street for tourists and locals alike. The Parade is very narrow and very busy – every day of the week.
Council needs to assist not hinder development – offer help, suggestions. We are open for business – come and talk to us, this is how we can help.
'we are open for business' concept and 'we are here to help you'. Important when first contact is made with Council on possible developments. This attitude has not always been in place in the past, with more likely to emphasise obstacles rather than help
Service level MAINTAINED
Our environment, including parks, gardens and facilities, would be very important for trades people thinking about moving here.
Grants requiring applications - that put a good case forward for the project, on an annual basis - transparent, invite applications, announce recipients. If businesses/organisations are receiving financial assistance from Council, then the entire community has the right to know who and how much.
Attract government organisations to relocate to Snowy Valleys - 100 employees of a government organisation will add 300-400 people to the area (family).
Follow up on securing grants for region.
It should be re-assessed.
Traditional Catch-22 - invest to grow.
Council should concentrate on providing appropriate infrastructure - industrial land, water, sewerage etc. An appropriately qualified person must be available to assist businesses (new and established) understand the environment of the community and establish points of contact.
To include renewable energy industries as part of strategic plans or projects.

To include recycling from existing timber industries, to establish an industry that uses their by-products. Transport hub which could include truck and machinery wash. Work with Snowy Hydro to seek supply opportunities which could be established in Tumut and surrounds.
Not all new business people are experts and look for advice and direction to get established.
Very complex - no easy answer. Council definitely has a role to play in providing support and encouragement to potential investors/industries (eg Visy, Snowy 2.0). Include community input.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Costs \$275,000 - query how this is derived? Snowy Valleys Council has adopted an Economic/RED strategy - 25 actions - query budget.
Notwithstanding the massive amount of investment involved, Snowy 2.0 will have significant impacts on Talbingo which will result in negative effects during and after construction. Until contractors are engaged, the during construction impacts can only be guessed at.
120 fees increased to Tumbarumba by more than 50%; 12 reduced. 6 fees increased to Tumut; 23 reduced.
Summary:
General agreement that Council has a role to play in supporting businesses to establish and develop.
Cut red tape and make it 'easy to do business'.
Role for Council to be advocate in industry forums to promote the benefits of SV as a location for establishing a business.

10. Emergency Management

Service level INCREASED
Service level MAINTAINED
SES, RFS do a great job. When episode is over, Council to advertise 'we're open for business'
Currently done well - focus on recovery. Need to note the Council contributions to RFS and SES
Absolutely critical - should be a priority
Essential service to all communities, legislation based. Must be maintained and coordinated within SVC. Include all stakeholders. Section 44 decisions to be made as required. After issues have been resolved and recovered, Council should advise community now 'open for business' as the issue (fire/flood) may stop people coming back. Important to keep the community informed
Council administrative role: members of Council aware of who LEOCON is and the structure required during an emergency. Volunteers are gems. Have a register of volunteers to assist in recovery/support.
Trusting what is in place is OK.
Maintain at current level.
Carry out what is required as efficiently as possible.
It's an area that requires all agencies to be effective in the role they are responsible for - Council needs to have staff in the positions who know what they're doing and understand the legal requirements

They do a great job - service needs to be maintained.
Council should support emergency management as required under the Act and emergency management Plan.
There is a lot in the admin involved in an emergency and a lot of behind the scenes organising. I think this is an important service. I would like to know that we have done all the training to get staff prepared.
Important to maintain - seems to be OK as is. However, the level of communication with communities regarding things like 'evacuation procedures' needs to be more effective and clear e.g. Batlow Bush Fire Evacuation Plan.
#10 – cut red tape.
Keep community informed.
Investigate why RFS budget is increasing and highlight obvious cost shifting
Be aware of cost shifting from other levels of government and services e.g. levies
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Summary:
Strong acknowledgement of the importance of the service
General feeling the current service is OK, but a desire to ensure that all appropriate measures/resources in place

11. Footpaths

Service level INCREASED
Batlow upgrade: Mayday road has no footpath - it's an important road where many children walk along to school. We need to consider a footpath on one side. 1km would be great, but budget restrictions - possible grant?
It would be good to see more cycleways, reinvigorate Adelong main street. Footpaths good in Adelong generally where they are. It'd be nice to see an improved Adelong Creek Walk if anything. Rail trail (some sort of compromise being made). Beautification (more trees)
Increase for Batlow based on priority: usage, access, safety, use by elderly/disabled; City Centre: mainstreet paving a priority to ensure safety, high pedestrian usage areas; refer upgrade to Tumba main street. All other areas to be maintained. No decrease
Priority for increase - fix unsafe sections. Apply for grants, but new paths leads to additional costs. Existing footpath strategic plan. Budget too small to be decreased.
Footpaths needed around Tumut High School. Footpaths in villages e.g. Brungle - none at present. At cemeteries in all towns. Need to maintain current level at least for safety. Divert money from street trees.
Not a decent road to Tumut hospital. No kerb and gutter - this is an area of emergency. Look at product being used - does not always need to be concrete. Make roads and gutters (driveway) accessible for prams, gophers, wheelchairs, etc.
Avoid concrete for footpaths. Need softer surface for knee and ankle protection. Is there a relevant policy? Who makes decision as to path construction type? Nature strip areas should be available for occasional parking via 'laid back' kerbs.

need to review standards e.g. design to accommodate gophers, twin prams, etc. Identify priority areas, develop program to link essential services/business. Look at opportunities to develop non concrete paths (e.g. non-CBD). Paths link communities. Cycleways don't need to be concrete. Non-concrete easier to maintain. Increase funds by utilising SRV, attract grant funding
Adelong main street is very tired + in need of upgrade. We firstly need to complete a street beautification management plan to work with the community.
Needs to be more footpaths at northern end of Tumba town area. Parking space barriers are dangerous & need to be removed. Not necessary, have been source of numerous personal injury accidents - this was consensus of the table.
Tracks along picturesque walk trails - maybe more bins for rubbish, might prevent people being thoughtless (reduce cost of clean up crews).
Footpath access from aged care homes, high density areas and schools to meet the use by families and elderly is an increasing time of healthy activity (walk don't ride) and safe transit across the towns. There is an increasing number of gophers in the community and the users need a safe route off the road, and the connection of footpaths is important to enable travel across and around the community. Increase service: money should come from cosmetic beautification of CBDs
We have no footpaths in Rosewood, we would like some!
Priority to increase levels of service especially town centres e.g. Batlow CBD (paving and gutters need redesign); footpaths in many areas not good e.g. near/around retirement village in Batlow. Safety issue for residents especially the elderly / those with mobility issues; links between parking, gutters and footpaths need planning. Development of rail trails important for tourism in the region (fund via grants). Perhaps fund increases by decreasing parks budget.
Review needed, eg Batlow.
Adequate pedestrian pathways in high use / dense areas e.g. schools, retirement villages. Gravel or hard surface, not necessarily concrete.
Service level MAINTAINED
Maintain (<i>response from 5 people</i>)
Maintain current spending, Batlow needs priority, elderly and recreation areas important
Footpaths in Tumba and community should be maintained, Batlow is a priority
Generally adequate although where public facilities are added (e.g. aged care) need to add/improve footpaths. Should be funded by developer
Footpaths a priority for an ageing population. Cycleways a good idea to keep kids off main roads. Take money from Street trees so they don't rip up paths.
Ageing population needs safe walkways. Increasing use of cycles needs safe cycleways. Current expenditure + grants for expansion.
Lot of areas that don't have footpaths. Continue putting paths in busy areas and make accessible for cycling and disability vehicles as well. Construction could be bitumen not concrete, or use good roadbase until all streets have paths and then commence sealing. No decrease in service
I think level of service is OK, but areas in Tumut where young families with children / prams use roads/streets because no paths available - these people can't afford to pay 50% towards the cost - how is this dealt with?
Service level DECREASED

Other commentary
Summary:
Many identified the importance of footpaths for an ageing population.
Various specific priorities identified, but Batlow CBD came up a lot.
Consider options for use of different (lower cost) materials.

12. Libraries

Service level INCREASED
Libraries are highly valued and provide a wide range of services. Strong engagement with volunteers can really extend the services that are offered (eg archive, home delivery etc).
Archival records for community. Wifi access vital for tourists, seasonal workers and those who for various reasons don't have computers etc. Main centres (Tumut and Tumba) should be open 5 1/2 days with extra day at least in Batlow, Adelong, Talbingo etc. Fee for lodgement of archival records.
Emerging use of technology for libraries should be explored (eg electronic books). Need to ensure technology (computers) is kept up to date and look at any emerging trends re use of technology that is suitable for regional/rural communities.
Libraries are not only for books but for communities, meeting places, sifi, discussion points and community engagement. Libraries should be used more (building space) and promoted more efficiently. Storage for community records under proper control (Batlow, Tumut, Adelong, Talbingo, Tumbarumba).
Cost \$655K. Cost shifting. ATO, Medicare, Centrelink, previous grants.
This service is important to the whole community. Upgrade computers for the elderly, particularly in Adelong.
I think the library could be promoted more and an increase in service that could use the library. Through promotion educate people about what is going on and support more activities that already exist. Important community hub that could be better utilised.
Definitely in need of an increase because these places are viable aspects of the community. Community spaces for meetings, learning - more advertising of library services. Increase resource expenditure in libraries. More work and advertisement of Adelong Library - extension of opening hours will make the space more applicable.
Libraries could be utilised better and then advertise its functions, events, spaces for use much better, to increase visitation and use. Great place to house rural transaction centres.
Libraries as keeping place for community records.
Batlow Library – must reconsider design, making it a beacon in eco-design, sustainable. All libraries should be keeping places for well organised community records. Batlow Library could have archival storage place for LGA records to be kept replacing Wagga (to include Tumba and Tumut records).
\$1 million for Batlow – what's happening? Let community know. Essential service.
Look at other income producing activities

The new Batlow library should be state-of-the-art building both in architecture and environmental sustainability
Most essential
Talbingo library – looking more and more likely to shut down due to joint operation of Dept of Ed and Council.
Service level MAINTAINED
It is an essential community service for both residents and visitors for all items as listed in the presentation.
Facility for learning and communication, access by elderly citizens (rural transactions), visiting speakers and displays of public interest.
Libraries in regional/rural areas are more like a community centre and is needed.
New Library for Batlow with \$1m grant - however must be built in line with other buildings and designed for the future, not just a building as proposed. State Library funding for all local libraries. What is the proposed cost for new Batlow Library? Shortfall of funding from grants.
Talbingo Library is facing closure by Dept of Education - Council needs to get involved to find a way to maintain library facilities in Talbingo. Loss to date is of toilet facilities, but what else is to happen due to location on school site?
Very important as a ready to be able to get any book you want. Important as a social outlook, a place to get together.
Important social and cultural role. Services are changing but not diminishing.
Review the 'how & what' of libraries across the council area. They have become hubs, especially in smaller communities. Need to evolve to cater for changing ways people access 'reading material'. Need to have ongoing media/education to promote use of facilities and what services and facilities are available.
Multi-use library facilities is the way of the future as e-books are becoming more widely used. Kids activities, book clubs, group meetings, book box (electronic), discussion groups. Libraries are becoming the social hub as the research and teaching is moving to the screen.
They are an important cultural and community centre. Current level should be maintained. Important to be aware of changing technologies (ie electronic books). Libraries may become more cultural interchange spaces rather than book repositories.
The nature of libraries is changing and they can become real people places offering multiple services and places for people, groups to meet and have access to facilities that they decide they need (eg Batlow). For the smaller towns in a large council area Council needs to enhance delivery of services through libraries.
Tumut Library is a good service - satisfied as is. Brungle should have some kind of library service or similar. People could donate books and mags, and maybe encourage learning.
Important impacts for communities. Suitable meeting rooms are required. Mobile service to outlying areas, either by book boxes or an internet service for online books. Opening hours could be varied in Tumut to allow shift workers access. Community needs to know what services are available, arranging regular library tours to let people know what is available. A great meeting place.
Service level DECREASED

Other commentary
Summary:
A valued service across the region.
Need to keep pace with changing technologies and how that impacts on the type and mode of service delivered.
Recognition that libraries are essentially a community hub.

