



Approved for release by Chief Executive Officer, Alex Waldron  
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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Special Rate Variation process discontinued by Councillors**

Having been presented with the financial position of Council, Councillors gave in principle support for the intention to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure upper Lachlan Shire Council's ongoing long-term financial sustainability.

There are many steps to the SRV process, each as important as the next. The initial step is to clarify the need for an SRV and Council engaged AEC Group Ltd to undertake an independent financial sustainability review and prepare SRV options. Presentation of these options and engagement with the community is a vital step in considering whether to apply to IPART for an SRV.

Mayor Pam Kensit said *"Upper Lachlan Shire Council ran six engagement sessions for the community and have heard clearly what many ratepayers had to say. As we live in a democracy, we as the community representatives have heeded the people and will not be going ahead with the proposed Special Rate Variation. Essentially the community has spoken and we have listened with a majority of Councillors agreeing to end the process now."*

It became clear from the engagement sessions and online / paper submissions received to date, that the community are not supportive of an SRV at this time and would rather see services levels reviewed and internal efficiencies than pay higher general rates. This means that council will not be applying to IPART for a special rate variation above the rate peg and the SRV process will be discontinued.

CEO Alex Waldron acknowledged that the SRV consultation had been stressful for staff, councillors and the community who all live and work in the Shire, however this was a necessary step in the process.

*"Upper Lachlan Shire Council has many hardworking staff and councillors who should be respected for going above and beyond for their community rather than being vilified for being part of a process aimed at improving the Shire."*

Future engagement sessions, including the evening session in Crookwell on Wednesday 8 November will now be cancelled due to the discontinuance of the SRV process.

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For media enquiries please contact Upper Lachlan Shire Council  
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