



## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

### ***COUNCIL RESOLVED TO SEEK SPECIAL RATE VARIATION***

At the extra-ordinary meeting of Balranald Shire Council held on 10th January 2018, Council resolved to continue with the process of lodging an application for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) with the State Government through the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Mayor Byron said

"This decision wasn't made lightly and has been reached over many months involving workshops, community engagement forums, information from the State Government and the public submissions that informed council."

"The application to IPART who, assesses and issue approvals for a SRV will be for;

- \* A permanent SRV rise of 10% increase (including the annual rate cap) for 7 years commencing in 2018/19. This would capture any new solar farm development following a review of the rating categories.
- \* A permanent SRV of increase of 10% per year for 6 years (including rate cap) for sand mining activities commencing in 2019/2020 assuming they commence."

"For example, a typical Balranald residential property paying the 2016/2017 General Rate of \$300 based on the current valuation and rating structure would receive an increase in order of \$30 in year 2018/19. The SRV does not apply to water, sewer and waste service rates. It should be remembered that actual rates can be impacted by land value and rating structure."

"It should be noted this is an application for approval and there is no guarantee of success as many Councils have had their applications rejected by IPART."

"The Council must now finalise the application and lodge it in early February. A determination is not expected until 15th May 2018."

"An SRV if successful is only one part of the road to achieving Council sustainability. It will also include a review over the next twelve months of

- Service Levels
- Cost/Expenses
- Productivity/Efficiency
- Rating structure to ensure that each land category is paying its equitable share of rates."

"Many of the above issues were raised in the public submissions and council has listened to the community. Over the coming weeks Council, through its Facebook page, will provide updates."

"I thank all those who attend the Community Group forums and made submissions."

Cr Leigh Byron

**MAYOR**

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