13. Environmental Weed Management

Service level INCREASED
Council to obtain further assistance from NPWS, Forestry, etc. Spraying is not working. Look at biological control. Slashing and planting native species. Mulch, mulch, mulch. Obtain advice from local landcare nursery - look at methods from the Mulloon Institute.
Council should be more proactive to work with landholders and other organisations to get noxious weeds under control. More proactive with state + federal govt. to obtain more funding to try and eradicate weeds rather than maintaining current level
This is a big problem and a national problem. The state and federal govt. need to get in on this. Forestry + NPWS don't seem to have any enforcement applied for the huge issue they have with weeds. We are just fire fighting and have no real enforcement or resolution. In years to come the problem will be too big to maintain - need a consolidated approach.
This is more than a financial matter. It is an environmental issue that extends beyond Council's responsibility. With the Council being surrounded by National Parks and Forestry, the weeds easily spread out. Council needs to advocate to both state and federal govts. Just maintaining with spraying runs the risk of long term environmental damage. What environmental studies have been done in this area? It must become a priority for future generations.
Weed spraying is very important as it is impossible to keep blackberries under control if your neighbour has blackberries. When you drive around the Shire, you see plenty of grass sprayed right along the verge but still see plenty of blackberries and St John's wort. More time needs to be spent on weeds rather than spraying grass along the roads.
If landowners can be issued notices to comply (control noxious weeds) then council must do more than slow spread of weeds on its own land - the weeds must be stopped. Advocacy by Council to govt. lands and Forestry bodies to act on weed control. Birds spread seed and destroy our agricultural environment. Seek grants for a major attack.
Big issue! Nursery industry is a major contributor to ever-increasing weeds issues. Rehabilitation works are a major solution to the weed problem. St John's wort, Patterson's Curse, etc. have been massively reduced in their impact in the Blowering Valley.
Better State and National Parks advocacy in regards to blackberry.
Reduce blackberry in forestry, private lands. Control from parks – forestry. Maybe SVC to do work and be paid.
Council to become more active in supporting landholders and parks to provide resources to spray when landholder has not time or resources to do the job themselves. Obviously the landholder will be charged for this service.
Need to identify and prosecute landowners of infested properties.
Council to look at providing a spraying service

Forests and NPWS control own areas – grant monies only
Weeds extend to infestations of Elms and Poplars, etc.
Service level MAINTAINED
Satisfied as is
Maintain at current level, look at environmentally safe forms of control. Proactive for inspections and enforcements.
Need Forestry and National Parks to take responsibility for their weeds. Roadside maintenance is vital - RMS may be able to fund. Enforcement on private property is vital.
Important council provides enough funds to control and eliminate weeds on its own land. Inspection and enforcing action on private land and other landholders should be a second but important priority.
Lost \$150k. Any increase should be grant or user pays only. Another example of cost shifting - take a stance! NPWS/Forest NSW = 62% of former Tumut Shire. Continue Weeds Action Plan. SVC focus on own property / public lands?
Cost shifting again - need to expand this activity. User pays concept for private properties to pay costs for noxious weed control on their properties. Council to be more proactive in inspecting areas. Council need a plan over next 5 years. Forestry and NPWS need to contribute to overall control. Council to lead by example - keep roadside areas controlled. Environmental issue for all parties concerned. User pays property owners where it's their responsibility. More funding state / fed govt., Forestry / NPWS.
Charge for service re: spraying noxious weeds on private properties where warranted, particularly if a property has a problem - fine properties if major problem. Council needs to be more proactive. Advocacy role? Council to lobby other govts. Question over whether the function is 'tenure neutral' e.g. lack of spraying in State Forests
The service is important and possibly council could act as an adversary to impose harsher penalties on those who do not spray weeds. Council could also push for more control of weeds in forestry and national parks. Council could also offer spraying services to landholders for a fee.
Need to keep doing what we can within available budget. Continue assistance to spray weeds where people don't have capacity to do. Also help develop pragmatic plans for spraying that are affordable for landowners to deliver. Continue advocacy with fed/state govt. to develop effective means of control.
Care and maintenance of land is critical. Increase in bio-control programs to be used in trial areas. Increase in flea bane - Roundup resistant. There is an opportunity to involve volunteer groups in helping to eradicate. Greater vigilance and obligation by landholders: assistance with providing materials and disposal, actively promote seeking funds with environmental groups. Increase volunteer working groups e.g. federal govt. green army.
Council needs to be a strong advocate to get state govt. to accept responsibility to enforce weed management across other government entities e.g. NPWS, forests, crown lands. Work in conjunction with local landowners to achieve positive long term results - possible joint ventures and subsidies. Maybe boost income through seeking grants or SRV
Service level DECREASED
Market for harvest? The insistence on curbing blackberries is unnecessary as black berries are potentially the least of problems in this regard - at least they have a food use, other weeds are inedible and noxious (these should be targeted). What impact is all this spraying having on the ecosystem? This sprays cannot be targeted on blackberries only - harming the environment and considering it's not even eradicating what is it intended to eradicate, this service is virtually redundant. Long term issues of chemicals!!
Other commentary

Summary:
Strong support for Council to advocate for better weed control in State Forests and National Parks
General recognition of the importance of the service, but mixed views if Council should spend more (prefer to seek out grants / support from other levels of government)
Desire to see progress with control of weeds, not just stopping further spread

14. Parks, Playgrounds and Reserves

Service level INCREASED
Facilitate and encourage volunteers.
A major identification factor for the community, stands out - more park benches, better maintenance
I feel this is so important. It's what people notice when they come into town that the parks are maintained and toilets are clean. Its also important for locals to be enticed to want to use the beautifully maintained parks and gardens. The Adelong Falls alone is a large area to maintain and we are about to add the falls walk back to the list of things that need to be maintained. Tumba currently use the jail (work for the dole) + people on community service - perhaps use Valmar as well?
A major identifying and important aspect of the community. Mannus inmates/community service would be a great source.
Recognise the landscape plan prepared for Rotary Pioneer Park by Paul – funded by Blakeney Miller.
Toilet facilities.
Develop a full lighting plan for community spaces.
More red bins along walkways (eg river walk). Myself and others do our bit to pick up debris but if a bin is not nearby we often don't.
Second Mannus crew with foreman council employee makes economic sense. Not for Tumut area as travel would make work day too short.
Service level MAINTAINED
This is a beautiful region and it needs to be looked after for the benefit of its residents and to encourage visitors. Having such great open spaces is good for the physical and mental wellbeing of people who live here as well as visitors. Service shouldn't be decreased.
Useable green space is essential. The amenities for these spaces need to be maintained at an appropriate level. The use of Mannus inmates may help with upkeep of facilities.
Parks are an important part of how people visiting towns see them.
Maintain the current budget - high levels of risk management must have priority
Level of service is OK at present
Mowing areas and frequencies are generally excessive. Weeds and grass species require serious attention. While road reserves in Talbingo are regarded as 'linear parks' similar road reserves in Tumut (especially SMH from south), although maintained by Council, are not so. The consequence is that Talbingo is represented as having 'too much' parkland compared to other localities. All existing 'statistics' in 'open space management plans' should be subject to scrutiny and strong questioning.

It is a service for the local community and also an attraction for visitors, especially maintain town entrances - this is a service that Council should provide out of general expenses.
Examine maintenance program to ensure standards met are appropriate to use. Some reserves need high standards others may need minimum care.
If you want tourism dollars you need to present the area well. We need parks and areas for kids to run free close to home. There needs to be an assessment of what there is, what's needed and the cost.
Playgrounds should be maintained, but review parks and reserves not used to full extent (reduce number of parks in Tumut). Maybe use unused areas to build aged care facilities. Review costs for all services, contract out to private operators mowing of parks, etc. Grants to upgrade facilities to be secured.
Parks and recreational infrastructure within are important for locals to socialise and somewhere for tourists to utilise on their travel break. They are thus an important part of the social fabric of the community and an important part of the amenity of a town. "Community Pride": local residents/service clubs could be engaged to accept responsibility for mowing and general care of parks and reserves, thus reducing cost / council manpower required.
As an avid daily dog walker as one of an informal group we move around many of the parks and reserves and I think they look great and are well maintained. Maybe some eye catching and humourous signage drawing people's attention to not litter
Important to keep at least the current level of service. It is what people visiting the area see - gives us pride to live here
We need playgrounds and parks - get prisoners to do maintenance. Look at places that we don't use - I think we need them all. Tumba garden club do a good job - can we make more?
Sell off some underutilised parks for redevelopment. Work for the dole to maintain parks. Connect with Tumut Parole Office to access 'community service' clients as a workforce with one employed supervisor as Tumba Council has MOU with Mannus correctional to have 'community projects' with council overseer. <i>Response from 5 people</i>
No such thing as 'free' - need to review the number of 'free camping' areas and the services provided
Need to develop better strategies to address the management of town entries, parks and playgrounds to ensure they are well presented especially during 'high use' times e.g. Easter, Christmas, Special Events. First impressions are very important in attracting, retaining and encouraging people to return to our region. Make people clean up properties with 'junk' on town entrance. Reintroduce pool fees and utilise funds across other community areas that impacts on a far greater number of people than the handful of pool users. I would prefer greater value for my rates.
Service level DECREASED
Maybe there is a case to review and consolidate these facilities (seems to be many and scattered). An important community facility but should be reviewed from time to time. Consider subcontracting out maintenance works (including mowing). Spend savings generated on roads.
Other commentary
Parks are the lungs of the community.
Must be maintained to safety.
Parks provide a pleasant look to the area – aesthetics are important, use should not be a measure to reduce the number of parks.
Summary:
General acknowledgement of importance of service for locals and visitors

Considerable number cited the need to review prioritisation e.g. focus on higher use parks, reduce maintenance or even sell off low use parks or use for other activities
Look at options to secure other resources to assist with maintenance e.g. community, Mannus Correctional Centre

15. Planning and Development

Service level INCREASED
At present there is little to no service when applying for DAs. The Building Code of Australia is not an Act but is a guideline. Council should give builders and developers some lee way. The department is inefficient and officious. It takes too long to get answers and to get a DA approved. We need development in Tumut but this department seems hell bent on stopping development of any kind.
Express, specific advice to neighbours of properties subject to a DA needs reconsideration. Neighbours getting no prior advice of a development can (and sometimes do) cause a lot of delay and costs.
Private inspectors should be engaged to approve works. Fire safety aspects should be further enforced with the age of many buildings. Prior to buildings being approved, neighbours should be advised in writing of proposed works. Better open communication on all issues in relation to planning and development issues with the public, builders, etc. There should be no decrease in this service. The Tumba and Tumut LEP & DCP shouldn't be merged - will not improve efficiency for this large LGA. However, increased efficiency is required for DAs.
More speedy OK for building sheds, etc. Tumut needs more building blocks. All new development needs to be put to all towns people.
Its important for more assistance in beginning of applications for applications to be processed quicker in order for business to go ahead. Service should be maintained, but more efficient process
No increase - the service needs to be better. I think Tumut Shire in the past has made this process quite long winded + the red tape not in line with surrounding shires. This hinders our progress as a community. We need to make the process easier and work with the community for all to prosper.
Needs to be a culture change to provide better information and a more helpful approach. Rules shouldn't change half way through. This needs to be identified consistently as an impediment to development (e.g. Tourism plan). Developer contributions should not be introduced uniformly without very careful consideration of implications. Real estate market values in smaller towns will not experience growth if any developer charges are introduced.
It is critical for the future of the region. DAs should be processed with a great deal of support and within a reasonable period of time. Notifications of DAs to neighbours need to be carried out if they are affected or confirmation of receipt of notice should be followed up. Council needs to look at areas for housing development especially in the smaller towns e.g. Batlow.
Face-to-face consultation with developers should occur before DA is lodged to highlight the matters to be addressed, after the DA is lodged to highlight matters that have arisen or not yet addressed before an answer is given on the DA. Council should make every effort to identify all the hurdles up front so not to frustrate developers. Development should be assisted, not frustrated. DAs should be advised direct to neighbouring property owners (to their mailing address) + acknowledgement of receipt required. Notices in newspapers is proper and required for community, but buying a newspaper not compulsory. System should deliberately avoid pitfalls of 'I wasn't advised!' Improve service via fees paid by developer.

