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NEW ACCOMMODATION OPENED



The new Itinerant Worker Accommodation at the Batlow Caravan Park was officially opened on Wednesday 4 October.

Wagga MP Dr Joe McGirr MP joined Mayor Ian Chaffey, Councillors and community members for the official ceremony.

Dr McGirr said that the opening was another chapter in Batlow's recovery from the 2019-20 bushfires.

The project was jointly funded by the Australian and NSW Government's and has provided an additional 60 permanent beds to support the local horticultural and forestry industries.



TOOMA ROAD WORKS

Road repair works are underway on a 1.4km section of Tooma Rd near the Paddys River Falls Rd intersection. The works involve 100mm of gravel overlay which will then be sealed with two coat seal.



This project is funded under the NSW Government's Regional and Local Road Repair Program (RLRRP) and will be completed in 3-4 weeks subject to favourable weather conditions.

COUNCILLOR COLUMN – MAYOR IAN CHAFFEY

I urge all residents to start preparing your homes and properties ahead of the start of this year's bushfire season.

We are entering an El Nino weather phase which brings hot and dry conditions and below-average rainfall and we have already seen bushfires on the NSW south coast and Hunter regions so we can't be complacent thinking it won't happen to us again.

It is vital that we listen to the advice from the NSW Rural Fire Service and our own local Brigades to act now and develop our bushfire survival plans and clean up our houses and properties.

This includes things like clearing gutters, keeping grass short, and cleaning up fallen leaves, twigs, and branches from around our yards and paddocks.

We need to ensure we have cleared around our homes including things like moving the firewood stacked on the front veranda away from any buildings. The last thing we want is to leave more fire fuel lying around.

The RFS also recommends that residents:

- Develop a bushfire survival plan and talk about it with family/friends
- Use the NSW bushfire household assessment tool to know your fire risk
- Be aware of the new fire danger ratings and how to use them as a trigger for action
- Know where your local Neighbourhood Safer Places are located, should you need to seek shelter
- Create a watch zone on the Hazards Near Me app to be notified of any fires in your area

It's not only up to the RFS to keep us safe, as residents we have a responsibility to ensure our own safety and preparedness too.





Council is investigating a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to achieve financial sustainability.

The SRV approved in 2022 has unfortunately not been sufficient to achieve Council’s financial sustainability so we are exploring opportunities to implement a new SRV to make sure services can be delivered into the future.

Council’s cost pressures have been exacerbated by the high inflation environment and an increasingly competitive employment market that has occurred post-COVID-19, as well as cost shifting from previously State Government funded services that are now at Council’s cost (like the recently announced increase to the Emergency Service Levy), a ceiling placed on rates, and the normal increased service expectations.

Current modeling in Council’s 2023-2033 Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) shows that further rate increases are needed to enable Council to maintain current service levels, adequately fund ongoing asset maintenance, reduce Council’s reliance on external grant funding for asset renewals, and ensure Council’s financial sustainability.

SRV OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Option 1

- 18% permanent SRV increases over two consecutive years 2024/25 and 2025/26 (39.24% cumulated)

This option would show a return to a balanced operating budget* from year 2025/26 and an overall balanced budget with a slow increase in a small (<2%) surplus over the 10 year period to service any further cost shifting or unexpected new service deliveries as was the case during Covid.

Option 2

- 12.5% permanent SRV increases over three consecutive years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 (42.38% cumulated)

This option would show a return to a balanced operating budget* from year 2026/27 and an overall balanced budget with a slow increase in a small (<2%) surplus over the 10 year period to service any further cost shifting or unexpected new service deliveries as was the case during Covid.

*before grants and capital contributions

An SRV is calculated on the Ordinary Rate only. Your rates notice could also contain separate charges for Sewer, Water and Waste. These items are not impacted by any SRV.

These SRV scenarios result in a balanced budget which allows Council to increase its asset replacement reserves ensuring current expected services can be delivered into the future. In the long-term it allows Council to invest responsibly in infrastructure and avoids burdening future generations with excessive costs or excessive reductions to services.

LET’S TALK SRV

Drop into one of our Community Pop-ups and learn more about Council’s financial sustainability plans. Or visit our website to take our quick online Survey and use our Rates Calculator to better understand the impact to your rates. www.svc.nsw.gov.au/srv

Date	Town	Venue	Time
Monday 23 October	Tumut	Outside Harvey Norman	11.00am - 2.00pm
Friday 27 October	Batlow	Outside Batlow IGA	11.00am - 1.30pm
Monday 30 October	Adelong	Outside Adelong IGA	11.30am - 2.00pm
Tuesday 31 October	Talbingo	Outsite Talbingo Supermarket	11.30am - 1.30pm
Wednesday 1 November	Khancoban	Inside Pickled Parrot Providore	10.30am - 12.00pm
Wednesday 1 November	Tumbarumba	Main Street Kiosk	1.30pm - 3.30pm