This service is very important for the development and future of our LGA. There needs to be information about developments shared across Council staff on a regular basis so that a service can be provided when new people come to the counter for assistance. Fire safety letters should only be sent out if people do not comply with inspection requirements each year, not before. Then costs/fees may be decreased because of less admin costs. Remember: some things are legally required, but the Council may have the discretion to deal with the matter if administratively in a different way. The aim should be to try to support developments if it is in the interests of the community.
Look at providing services (eg water) to the whole of the development even when done in stages.
Some services should be available in both Tumut and Tumba. Shed ok in Tumba but must go to Tumut for a house.
Review processes – less red tape. SVC to be more helpful for win/win situation for all proposed developments. SVC to encourage expansion. Review of costs – small vs large developments.
Have flexible development charges taking into account the nature and size of the development.
Council to be more proactive in assisting with the DA process
Investigate the 'bad attitude' of some staff and address as part of improvements in customer service
Some councils offer an incentive or some form of practical assistance – a building, a space, no interest grant (not huge) and advice and suggestions on launching a business in the LGA
Don't have blanket fees and contributions across council. Charges should reflect value of block/development also sewerage
Service level MAINTAINED
DAs should be informed of all requirements at initial interviews
Should be maintained at current level
Maybe it could be suggested to anyone planning a development that they notify the neighbours or anyone who could be affected. It could lessen conflicts. Maybe a form with suggestions as to issues to be covered, at minimal cost.
Charges need to be scaled to size of community - not a flat rate.
It is important that planning and development controls be administered to encourage rather than discourage development and improvement. The introduction of development charges should be done with extreme caution given their probable effect on the economics of development in smaller communities.
No increases - conduct efficiency reviews to streamline process and divert funds to other service priorities. Focus on cost recovery where possible e.g. swimming pool safety, fire safety, illegal works. Must meet minimum statutory and legislative requirements. Not less important, but need to assess/evaluate 'user pays' principles and cost recovery or privatise e.g. building certification.
I believe Council don't do enough to encourage development. Having inflated water and sewer funds for future development that is paid by developers is stifling growth. Council should also advise and help landowners wanting to develop a business rather than making it as hard as possible. Timeframes for 149 certificates need to be shortened as it currently takes weeks for them to be received. I have witnessed many businesses not proceed due to Council restrictions. Council should do all they can to increase population + helping start new businesses + expanding existing ones is the first step.
Service should be maintained but look at efficiencies - vital that harmonisation is seriously addressed across the council. Look at introducing scaled developer charges (section 94) across the Council. Fees and charges should reflect the value of the development not be an impediment but produce \$\$ for other development.
Service level DECREASED

Other commentary
Summary:
Concerns raised over excessive 'hurdles' to development process - Council needs to encourage development, make the process simpler and faster, provide more support to applicants
Neighbour notification in relation to DAs needs review
Some support for user pays relating to application, but many raised concerns about implications of developer contributions e.g. to water supply, sewerage and other infrastructure discouraging development

16. Public and Environmental Health

Service level INCREASED
Increase in extraordinary and infectious diseases must be monitored. Of critical importance: that a medical geographer is appointed to map the entire Snowy Valleys region.
An urgent increase in this service is required. Public health in particular (specific premises identified) many dogs inside food areas. Take appropriate action as required. All food outlets should be inspected on regular basis scores on doors should be expanded to all food premises within the LGA. No decrease - service must be at least maintained and increased in food safety. Must meet legislative requirements. Other issue: cost shifting between local govt. + state and federal govt. needs to be widely reported on changes, in particular when Council is setting charges.
Similar to planning & development. Food safety = user pays + OSSM + public health. Predict an increase in the cost of climate change management? Cost shifting must be understood by the community - state / fed don't respond? Must meet minimum statutory/legislative requirements. Review the various services to ensure they are efficient and cost effective.
Pollution Visy Mill - you can tell by the smell of the air when things are not burning right. I have spoken to people that work there and things are not always right (green smoke etc.) should be inspected when smell is about. Some food outlets are still not real clean. Govt health services should be collecting sharps from public toilets not council workers. Very important when you driven into Tumut especially from Batlow you can see the pollution.
The detrimental public & environmental health impacts caused by pollens & flowers, etc. of deciduous trees is generally ignored, and if publicly raised, falsely attributed to other causes. For the future (extensively) this will be to greater and greater community cost, a cost which in Australia should not exist. The nursery industry continues to profit at community expense. Then add impact of insecticides used to attempt to control (for example) elm leaf beetles being extremely toxic to all aquatic life, as well as some important insects. Missing especially in Tumut is the air pollution caused by wood-fired home heaters. SVC continues to approve wood fired heaters for installation in Tumut homes. Tumut's inversion layer ensures high pollution levels in Tumut, while all attention is directed to the mills, rather than the house fires.
Work with Health Dept to employ a medical geographer to plot the health of the community.
Health inspectors to do better job. Batlow Hotel – dogs on premises in food areas.
Service level MAINTAINED
This service is important but needs to be carried out with discretion and cover the legislative requirements. Notices re: inspections of food safety, sewerage management, etc. need to be followed up. This doesn't always happen

I think the service is important, but increasing a service that is running at a loss is just not acceptable. I think we need to look at this service + look at efficiencies.
Again, some items are legislative requirements but in some cases the Council has discretion to deal with a matter differently. Food safety - important. Maybe some of the items/services could be provided by other state govt. areas? Additional advocacy re: cost shifting from other govts. to Council.
Harmonisation is again critical across the new council area - especially in relation to onsite sewage management and food safety being mindful of the difference between commercial properties and non-commercial e.g. service clubs, schools (food safety). Once you allow services to be 'reduced' it's very hard to re-introduce them and once things start to go wrong they become costly and difficult to repair. Need to be working towards better health and environment, can't have the mentality that 'we always did X and we're still here'. That includes not for profit venues and mobile providers. People should be prepared to pay a fair fee to have vital checks undertaken to ensure public safety and environmental health and safety.
It is important that health standards are maintained to high standards. Where commercial interests are involved suitable charges can be made, otherwise a public service.
Look to obtain funding from Health authority to meet the funding gap
I expect that establishments do the right thing. Word of mouth will react against them if their premises etc. aren't up to standard. I personally don't take much notice of the scores on doors for the above reason. I've heard about a new business being given a bad time because an existing competitor complained.
Maintain at current level
This service should be maintained at current level as it involves the health of people - may need to increase inspections as tourism and number of food outlets increase.
Stick to legislative requirements. Re: onsite sewer management - should have well-developed risk categorisation and not over-service.
An amalgamation of organisations that assess food safety - some standard regulation and just one. Different assessments and standards - need to become pragmatic. Budget deficits are concerning - services need to be increased and standardised and better organised, but we cannot afford to increase. Too many administrative issues and bureaucracy, not enough practicality.
Assuming the current level of inspection is meeting required standards, it should be maintained. Possibly self-certifying some matters on alternate inspection dates may reduce costs (subject to random inspections). Fund any increases required from fees.
Service level DECREASED
There may be more opportunities for council to access further assistance from Dept of Health - e.g. to supply & replace all sharps buckets, to inspect mortuaries, etc. It seems there is a significant overlap in responsibilities, where council may be able to unload. Commercial operations should be meeting greater charges for food inspection than NFP operations.
Other commentary
Summary:
Concerns raised about a variety of public and environmental health issues
Concerns about cost shifting raised - support for user pays and/or additional support from state government
General support for food safety inspections in particular

17. Public Toilets

Service level INCREASED
Tumba public toilets need refurbishing (at Skate Park and Robey Park) - both are used for Tumbafest and for other things. Need good signage. Keep clean and looking good.
Need more signs to where toilets are. Park opposite basketball courts /duck pond needs a toilet. Sign for caravan parking near toilets.
Public toilets needed at Brungle for travellers and events. <i>Divert funds?</i> from street trees
Need more toilets in Tumut CBD and Pioneer Park
When will Rosewood toilet be finished?
The better the standard, both architecturally and functionally, the better for the community in general and the experience of visitors.
Improve Adelong showground toilets. Maybe improve streetlighting (safety). Improve efficiency if possible - possibly more sustainable. More signage.
Sometimes not enough shrubs.
<i>Divert funds?</i> from an undertaking by Council
They are essential for both residents and visitors. For visitors they are often point of call and first impressions are important. Signage needs to be improved across the region. Some of them (eg Batlow Literary Institute) need refurbishment. Increased tourism (eg RVs etc) increases needs. <i>Divert funds?</i> not sure.
Need soap and toilet paper. Not enough toilets in Batlow. <i>(response from group of 5)</i>
Signage to facility location is essential, especially to cater for tourism - locals will learn where they are. Face of the town - first thing tourists look for.
The toilets need to be maintained better. It is generally the first thing tourists use and see. One filthy toilet usually means they will never come back.
More of well designed and economically designed.
Key to visitation / tourism. Current standards inadequate
Service level MAINTAINED
All public toilets to be maintained to high standard. Where necessary upgrades to appropriate standard. This is a necessary facility for locals and tourists. Must be built for disabled persons.
A necessary facility. Probably okay re numbers and quality.
Maintain current level of funding. Keep clean and functioning. Ensure good signage for tourists. Keep renewal program.
Toilets are only useful if cleaned daily to a high standard.
Currently meet minimum standards of cleanliness and hygiene.
Toilets are used every day by tourists (30+ per day).
Good, generally high quality for public toilets. Focus should be on maintenance. First port of call for tourists.
As an avid dog-walker with an informal group, we use many facilities at many locations and have no complaints.
An important service - toilets are usually the first facility that are used by visitors and visitors will not want to stay longer in the area if the toilets are not clean.

Maintain - quite good. Always keep surrounds very open to avoid any problems.
Happy with the current level of service. Needs better signage. Would be good to see some art on public toilets to make them a feature not just functional - could be something that could be used across the shire to unite - start with at least one toilet block that is artistic.
Maintain. More signs to show locations. Contract out cleaning - would this be more affordable?
Good toilets are a talking point for tourists - good for the economy. Businesses/hotels are not public facilities - adequate facilities in and around town are essential.
Service level DECREASED
Nil responses
Other commentary
Cleaning should be let to private contractors to save funds and proper responsibility taken.
Tourists spend money in our towns
Where are the public toilets? What times are the public toilets opened? Many visitors ask these questions - no signs visible and very few locals know.
Summary:
Significant proportion wanted to see an improved service, generally identifying specific toilets needing work
Important for visitors
Better signage
Investigate contractor cleaning

18. Ranger Services

Following is the summary of notes taken during discussions about Ranger Services at the first Community Sounding Board Workshop.

Overwhelming consensus that Companion Animals (Responsible Pet Ownership) service of Council is delivered well.
Noted that more resources could be made available for removing dead animals (road kill) from roads.
Question – how much revenue does Council raise through parking enforcement?
Sense that 2 hour parking limits are not enforced, and most businesses' staff park out the front of their premises for the duration of their shift. This makes it less likely that shoppers and visitor can find appropriate parking in the CBD (Tumut focus for this discussion).
Council could consider the creation of additional specific parking for elderly and disabled.
General agreement that "we don't want Council to be too officious with its parking enforcement", but to strike a balance between people who work in the CBD and the people who shop and visit.
Question – would contracting out ranger services be cheaper?
"Council leadership denies the fact of inadequate parking".
Perhaps we could lobby for increasing fines for local area (noted fine amounts not set by Council).
There should not be time limits on disabled parking spaces.
Disabled parking spaces should be located near key services like radiography, pathology etc.

Include longer duration parking (eg 4 hours) for people who want to spend more time in town (eg visitors, and residents from outlying areas who come in for the day).
Acknowledged that there is all-day parking available just outside the CBD but "most people wouldn't know it was there". Perhaps Council could erect signs near the CBD to advise where longer-term parking options exist, and enforce shorter-term parking restrictions to "change the culture of parking all day" in the 2 hour spaces.
Limited parking options in town for visitors towing trailers or caravans.

Following is comments made by the Community Sounding Board at a follow-up session that gave them an opportunity to write comments about Ranger Services.

Service level INCREASED
Disabled parking space in Russell St (Radiology / Blood tests). Policing of disabled parking.
More action re: dogs barking and animals not registered including cats.
More strictly police dog control increasing fines for dog attacks and stray dogs
Pounds need upgrading. A speedy response is required for stock on road and also stray dogs. Parking areas that are not timed need to be highlighted. More free micro-chipping days.
Better control on dogs/cats in residential areas.
Improve trailer parking
Parking issues in Tumut CBD would be a great opportunity for a specific community sounding board to ensure community contribution before expensive changes commenced
Parking for RVs, boats, caravans, trailers. Very busy around woolworths – where do they park to look around town (signage)
Service level MAINTAINED
Ranger services – currently going great.
Should be a bit of grace for first-time offenders - then apply fines for serial offenders. If possible, pensioners etc. should be treated more leniently. Parking: should be communication between councillors and shop owners before fines are imposed. Council first aim should be to maintain cooperation and achieve objectives. If cooperative approach doesn't work then apply fines. But council also has an obligation to work to provide sufficient parking spaces if this is a major cause of the problem. Should always try to work with the community before taking a punitive approach. Should only be parking time limits where it is an issue e.g. not in Talbingo, Khancoban, etc.
Maintain the service as is - current Ranger service is very efficient
If businesses employees are taking parking spaces all day, Ranger/Council should consult with businesses about the problem with the view of getting cooperation.
Parking - Tumut is hopelessly planned in this respect, no parking for vehicles with trailers, caravans, boats. Feral animals - all should be more widely collected and removed, disposed of, etc. (difficulties especially with influence of Forests and all the ferals they accommodate, whether the ferals are cats, dogs, horses, deer, foxes, etc. doesn't matter, all should be addressed). Services in more recent years have however been of a clearly higher standard than previously.
Basically OK as is
Ranger seems to have very many duties, can they all be covered? Hard to get a 2IC because of the enforcement aspect?
Ranger services good. Parking in Tumba is adequate, however is not in other towns.

Business owners shouldn't park in main street. Higher fines for stray dogs and cats.
Companion animals: harmonise across council, ranger action. Common sense approach to parking patrols needed to be carried out in major centres.
Apply full 'abuser pays' = fees for breaking rules e.g. parking, animal infringements
My only complaint is parking no invalid parking in front of pathology in Tumut. I still notice certain cars parked in front of businesses all day long.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Summary:
Overwhelming consensus that Companion Animals (Responsible Pet Ownership) service of Council is delivered well.
General agreement that "we don't want Council to be too officious with its parking enforcement", but to strike a balance between people who work in the CBD and the people who shop and visit.
Lack of disabled parking in some areas (e.g. Tumut pathology)

19. Roads

Service level INCREASED
More attention should be paid to seal maintenance and road structure. Other works (hidden works beyond actual road structure) on road reserves (inc. state roads) should be separately identified, costed, budgeted and reported.
Intersection Capper St / Gocup Rd / SM Hwy needs roundabout (RMS). Yass Rd - needs causeway, water 2 foot higher east side of road, could have got away saved houses. More trees need clearing opposite caravan park.
Maintenance should at least equal depreciation. Upgrades should be programmed according to availability of grants and allocation from capital program.
Important and safety for residents and visitors. Some village roads need more upkeep as well as kerb and gutter. Kerb on streets in Tumut need completing (Herbert st near high school, top end of Forest St, Lambie, McAlister. <i>Divert funds from street trees.</i>
Yes - a priority. Service level now is appropriate. Main issues with RMS roads - intersections e.g. Batlow Rd/ Snowy Mtns Highway; speed limits e.g. Batlow town.
Definitely a priority due to traffic increase. Rural roads require more attention Brindabella rd is #1 priority for this shire as access to Canberra services (Doctors etc.) and vice versa for other travellers. N.B. while unsealed a minimum of 2 grades per year. Forestry funding needs increasing; state funding for rural areas needs to increase (not for Sydney only) follow Barillaro (Deputy Premier) words.
Batlow: consider town centre as a one-way flow; increases visitation to the town, slows traffic, increases pedestrian safety, 40/50, zone enforced
all roads a top priority to increase - rural and regional. Increase funding via state and commonwealth funding. Not an option to decrease.
Rural roads need more priority. I think it's good in town. Most roads can be maintained at same level to save money.

Roads are the only means of transport for majority. Needed for tourism and transport of goods. Money for increase should come from heavy users of roads as in trucks, forestry, national parks, etc. If increase of funds not available, then it should at least be maintained at current level.
As a minimum, maintain - if budget allocation changed, long term road maintenance programs must change accordingly. Evaluate business case if decrease or increase
Safety - potholes, slippery surfaces, poor cambers on bends can cause accidents and vehicle damage. Roads directly affect everyone. A valuable asset and maintenance should be a high priority to protect the asset and the expenditure in the first place. Profit from contracts for RMS and other councils and other bodies + private works should be ploughed back into roads.
I think generally the 'council' roads are adequate. I would like to see more spots where an average driver can pull over and let vehicles backing up behind me can get past i.e. courtesy. Also: collection of unsightly rubbish which detracts from our beautiful scenery.
I'd like to see a minimal increase to provide an upgrade to roads be they gravel or bitumen - the advantage would be more employment, better roads, opportunity to attract more grant \$, everyone benefits residents, visitors, industry, provides opportunity to lobby; SRV identified area to spend
Slight increase - definitely not a decrease. Continue with current special rate variation
Trucks out of main shopping area of Tumba; need a truck pull off area in Rosewood
Look at methods of improvement in process, with minimal cost (e.g. resealing - look at product used - stronger rock e.g. byproduct of Wee Jasper stone, accessible, cost); access is important so service should be maintained
Jackson's bridge (Tumba) is a major concern
RMS - petition to have trucks diverted along Courabyra Road (upgrade) to remove them from travelling along The Parade, Tumba.
Lobby RMS to divert trucks along Courabyra Road to remove B-doubles from The Parade, Tumbaramba – it is currently a very dangerous situation with the high level of consumer activity and traffic in the Parade.
Brindabella should be state funded / national road
Go for grants to do roads
Major roads good – Brindabella Rd needed
Service level MAINTAINED
No major issues with current service. Haven't heard negative complaints from visitors
Conditions of roads are reasonable (although not perfect) are what's to be expected and are fine. Fix Gocup/SM Hwy and Gilmore / SM Hwy intersections
I think majority of roads are OK. Currently doing a lot of work on Tumbalong Rd. Maybe better linemarking and pull off areas
Maintain current service (<i>response from 5 persons</i>); Tumba to Wagga Rd - Wagga Council section between highway and shire boundary could be maintained by SVC at a cost to Wagga Council. Previous discussion already had this in the pipeline prior to amalgamation. Petition RMS to divert log trucks from Tumba main street (danger to our community in such a narrow street with much activity). Also Batlow CBD
Majority of roads are fine.
Roads – adequate around here; pretty good. RMS roads are more worrying. Lobby the RMS for their roads. Maintain our funding.
Local council does not need to spend \$ on roads. \$ to be lobbied from RMS. Do roads well the first time.

Just build them well the first time!
Funding should not be taken from other services.
Under constant review – safety issues to be addressed in LGA. Not necessary to increase funding – do the job right the first time.
The majority of roads that are the responsibility of council are OK – no need for an increase in funding.
Service level DECREASED
No comments
Other commentary
Summary:
Majority support an increase in funding - various priorities identified
Lobbying required to get RMS to improve key roads / intersections

20. Sewerage

Note: comments include water supply and sewerage

Service level INCREASED
Sometimes there is a bad smell from the Tumut sewage treatment plant
Developer charges may not be the appropriate way to encourage/attract people and development to the area. It may be better in the long term to increase water rates for a longer term gain - do the maths - make a strategic decision not one focused on short-term gain
Notices need to be issued before pipes are flushed (for water supply). Ensure all parts of the system have been risk rated for renewal (sewer). Water quality is good. Cost is not the cost of the water but ratehr supplying the water and maintaining the system - outlying properties?
Water: is there recyclable water supply for parks and sports areas or can rainwater tanks be installed to catch water from amenities buildings? Drinking water refill stations at more villages across the council. An announcement regarding flushing pipes, either social media / local radio. Sewerage: could plants be placed along the sewerage fence line at the entrance to Tumut?
I certainly can't complain about the current service however I would say the water quality is questionable at Adelong. The water froths when you turn the tap on to fill up a bowl and the algae is quick to grow - not sure why? Efficiencies: digital meters - would be a cost initially, but would save costs with meter reading.
More automated systems required for more regular accounts that can make user regulation easier. Water availability required at Rosewood. Developer charges inhibit development.
Why septic levy?
Get rid of annual \$29 septic levy fee
Sewerage business must be reviewed annually using FINMOD to ensure service operates on a user pays basis
Service level MAINTAINED
A must to maintain this service to the highest possible standard - increase if required.
Obviously a must - increase if required.
Essential service and a need to manage - replace infrastructure as required. Recent issue in Batlow which has yet to be rectified is water pressure. Excess water costs too high, raise the usage level. Inform community when works are being carried out on mains..

Maintain current standards - must conduct audits for best practice, must do annual FINMOD business case reviews to ensure the water supply and sewerage businesses is sustainable (hasn't been done).
All water treatment plants should be flouridated. The issue of harmonisation is again a problem that to date has not been addressed. Should be discouraging water use not making it cheaper to encourage them to use more. Review the way water meters are read. Notify households of 'pipe flushing'.
Service needs to be maintained. Obviously there's a big variance across the new SVC area - consideration needs to be given to sensitive areas, or areas that cannot afford the same cost as others.
Generally speaking, the services are working well. The water quality and supply in Batlow is very good.
I think the service is great the way it is.
Water: any changes should be very carefully considered to consider demand management / appropriateness to local community. Developer charges - in smaller towns/villages, may prevent any development - these may prefer a higher annual charge and no developer charge with subsidies made explicit. Quarterly meter reads better than six monthly - save bill shock. New technology should be introduced to all electronic meter reading (remote) so customers can maintain / monitor their own consumption / bills. Mannus Lake connection to Tumba needed to secure Tumba water supply. Sewer: all OK, but same comment re: developer charges / annual charges.
Water at Tumbarumba is fabulous now!!! We had undrinkable water for many years in days gone by. Service (bills) could be delivered more frequently with technology.
Tumut water supply and sewerage: no issues.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Summary:
General support for maintaining current service and many for increasing if required.
Concerns about developer charges/contributions inhibiting development
Support for automated meter reading / access for customers.
Need for better notification before mains are flushed.

21. Sportsgrounds and Facilities

Service level INCREASED
I think this is important but should charge \$50 per cut whatever small fee. Clubs can make up shortfall by charging fee to get in.
Sport is an important community activity. SVC should standardise 'user pays' across all facilities.
More usage = more opportunity. Consider a broader usage such as RV travellers that need open space to maneuver. Good model is Yass Shire and their attraction for RVs, invest in outdoor kitchens (e.g. WA) to attract RVs and a reasonable charge out rate.
Consider low income families, single parents and grandparents when setting fees for user pays. From what I can see there's situations where kids fall into antisocial activities (a stress on carers) and some of these buildings could perhaps be used for after school activities

Improvement in management of grounds would be great, it's important for the community - new Tumut facility is unnecessary
Need to identify possibilities to generate income to enable facility upgrades. Need to develop a consistent plan across the new council area. Premier grounds to attract higher level competition. I have very real concerns the proposed multi-sports complex has been hijacked by a small group wanting an indoor heated pool. The ongoing cost and a real "free" mentality will be a sure fail for the project. Focus on what the original plan was and keep pools as pools. User charges - shouldn't be all free. Sports grants shouldn't be available to schools for infrastructure.
Weed control and grass species need careful attention - minimising the need for mowing should be a priority. Otherwise: night time, flood lights as installed are a major nuisance for the whole community. Better aligned and less powerful lights should be suitable.
Charge fee to clubs, etc. for use of sportsgrounds, and use these for maintenance of the grounds. May not get a large amount of fees, but will be a contribution e.g. country rugby league, education department. Shovel ready projects for grant applications e.g. toilet blocks. Encourage service clubs to adopt sportsground.
Tennis courts are being upgraded. This will open up to other towns to come to Tumut for competitions. This can only mean \$ into the community. Facilities should be at a universal standard.
User pays where possible, but these are places of community gatherings and cohesion there should be a concession for those who cannot afford.
Service level MAINTAINED
Examine case for user fees related to input from users in setup and maintenance costs. Maintenance of grounds should be to a standard appropriate for the needs of the users
Important to have useful green spaces within towns and villages. Upgrades to facilities at Riverglade Sports Ground are urgently needed - toilets and more seating. The removal of the cottonwood trees that shed pollen that cause breathing difficulties. Also recreation ground at Brungle (in Bray St) needs toilet facilities.
Council has the role of providing sportsgrounds and mowing fields as public space. Tasks relating to particular sports such as linemarking, maintaining pitches, etc. should be the realm of the club/user involved.
Sports facilities (golf, football, cricket) are all user pays in Rosewood. No new sports buildings, but save any good buildings.
The services are very good, but should be user fees by groups. Proposed indoor sports centre is a NO! NO! will be a great white elephant and cost prohibitive.
Sportsgrounds are an important part of all communities. These facilities encourage more sports activities and therefore improved health. Encourage users from whole Council area to use current facilities, while travel could be an issue. Some not used (e.g. too many in Tumut) could be better used e.g. RVs. If increased use of all facilities happens - fees to be charged, but these won't cover all overheads.
We need sportsgrounds - spend the money as many community groups use the sports grounds.
Sportsgrounds are a vital facility the health and wellbeing of youth is important. Bored youth will cost the council more (graffiti cleanup, vandalism, etc.) Find other activities to fund.
Maintain service level and a user pay service should be implemented across all sports (including swimming pools).
\$40k sports grants not fully expended this year - need to be part of a sports committee to be able to apply. New facility in Tumut: just not affordable for the community. The grounds are

great as they are - perhaps we could charge usage fees with this money put towards parks and garden staff so they can better maintain all the grounds.
Sport is critical for the mental and physical wellbeing of the community. Care must be taken not to increase fees for users, especially families as many choose sports for their children on a cost basis. The proposed multipurpose centre in Tumut would dramatically increase infrastructure but the estimated annual deficit of over \$400,000 is far too much for us. I question the advice given to council as similar centres in cities / large towns have populations many times that of Tumut or the region.
Indoor sports – Council should not be funding consultants/feasibility studies with the budget as is. There needs to be community input.
User pays consideration as necessary. Tumut multipurpose should not happen!
The Tumut multipurpose centre is a potential white elephant. When you need a grant to do a feasibility study there is a basic problem.
Tumut MPC is not a fiscally sound choice for spending.
Low population base makes new rec centre at Tumut not feasible. If anything is to be built it needs to be more central for all residents.
A lot of money to benefit small number of LGA residents. Probably a white elephant
Use a community sounding board to fully explore / evaluate possible Tumut MPC
Revisit multi purpose centre – what was originally proposed? Intergenerational issue, more consultation required
The proposed MPC in Tumut needs more community consultation. A facility like that should not be run at a loss and subsidised by ratepayers. There is a risk that players may have to pay more to participate and this could result in players leaving the sport/s for others.
No MPC
Multipurpose centre – 2 reports should be prepared – 1 including indoor pool etc & 1 based on courts. MPC is the perfect issue to develop a specific 'sounding board' to gain better understanding and have diverse input into the project.
Multipurpose Centre involves payment by all through rates and has use for only the minority. MPC very superfluous – population base too small for this.
Sportsgrounds – Tumut multipurpose centre – economically stupid; it's a ridiculous and a pathetic investment. Not a huge fan of user pays. Tumut already has good facilities.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Summary:
Recognition of the value of sportsgrounds to the community - general support to maintain current services, significant portion to improve them
General, but not universal, support for user fees, should be tied to work undertaken / opportunities to increase service levels
No support for Tumut multipurpose centre - concerns over affordability.

22. Stormwater Drainage

Service level INCREASED

<p>maintenance and clearing of drains and pits, especially in tree lined locations essential for drainage efficiency; clearing of debris and leaf matter from CBD and elsewhere improve efficiency of the drainage system as well as amenity of streets; flooding of properties is distressing for occupants and costly in terms of damage and possibly economic disruption; maintenance of asset saves money because repair/replacement avoided</p>
<p>Footpaths which aren't well drained are an inconvenience especially in wet weather i.e. dodging puddles especially with grassed footpaths, the grass is the same height and conceals the puddle</p>
<p>So long as deciduous trees remain, should be ensured their leaves don't enter waterways (these are 'poison' to Australian waterways) - can be decreased if replace with native species</p>
<p>Slow water in creek beds using reeds, rushes - provides habitat, cleans water, inexpensive, slows runoff, keeps water in the ground, prevents erosion. Ensure pipes are clear.</p>
<p>Yes to increase - especially in town centres such as Batlow with high gutters, the \$25 charge at Tumba should be collected from all residential properties that utilise stormwater systems across the council region</p>
<p>Stormwater in main st of Adelong needs upgrading. Water doesn't get away quick enough, sometimes there are puddles that stretch a metre from the gutter and you can't avoid them. Council has been doing a lot on stormwater in Adelong, but not in main street. Needs to be part of street beautification program.</p>
<p>Service level MAINTAINED</p>
<p>Needs to be a better approach - develop a plan to ensure network is capable and maintained, need to be more effective, need to have crews clear debris after storms to avoid 'clogging' of networks</p>
<p>Continue as is, also examine natural ground flow and open drains</p>
<p>Current level of service OK as far as I can see, being out of town I'm not affected</p>
<p>Seems generally reasonable but unsure of general necessities. Improve guttering Adelong and Batlow main streets</p>
<p>Maintain, but \$25 charge to be levied (in Tumut as it is at Tumba); encourage SVC to do a stormwater plan in areas it hasn't been completed</p>
<p>Stormwater control is good but add \$25 management charge if it is only for people who benefit and set at same amount</p>
<p>Maintain current spending, scrap Tumba levy</p>
<p>Keep drains clear, new large buildings collect own water, \$25 fee to be wiped as we pay high rates as it is</p>
<p>Don't introduce new levy to other areas (scrap it in Tumba); no decrease in all areas of council</p>
<p>Presumably adequate at present but user pay \$25 contribution is reasonable if directly benefits - not to be used as a means of annual increases</p>
<p>Need to allow stormwater to move away from CBD and residential areas, developers need to install more adequate stormwater drainage, Coles supermarket flooded every time there's a heavy downpour - perhaps a drain at entrance to Russell St carpark might help</p>
<p>maintain current program and introduce stormwater management charge (\$25) council wide subject to stormwater management plan</p>
<p>Target grant funding based on priorities, keep minimum budget for maintenance</p>
<p>Service level DECREASED</p>
<p>No comments</p>
<p>Other commentary</p>
<p></p>

Summary:
Specific issues identified for increases, significant portion satisfied with current service
Significant (but not universal) support for \$25 charge at Tumbarumba to be extended to other areas

23. Street Trees

Service level INCREASED
Trees are needed as a tourist attraction. All trees natives only. Extra funds from selling the steel caravan park building in Rosewood
Trees are important for absorbing CO2 as well as the general amenity and look of a town. Important for shade in summer especially in parks and around CBD.
Respond to high risk problem trees ASAP.
Council should ask residents what trees they would like grown in front of [houses] or main streets. Don't plant gum trees as they are far too messy and drop too many leaves and branches.
Program of planting 150 trees per year when there is 50,000 trees in Council-controlled area assumes each tree has a life of 333 years. The replacement program is well below what is required. There is a probability that increasing numbers of trees will become overmature and require remedial work.
Street trees make the town look nice. Plan what trees where. We need shade. Adopt a tree? \$270K pa is good bucket. Coming from Wagga to Tumba - plant tree avenues. Cool climate trees.
Adopt a tree' program to reduce costs in maintaining. Employ arborist to manage all trees under control of Council. Need to review tree safety along main roads, in particular Tumut to Batlow to Tumbarumba.
Extremely notable identifying factor - are famous for the trees, eg we have a falling leaf festival.
Improvement
Trees are a very important part of the visual aesthetics of our Council area. Management Plan for trees is a must - don't remove a large number of trees in one area at a time - plan gradual removal. Put the right trees in the right area for the right purpose.
Employ an arborist. Arborist to be responsible for health and maintenance of mature, important street trees.
Primarily wrong species. Species should be mainly local native, which are more likely to require little or negligible maintenance. Avenues of same species trees lead to more disease etc. Elm leaf beetle treatment should be terminated immediately and not resumed. Past performance is farcical - those responsible should be removed.
Trees need to be planted now for the future. Ad hoc decisions now impact on future generations. Identify appropriate species and plant them in appropriate places. Choose old and new species, native and introduced.
Plant more native trees, plants and shrubs so that we provide food and habitat for native birds and wildlife. Create native gardens - a real tourist attraction.
Street trees definitely need consultation
Street trees – employ an arborist. More strategic placement. They are important and very identifiable. Better consultation with the community.
Dwarf gum trees are now available – very manageable.
Train staff as arborists.

Review and implement plan – urgent public consultation required.
Council to employ an arborist who can act independently.
More native trees and plants to protect native wildlife.
More consultation
More natives – suited to particular location / town / altitude. Keep wildlife in mind
Better investigation into types of trees, community consultation
While introduced 'plants' especially deciduous trees, are claimed to be great assets, they are not (under TSC and now SVC) subject to financial management required for other assets
Remove back room unaccountable Tumut people who dictate purchase, planting and maintenance (extensive unreported cost) on other communities
Not about either/or native and introduced – about balance
Service level MAINTAINED
Quicker action on dangerous trees. Don't plant under powerlines - only shrubs under powerlines or small trees. Replace in main streets one or two at a time, and replace with suitable trees - don't replace all at one time. When taking out dangerous trees, need a stump grinder to prevent regrowth and white ants. Prune trees and plantings along roadways for clear view for traffic to improve road safety. (6 people's contribution)
Maintain current level. When new or replacing discuss with the community of the town as to suitable type (namely natives).
Wagga, Batlow, Tumba Road coming into Tumut needs an avenue of trees. The trees in this Shire help identify the area. Not many areas shine so beautifully in autumn. This will help to bring visitors. Cool climate trees need to be featured - Victoria features and promotes their cool climate tree areas. They need to be professionally cared for.
Variety of native trees suited to the location and climate of the town involved is important.
Maintain current budget as a minimum. Important community presentation asset. Identify priority tree areas and plan accordingly. Involve communities in decisions regarding types of trees.
150 trees pa is good.
Trees define the shire. Considering budget constraints, the current situation is okay. Maybe 150 pa new trees planted needs to be more.
Trees are a necessity for all towns and helps the look of the streets and venues. Safety is a major factor to always consider. A strategy needs to be set to manage the tree issue in all areas. Consideration needs to be given to the type of trees planted and why the tree is needed.
Beautification/shading/screening is important in all towns. Areas and streets do need planning and with community input. Some areas/parks/showgrounds currently have mature trees (often natives) that are dangerous and fall cutting power lines etc (eg Batlow Showground) - this area needs consideration especially as it is used for events and RV parking.
We need tree management plans - long-range plans - keep the community informed and allow our say. We spend a fortune on rebranding but I think the plants in our town say just as much about our town. We especially need important trees documented so the town can be informed.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Summary:
Community would like to be consulted about the types of trees that are planted where, and when.
Issue of species of tree (introduced vs indigenous/native).

Largely agree that street trees are important for visual amenity, shade and habitat.
Opportunities for community groups or residents to adopt a tree/s and support it to be watered and nurtured while growing, and pruned for safety as it matures.

24. Swimming Pools

Following is the summary of notes taken during discussions about Swimming Pools at the first Community Sounding Board Workshop.

An option would be to keep the free entry but to increase the canteen function and make more income through the sale of food and beverages.
Eliminating the entry fees "was stupid".
With no entry fees, all ratepayers are paying for the pools even when they never use them (eg residents who live too far from nearest pool). Entry fee means that actual users pay a fairer share.
"I'm happy to pay".
An option would be to seek reduced or free entries for people who can't afford to pay.
It would be good to ask for pool users' postcode on entry to determine who is getting the benefit of free access. Also acknowledge that visitors to the LGA bring money into the broader economy.
Need to know how the free entry has changed pool use.
The swimming pools are not accessible to all (some residents live almost an hour away from nearest council pool). Therefore, shouldn't be totally subsidised by ratepayers.
Cutting out the pool entry fee has meant a \$150,000 from parks' budget – this is not sustainable.
Health benefits arise from increased pool use (particularly for ageing and disability). Pools don't always need to be Council's responsibility – they could be privately run and provide opportunities for hydrotherapy, and other business opportunities.
Infrastructure exists to heat the pool – that would make it possible to extend the swimming season.
Show of hands for reinstating pool entry fee: 20 said yes, 11 said no, a few people declined to vote.

Following is comments made by the Community Sounding Board at a follow-up session that gave them an opportunity to write comments about Swimming Pools.

Service level INCREASED
Heated hydrotherapy pool for Tumut. Opening hours extended in the evenings during daylight savings for Tumut pool.
Entry fees should not be eliminated but fees should be adjusted to reflect ability to pay e.g. family concessions, children's fees, etc. Opening hours to be in conjunction with consultation of each community.
People have expressed desire to have Batlow pool open for the same season period as Tumut. Also lane ropes taken down after each swim club meeting at Tumut pool. Community members would like no entry to pools.
Options for minimising impacts of pool fees essential – preferable not to reinstate fees.

Swimming pools – no fees in my opinion. This is because of the health and social benefits. If fees do get reinstated, then minimise impacts (at least consider under 18's free).
Improve canteen food options.
Need to improve the food that is available at pools – more healthy options
Free to learn – otherwise pay to get in
Rate payers free – others pay to get in
Fees should be same across LGA – including cost of swipe cards and being able to access all pools in other towns.
Make season ticket entry in all 5 pools within LGA. This would encourage visits to other neighbouring centres.
Service level MAINTAINED
Fees need to be reinstated. Not in favour of swipe cards. No need for increased season length. More events at pools to increase usage. Ticket price available to cover all pools in SVC. People conducting swimming lessons for children should not be charged for use of pool.
I think there should be some information gathered on where people come from when they come to the pool i.e. ask for post code. This will allow us to make an informed decision on whether the free access does increase usage and of how many of those were from outside the area, that otherwise would not come to town. Also how many kids learnt to swim + improve as a result of the free access. Has youth crime decreased as a result? I am in favour of bringing the charges back particularly for those of us that can afford it. There is no such thing as a free lunch. Maybe we could look at keeping the fees for kids 18 and under free?
Swipe cards for after hours use: will a lifeguard be present for such use? User pays is a simple way to raise upkeep revenues - need a family rate, though.
Pools should charge something for entry, even if it is a dollar. A heated pool is required somewhere in the district for people who have hip or knee replacements.
Maintain current levels of service - no heated pools. Charge fees \$150k
Small fee should be charged. Seek better use of all pools. No heated pools - not cost effective, business case could not support this. Better community /organisations communication and SVC establish a strategy and 5-10 year plan
No free entry! Extended card entry (unsupervised hours). Culture of pools since free entry has declined because of negative influences of some patrons. Don't incorporate a 5 lane indoor pool into the multi-sports complex at Tumut (proposed). There are fee options for schools / disadvantaged. The free entry decision was illegal in that the change of fee was resolved at a council meeting without the mandatory public exhibition period. Tumut pool upgrade/disability access needs to be resolved.
Fees should be reinstated - can cater for special needs within the fee structure e.g. if you want young kids to be free entry, then they can be. Interesting that a 20% increase in usage caused no increased costs - seems to imply there is scope for cost savings. If this is the case for other services then significant savings across the board may be possible. Feedback to Council following wide consultation was that people were happy to pay fees: why did Council take no notice? People asked for very modest improvements to pools across the Shire. Council took no notice. Is it correct that lane hire fees have been introduced... \$27 per hour??? Rumour is that kinds can no longer afford to learn to swim but they can only play
Bring back fees - user pays to help with some costs towards the overall loss (subsidy).
Free access, no lifeguard - OK.
Maintain by reintroducing entry fees - incl. concession/family, free for under 5 years. Increased entry fees preferable over reduced hours.

Charges for usage need to be maintained (re-introduced) but kept low with concessions. Hydrotherapy pools are needed at both ends of the council region. A heated pool in the region is important but it needs to be one that allows for competitions. Batlow pool is already heated and could be covered to extend the season (future project?). A heated pool in the proposed multi-purpose facility in Tumut is a duplicate if the current proposal to maintain development of the existing Tumut pool is also kept. I doubt that the proposed multi-purpose facility is financially sustainable considering the predicted annual deficit of \$1/2 M. and also the fact that it really only caters for a small population.
No swimming area in Talbingo after Feb '19. There should be a reintroduction of fees. Adelong pool should have been set up to be the heated Shire pool. The current pursuit for everything in Tumut is not in the Shire interest. Other new developments, e.g. 'multi-function' centre should be in geographical centre (say about Batlow?).
User fees should be brought back - may have different scale for different age groups / pensioners, etc. Open pool for longer hours that will allow older people to attend, when not crowded, to avoid conflict/injury.
The pool user must pay and this payment can be assessed by financial difficulties as has been the case before. The decision made to make the pool free was made without consultation with management or community. Having no entry fee increases the opportunity for the use of facilities, showers, etc. The \$150,000 has been removed from parks and the Adelong Falls maintenance budget. While welcoming visitors there need not be by providing free swimming. We all must pay something - to use the argument of 'getting kids off the street' is highly questionable.
Rates – include an additional opportunity on rates notice to contribute to swimming pools. Free learn-to-swim lessons. Charge swimmers.
Charge for all concerned.
Fees <u>should</u> be paid.
User pay but some exemptions e.g. young people, season ticket to allow access to all pools in LGA
Avoid heated pools at any cost (use community sounding board to evaluate)
Service level DECREASED
Pools shouldn't be free - they are a significant cost and paid for solely by ratepayers - not every resident is a ratepayer. Pools are an 'emotional' subject' but they can be managed much better. Free access for school events (or a lump sum, not individual entry fee) free for those attending swimming lessons or free for a certain number of hours. Families can find money for canteen, McDonalds, KFC, etc. People in general don't value "free". Pools are too important to be used as political pointscore. Including a 5 lane indoor heated pool in the multi sport complex will doom it to be a financial burden short, medium and long term.
Other commentary
Summary:
Divided opinion: about two thirds said they would prefer to see Council reinstate the entry fees, citing the 'fair share' principle (not everyone uses the pools and some people live too far away to use them, so those who are using them should contribute to the cost of running them) or stating they were happy to pay for using them
Those who supported the continuation of free entry cited the health benefits of swimming and the social benefits of encouraging greater use
Suggestions about options to minimise impacts of re-introducing fees (e.g. nominal / gold coin only, kids under 5 free, etc.)

25. Tourism

Service level INCREASED
This is an important service and must be recognised. The essential increase in public facilities (toilets). Wait to see what marketing branding reveals.
This is a key need in the region. The current expenditure of \$680K is not clearly broken down and therefore difficult to comment on. In terms of promotion of the region we need to use social media extensively. However, it is our facilities that people remember and tell others about. It is critical our streets look good, our caravan parks are well kept and functional, our parks and toilets are kept clean. Marketing the region is good, but we need attractive things to do and activities to market. The development of visitor activities is essential as is access to the region (Brindabella Road), rail trails, farm gates etc. Visitor information centres in all towns are necessary, perhaps utilising the libraries in smaller towns. Why not staff them 7 days a week? (at least give it a trial).
Tourism promotion will not be effective if there is insufficient infrastructure in place - priority where Council can support. Promotion for tourism should come from the community - the community should own tourism. Refer to how Temora promotes its town: "the friendliest town". Promotion/marketing should encompass a "great place to live" as well as all the great things to see and do. Promote 'paddock to plate', arts/culture (which seem to be mostly left out).
Tourism is happening in the region. Look after the visitors - toilets, signage, parking, events calendar - these would be the responsibility of Council.
Need to do TV advertisement to encourage new residents. Visitor information centre to close and placed in a retail outlet. 50,000 people visited TVC in 2007 - now under 30,000 people visit. Staff (NPWS) sell NPWS accommodation, but do not send visitors to many local accommodation outlets. Put a business levy - use this money to promote the region.
When you look in Tumut on Friday arvo, Saturday mornings, amount of vehicles with caravans, horse floats, trucks and boats stopping in front of Woolworths going to Blowering, mountains horse riding... so tourism is a big important part for our region. Accommodation is very important - if we are short maybe a bit more free camping in town area so more people spend money in town. Maybe a bit more ads on TV like Laurie Daley for Junee.
Similar to Economic Development. Tourism has been identified as a vital economic driver. Apply for specific grants, eg DMP. Extra funds: Facilitate a local tourism levy, business levy.
Tourism is a must or we fail or has failed. Another need for a change of attitude by Council. Improved signage. Community focus strategy to be developed in conjunction with community and all businesses within the LGA. Visitor information centre for Batlow - promotional material for all regions within Council - Tumut Visitor Info Centre has no merchandise for Batlow. Council needs to appoint Community Committee from the whole region of the LGA. Local facilities must be improved to cater for tourists (toilets, information, parking for caravans etc). Not only attract tourists, but attract people to move to the region to live - what are the benefits? Council senior management need to meet the community at community meetings and address the issues. Better communication by Council with all agencies re Sugar Pine Walk - what a disaster. Business levy could be established to benefit all businesses and develop and promote tourism.

Tourism is extremely important to our area and things such as caravan parks and associated businesses need to be nurtured and assisted, not have obstacles put in the way. Cycling needs to be the main focus and personnel helping to build a cycling culture should be encouraged not harassed. Each community needs to have its own identity and to be promoted as such.
Fewer impediments to tourist ventures. More support. Transparency of budget and where the money is directed. Council needs to promote attractive scenes, rather than focussing on marketing that is rather ineffective.
To me, rebranding the Snowy Valleys as a whole means the smaller communities will lose their individual identity. Biggest tourism drawcard is the impression of the town - attractive, clean streetscape; beautiful maintained gardens etc. Have to have events and attractions to bring people in and a reason, then you need facilities to keep them there.
It is a priority but I'm not sure that we spend our money well. Local infrastructure such as streetscapes, toilets etc is critical. Also caravan parks and camping areas. Are Visitor Centres good value for money?
The most important thing. I'm not exactly sure how effective visitor centres are these days - once upon a time they were the first port of call. Signage needs addressing - signage outside Adelong is nearly non-existent - we have signs in town but nothing to entice people outside of town - one sign coming from Wagga ("Adelong 27")
Town entry and public facilities should be first class and well maintained. Streetscapes and photos in brochures should be attractive and appeal to prospective tourists - highlighting the positives of the town. Tourism is a priority for every town.
Service level MAINTAINED
If possible, maintain this essential service. Council must recognise its assets and the diversity of tourists must be identified and catered to. The area is not about eateries - we have coffee and more - bird watching, heritage
Not Council's role to 'make things happen' but to support the industry through all it does, eg trees, public toilets, parks and open spaces, bins, presentation of community facilities and services. Support tourism initiatives, eg rail trails. All businesses have a responsibility re tourism.
Maintain and where possible improve marketing and information services. Maintain and keep high standards in facilities such as toilets, parks and picnic areas.
Cycling. Rail trail has legitimate problems - why does it have to go through people's properties? Call it something else. An attraction - count the yellow bikes.
To highlight the natural environment as a major tourist attraction. Establish more walking trails surrounding towns/villages. Highlight the indigenous culture and heritage of the area. Heated hydrotherapy pool. Work with industries such as Visy, Hyne and packing sheds for 'tours' of their industries. More free camping sites with amenities.
Support volunteers' organising of events for the community. Try and cut the red tape.
Maintain facilities. Conduct a tourism signage audit and target improvements.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Summary:

Successful tourism relies on quality service provision in other Council areas - public toilets, streetscapes, parking, signage, road network (Brindabella Rd).
Query the continued relevance of Visitor Information Centres in an age where people get their information online.
Potential to support funding for tourism through a business/tourism levy.

26. Waste Management

Service level INCREASED
Free drop-off weekends could be spread throughout the year by giving ratepayers tokens to use as needed (i.e. 4/8 per year). This would take pressure off the change of season dates, and also allow for wet weekends at landfill sites. Landfill sites should be phased out! Many countries and other council areas no longer use them or approve of them. These services need to be re-considered e.g. why not offer residents the option of reduced rates if they don't have a bin service or a reduced service. Bins could be electronically coded so you pay as required.
Residents close to town (Tumut) not getting bin service while the town-based trucks travel way out of town almost past their door. Airport is cleared but not the 8-10 homes along the other side of the airport en route to/from Brungle - the route could go that way in one direction or the other. Recycling education / reward should be well publicised incl. the outcomes + clearer simple info as to what is recyclable or not.
A business unit that can generate funds to develop a <i>council wide</i> approach to waste. Reuse centre valuable at every level. Must maintain free waste weekend. A greater focus on the environment and recycling. All ratepayers should pay for the facilities / access.
Free drop-off weekends could be more often.
Consider composting in schools. Keep up with waste education.
The need for 'waste' collection in Talbingo is highly variable - perhaps bar code ID for user pays. There should be no 'green waste' collection by council.
Stop charging rural ratepayers when they use a private contractor e.g. Bellettes
Essential services should be maintained. More services for green waste at Batlow, not just very small branches and grass. This is mulched and used by council. More free drop off weekends. Costs part of rates? Consider expanding collections to rural areas where there are a number of collections at no extra cost (they are ratepayers).
Free drop off weekend a great idea - I've noticed less rubbish being dumped in bush back of Tumut. Red bins need to be bigger especially for larger families.
Inequity in the provision of service i.e. 4km out of town, no collection, yet collection extended to Tooma. The \$40 charge for rural residents who do not get a waste collection service is bad considering that as a rural resident, we have to pay each time waste is taken to the Gilmore facility.
Service level MAINTAINED
Operate as a business unit = user pays. Generally well done. Assess/analyse specific complaints. Role of private enterprise e.g. green waste collection.
Needs to be maintained + continue with push to educate towards recycling etc. to reduce overall landfill. More efficiencies!
A critical service - maintain as is. If increased - seek funding. Composting green waste and making compost. Recycling agricultural film - silage wrap.

Collections maybe fortnightly. I put mine out even monthly. Would like a green waste bin or service may be monthly or longer.
Rural recycle centre great (e.g. Tooma). Rural roadside service should be looked at.
Current system works efficiently. Capacities and collection frequency good. How much of the recyclables is actually recycled, and how much is recycled back to waste?
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
What is happening to the recycled waste?
We need to be encouraged to do better with our waste.
Four vouchers for waste drop-off is a good suggestion.
Waste – don't charge rural residents; we don't get a service. Four free drop-offs a year is a good idea.
4 free tickets per annum to all residents.
More free weekends – issue for vouchers to all ratepayers.
Supply colour coded recycling bins in the community areas.
4 vouchers per year per household (not fixed free weekends).
Brindabella is exempt from \$51 rural levy, but still being invoiced! - needs to be credited to Brindabella residents
3-4 vouchers for free tipping by residents instead of designated peak weekends gets around weather issues too
Free drop-off weekends. Use tokens for ratepayers e.g. 4 per year to use any weekend.
4 vouchers issued with rates notices – as opposed to 4 weekends
Summary:
Free waste drop-off weekends are great
Equity of service needs review e.g. access for rural residents, charges
Questions over recycling - clarified by staff that currently markets do exist
Highlights the importance of preparing a new Waste Strategy for the LGA.

27. Water Supply

Feedback for water supply was included with Sewerage.

1. Business Units

Service level INCREASED
Utilising Council plant for private/external work to defray costs of staff/maintenance of plant etc. is absolutely necessary - provides further net income. Increase in funding from external customers to fund projects.
Important to rebuild the unit that was SWS - opportunities to build strong culture, skills and economic base. Utilise plant and teams effectively. Need skilled staff to develop tenders.

Essential for 'cream' for improvement works. Snowy Works separate works division should not be necessary to deliver private / RMS works. Slide only shows dividend from SW. Tumba Shire dividend (except in last couple of years before merger) was healthy. Loss of RMS capital works is a huge risk. Brindabella Rd / Snowy 2.0 should provide big opportunity. Need to be careful unnecessary overheads don't get transferred to Council works so profit is overstated. Should not be competing in space with small local contractors - only causes ill will.
Service level MAINTAINED
There should be a review of charges as there are often comments 'Council's works unit is too expensive'. Local contractors are better and more financially expedient. It should be recognised that the unit have been successful on larger jobs.
The use of smaller private sub-contractors for council and government projects can result in a lack of those services to the local community e.g. electricians earning big \$ through government contracts are not available to work in local business.
Maintain business units at current level
Maintain ability to tender for state and federal roadworks ensuring that Shire work is not relegated in priority.
12 million contracts are they employing more people to cover contracts up to 24 million? From what I've heard local council is top heavy because of all the different departments
Operate business units as cost recovery. Note: closing SnowyWS will have a major impact on the LTFP. Loss of \$500k/year dividend x 10 years = \$5mil = major problem. Ability to respond to thread of RMS going to tender? = major risk.
Need for Council to better liaise and seek work to be carried out on RMS roads: too long of a wait for works which are often a safety issue e.g. Batlow Rd / Snowy Mtns Highway, intersection Gocup Rd / SM Hwy. Council rates far too high for local works, even when grants fund the project. Admin costs too high and more of the grant should be spent on the project to secure a better outcome e.g. Batlow Skate Park a disgrace. Snowy Works and Servcies did not provide good value to stakeholders and should be closed. More efficiency measures needs to be addressed within SVC for works - roads.
No issues - interesting
Business units need to be retained as long as they can be cost effective and commercially competitive. They are essential in maintaining strong, experienced work teams with increased capacity to manage large jobs as they come. Also it enables the Council to keep a good base of experienced employees employed on a regular basis
Issues: having appropriately skilled people in project & contract management, flexibility in dealing with overtime and time in lieu. Opportunities: sharing capability across councils with SVC (were SW&S) prequalification. Important: commercial/private works provides an opportunity for competitive tendering and looking at how to find efficiencies and the use of contractors and other means to be more competitive - any efficiencies will be put back into more infrastructure.
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
SWS a joke. Audit required of all units.
SWS competitiveness to be reviewed
Summary:
Considerable support for Council to pursue RMS/external works, recognising the benefits of doing so and risks of the loss of RMS work

Some cynicism as to the benefits / value of SnowyWS
Emphasis should be on larger jobs, not competing with locals

2-10. Internal Services

The following services were all discussed together.

#	Service Description		
1	Business Units	6	Information Technology
2	Depot and Fleet	7	Infrastructure Asset Planning
3	Finance	8	Records Management
4	Governance	9	Risk Management
5	Human Resources	10	Workplace Health and Safety

Service level INCREASED
No complaints. Let Council employees know that their efforts are important and appreciated and that they are important and valued
Governance is critical. Good leadership and clear role descriptions are essential. It is also necessary that the community understands the roles of the employees. Currently there seems to be some confusion both internally and externally. This needs to be attended to. Efficiencies come from a well managed, organised and supported organisation. It also comes from a cohesive and happy workplace. Is this happening? There has been comments from the community that the current council workplace is not a happy one
Don't overcontract/privatise. I'm concerned about the view that privatisation is beneficial - oftentimes it isn't and will lead to excessive pricing, not cheaper necessarily (it will lead to a loss of jobs and raising of prices in the long term). Employment in the public service is important to the community. Outsourcing of contracts should only be done if it's beneficial to the LGA in the long term. Improved efficiency is important.
Records management - needs improvement. Infrastructure asset planning - should include trees, especially those considered significant and records should be generated and recorded for performance monitoring and future planning.
Service level MAINTAINED
I think if we look at Business Efficiency we need to maintain the services required and allow staff to do it well without blowing the budget. We can't increase the services if we are running at a loss. Org chart on website, one so the community know who to contact but we also can see how many staff it takes to run the Council.
Service should be maintained and always look to build greater efficiencies - investing in technology, less red tape, improved processes.
Stop demarcation - use personnel across different areas to be more efficient. Look at outside income streams - sponsorships
Council staff to be multi-skilled to allow an eventual reduction in staff and be fully utilised in the 8hr day. Get rid of road maintenance - this would be better resourced by expert construction / earth moving operations. In some cases, services are subcontracted out anyway (e.g. water trucks) - at a ridiculous charge \$130/hr (nearly as much as a grader rate). The performance / efficiency of Council road works is way down from Snowy Works and Services many years ago IMHO. National Parks and Forestry must start paying rates - huge issue for this Shire.

Internal and external 'audits' to be undertaken to review efficiency, expenditure and income. Meet legislative requirements. Review number of 'fleet' vehicles - better use of vehicles. Review depot facilities and efficiencies. To review budget the big picture needs to be revealed e.g. income actual, investments and income from investments including costs of all services for previous financial year. What services cannot be adjusted cut etc.? Salaries, bonuses, etc. can these be adjusted/reduced? How can new income be achieved? Forestry and National Parks to pay rates, contribute to Council costs.
Needs to be maintained to ensure compliance with legislative requirements
Seek efficiencies of shared workload. Avoid departmentalising - typist pool/secretaries - every department head having a secretary or share 1 between 2 etc. etc. Council said to be reducing red tape and making process easier for new business / new residents (housing) - but the stories are that it is still heavy going. New requirements for one business kept arising as various stages reached - should have been up front. Annual fire safety statements: Council charges fee for processing completed paperwork (over \$80) but then expects client to fwd copy to NSW RFS - either Council should do that or we bypass Council and simply lodge direct. It is just a fundraiser for Council. Greater efficiency is required.
Minimum statutory and legislative compliance regulations that must be adhered to. Increase political pressure of NSW State Govt to pay rates of Forestry Corp / NPWS commercial services. Potentially \$1M p.a. income (use to increase identified priorities) = VITAL. Conduct comprehensive service efficiency reviews and act where opportunities are identified. Document the outcomes.
Better outcomes at less cost. An efficiency drive is required. Can the cost efficiencies proposed for the amalgamation be achieved and demonstrated
General feeling Council does not necessarily have people in some areas with adequate knowledge and expertise e.g. governance. My feeling is we need to be prepared to pay for what we want - the idea that "we pay our rates, so therefore Council should do..." is a real problem complicated by decision makers who want to be popular so make poor financial decisions.
Safety first, records kept. All items on screen are part of a safe workplace. I think the extra money to pay for this should come in from Council fees. Where is the money coming from to build a new sports building?
Service level DECREASED
Other commentary
Does Council have a policy or practice of not employing people with criminal records? If so, don't these people deserve to make a go of their lives and contribute to society? Maybe Council could employ somebody who has formal or informal skills to work with such people.
Audit required – efficiencies.
Summary:
General desire to see Council pursue efficiencies, various suggestions about opportunities to do so
Significant recognition of the need to comply with legislative requirements and managed risk

Other Services / General Comments

At the final workshop on 8 December 2018, the group was asked to provide any other comments or suggestions not covered in relation to particular services. Feedback follows.

Improve signage: toilets, water, parking, parks.
S355 committees should be reviewed re volunteers and risk management. Terms of reference needs to be reviewed – better understanding of s355 committees to public – may get more volunteers.
Means of reporting issues to SVC on issues of concern to ratepayers and general public.
Street lighting – SVC vs Essential Energy – what is the policy?
Adopting an attitude of ‘how can we help you?’ rather than ‘how can we hinder you with our red tape?’
Need for a truck stop and trailer stops. I live on Adelong Road, Tumut opposite railway precinct – increasingly trucks and trailers are being left there. Maybe surface at railway precinct can be upgraded. This is not a complaint.
Across many functions of Council there were common issues raised – Council need to help rather than hinder; send a message we’re open for business; limit/minimise red tape; value and support volunteers. These have very broad impact across economic development; tourism, planning and community services.
Needs to be more creative risk management to reduce red tape. Eg don’t impose unrealistic requirements where risk is low. Volunteers should be shielded as far as possible from bureaucracy – they need to be empowered and recognised.
Environment – Council has a responsibility to deal with negative consequences (blue green algae) from the Mannus Lake with or without government grants. It is as much a core Council responsibility as is maintaining other Council assets.
Volunteers not being encouraged – too much red tape
Don’t underestimate the power and economics of working with volunteers, rather than against them (section 355 may need to be more flexible?)
Ongoing sounding board a great idea – would get more of a diverse and accurate opinion of the whole Shire + more opportunity to debate the issues
Volunteers: suggestion: Council coordinate an information and discussion forum for all s355 committees in the council region. This would facilitate a better understanding of the legalities, review their terms of reference, and committees would benefit from sharing information on how they operate. They could then develop their own TORs with council with a better information base. The new volunteers form may scare off volunteers and needs to be discussed / reviewed (e.g. too long / medical info they don’t want to give, etc.).
S355 committee forms to be reviewed
Essential Energy unaccountable – controls all public and some private property (improperly), lighting, with Council paying “costs” dictated by EE. Over-servicing is the norm in parking areas, main streets and main roads.
Opportunity for bequests to a specific area via Council, eg parks, heat pool.

External revenues – SW’s contract out of the area their services for a profit. Tourism encouraged. Government office relocation from the city. CSU Wagga in Tumut/Tumba. Forestry to pay rates. Disability/elderly services.
Revenue \$ to be allocated to services.
Look at running Council like a business. A business goes bankrupt if not making money. Have the right people doing the right job. Look to create efficiencies in every aspect of the business.
Love volunteers – they’re invaluable!
Remove the demerge signs (a minority of people, but has an extremely bad impression of the community). Work together.
S355 committees – bring the community together to explain, recruit the issues and benefit of 355 committees.
Climate change and the environment – what is council considering, to discuss this with the community.
Agriculture – what consideration is being given to farmers – weed control, water issues.
Change SVC attitude overall. Communication/reporting on issues and outcomes to all.
Review of efficiencies – justification for change.
SVC need to engage with all – not just internally – closed shop.
Tumut – stop focus on Tumut only – the LGA is one.
Service delivery is different between Tumut/Batlow/Tumbarumba/Adelong/Talbingo/Khanchoban.
Mayor spoke – we don’t need a history lesson: what is your vision?
Rapid achievement of financial sustainability overrides any desire expressed for better services.
Maintain awareness that different communities within SV Council region have different needs and different access due to isolation and population base that can be too small to attract private operators.
If Council can’t afford it then they should cut back on finances and capital works – too many services.
Create new businesses like the old Tumba Council had in place and reap the monetary benefits.
Continue future engagement.
Thank you for your invitation to participate in this Community Sounding Board, on behalf of all the Ngarigo People of Tumbarumba, at least we have been recognised now as a part of the community. Thank you.
I’m concerned that the 2 previous councils are very different in the way they provided services and what services were provided. Comments could be specific to one council but not be favourable for the other old council Some comments I made I was considering my own area and what I know and may not necessarily take into account the other old council. I think most would have commented this way therefore distorting answers. This is also a big concern with the phone survey and budget allocator.
Financial viability of Forests: don’t pay rates, said there is need for more land under forests (& reduced rate income) – who profits from timber exports? Little or no benefit to communities. Why should there be any export of a deficient/subsidised resource?

Revisit any opportunity for a public liability insurance to cover small events and gatherings on council property (casual insurers cover?). Council must ensure volunteers / committee members 'endorsed' by council have working with children + police checks
The community needs to have greater understanding of what s355 committees means – what is the legislative context? This links to many of the services provided by the council and/or involvement of Council in the various activities involving community volunteers
The 'Sounding Board' is something that should be continued – very positive in hearing all views across all communities, all the differences and commonalities, different perspectives. Also great to hear about all the different services and not just the ones we are personally interested in.

Feedback: Financial Sustainability, Special Rate Variation and Rate Harmonisation

At the final workshop on 8 December 2018, the group was asked to comment on the above issues. Feedback follows.

I'm no expert on any sort of economics or accounting but financial sustainability is a given in my uniformed opinion. If something isn't financially feasible then how on earth are the elements of our locality to run effectively, especially when their effectivity is debatable as is.
How can the next ten years be financially predicted – anything could happen within that period and what sort of impact is ten years of financial instability going to have?
Use volunteers and community groups and credit them for their work.
Financial sustainability is to a degree important, but in the long term surplus should be a goal.
Larger investment in the attempt to achieve surplus is a risk, but one worth taking in my opinion (although I am no accountant by any regard).
The length of time should be determined by what's in the coffers, not in too much particular regard to goals (eg 10 years, 5 years)
What are 'other expenses' of \$3,409,935? Administrative costs/running costs?
Grant funds held by Council – are they invested to earn interest or just sit in the bank account?
Agree Forestry and NPWS should pay rates.
Look at areas where Council has made a profit and pursue these areas as a business model (eg Tumba Aged Care).
Are there detailed figures on the amounts of interest accrued for grants received prior to being accessed for the projects – and could this interest be added to the specific grant?
Council must comply with legislation and be crystal clear why it is will take 10 year and the reasons why.
Regional and rural councils to become better advocates for the 'west of the Divide'
What overspend is there with the merger?
What consideration is given to the long-term sustainability of grants eg Green Army and McFarlane Creek.
Invest in volunteers – respect, offer care, recognise.
Review of efficiencies – business improvement required.
Must reduce employee costs and benefits. 50% is too high given the income and other expenses.

Reduce the number of consultants – far too much is spent on this item.
CSB needed a financial officer from SVC to better explain outcomes etc.
3-4 year plan should be prepared (while short term and long term planning is required).
10 year plan is not acceptable – urgent review of costs/projects needed.
Just proves that joining Tumut Council and Tumbarumba Council should not have happened.
Forestry etc to pay rates, and/or contribute to costs.
Review of Visy contribution to Council costs and for services provided.
The main purpose of the amalgamation was to improve financial sustainability and at the same time to reduce costs. A ten-year time frame to achieve sustainability is full of uncertainties. The Council must show a strong trend to financial sustainability over the 3-4 year plan.
Financials seem to be very finely tuned. Any sudden/unexpected projects could throw the plans out of balance.
The last 12 months+ have seen a huge amount of spending to bring both LGAs together and the expenses + lack of efficiency have had a big impact on the bottom line. This should improve if council looks deeply into efficiencies.
There is certainly a need to look at loans if they can be self-funding.
LGAs in regional areas to lobby NSW government for larger share of pie (more infrastructure funding, national road improvements)
Financial sustainability is fundamental. LTFP must be balanced. SVC cannot operate in a deficit situation. Every year SVC must check that assumptions are real and achievable. 'efficiencies' must be clearly determined and quantified.
Council is no different to running any other business – needs to be accountable for all income / expenses, while still making improvements going forward for a more prosperous Shire. Need to keep deficits to a minimum, otherwise it's too difficult to catch up and maintain ongoing services.
10 year plan a must. 3-4 year plan important to make sure the goals don't go down the gurgler. Maintain special rate variation. Increase any service along the way (once budgets adopted) must be from decrease in other areas and recorded so adjustment / reversal can be made later on. Greater efficiencies – better methods to combine resources, fleet numbers and efficiencies.
NSW Govt cashed up – Forestry etc. non-rateable. LGAs – in particular ours – need a share to meet demands. National parks, forestry and dams should pay a rate.
10 years LT plan necessary to know the objectives of Council so that decisions in the meantime take this into account. BUT council needs a 3-4 year plan to make sure that goals aren't derailed.
Current assumptions are dubious on income and can't be relied upon. To have a 10 yr plan to 'break even' is far too long, it should be 3-5yrs. Until break even point is reached, Council should not be taking on or spending money towards ventures such as the MPC, free pool entry, etc. that have predicted long term annual deficits. Note: some of these e.g. Brindabella Rd upgrade may have future benefits financially and should be considered.
Sale of excess plant and machinery – one off income, not included in plan.

Refusal to record and properly allocate costs of and due to deciduous trees leads down the road to ever increasing unsustainability. Costs involved extend to matters including detrimental impacts on: water in all waterways, land impacted by rotting deciduous leaves, air – carries air borne pollens of especially deciduous trees, community health resulting from air-borne pollens, but fall to ground and in any event are much larger)

Advocacy to other levels of government to attract better funding. The principles of IP&R must be taken seriously – whole of life costing. Can't dismiss depreciation as 'not real money'. Every new infrastructure creates new costs / maintenance / replacement. Unfortunately politics influences critical financial decisions – not all decisions are in the best interests of long term financial sustainability – reports should include 'whole of life' comment linked to budget impact (short, med, long term).

IP&R was introduced to give LG a tool to support long term financial sustainability. If the council doesn't follow IP&R difficulty will be to be sustainable

Can the Council deliver anything more than what is currently required do to the need to deal with the amalgamation process, including all that has to be done to deliver the infrastructure relating to grants on top of business as usual? As well as factoring in depreciation for all the new infrastructure. There must be currently huge drain on existing resources i.e. need to have more employees, more consultants, more resources to deliver. When will the Council be operating 'normally'. Has this been factored in to future budgets. May miss other financial opportunities. There needs to be more consideration of what extra activities the council can be involved in that will provide future income, extra ratepayers, etc. this may be difficult if the Council is too busy dealing with the current workload (as above) which I believe will be ongoing for a number of years into the future.

If we are looking at the need to reduce a deficit over a 10 year period then a priority is to look at external revenues – development of land, increase in ratepayers and opportunities. Some of these may return more in the long run rather than short term.