

Nillumbik Shire Council - Public submission on draft budget 2017 - 2018

Submitter and Key Points	Officer Response
<p>1. Allison Kellow I prefer to see protection of our natural environment, and evidence-based bushfire management risk over a personal hip-pocket based policy such as "no rate rise". Like many others I chose to live in Nillumbik for the trees and natural environment, NOT the multistorey Heidelberg-style apartment blocks. I am concerned about the proposal to raise funds via the sale of public land and I seek clarification about exactly which properties are earmarked for sale.</p>	<p>Council is currently investigating options for its land sales program. A list will be made public once research is completed in July.</p>
<p>2. Sherrilyn Ballard Active & Creative people – I would like to see funding going toward supporting youth that are not engaged well in the community e.g. in sporting clubs. Families who may have limited funds to spend on after school activities would benefit from their adolescent children being engaged socially, creatively and physically. Council Youth Team could engage with youth - find out what their needs, aspirations are and maybe partner with existing community groups to provide social, learning activities. This could be in a designated spaces in townships with easy access to public transport. This can also provide opportunities for mentors in the community to “make a difference” for youth. We have seen this with the L to P driving program.</p>	<p>Currently Nillumbik Shire Council's Youth Services team offer a number of programs and capacity building initiatives which respond to young people's needs and aspirations. Young people also have the opportunity to be involved in the various stages of rolling out a program or initiative including coming up with an idea through to planning and implementation. Current Youth services programs include everything from Youth Theatre Programs to street art excursions. All programs are offered at no cost or a low cost to participants.</p> <p>As the Youth Services team prepare for the development a new business plan in line with the adoption of the Council Plan 2017 – 2021, a number of steps will occur to ensure young people are involved throughout. A few of these steps include:</p> <p>1) The continuation of the newly established 'Nillumbik Youth Stakeholder Forum'. This group is taking a 'taskforce approach' to working on priority issues. The group has identified youth homelessness, drugs & alcohol, a youth space and information dissemination as the key priorities.</p> <p>2) Work is also underway to undertake a 'Your Say' project with young people. It is intended that young people representing diverse backgrounds, perspectives and interests will be included throughout this process. During 2017, Paige Burton, the Australian Youth Representative to the UN will be meeting with young people from all walks of life, hoping to capture the diversity of Australian young people. This year, the tour's goal is to reach 50,000 young people. Nillumbik Shire Council, via the Youth Services team have formed a partnership with UN Youth Australia and Paige will be facilitating conversations with the young people of Nillumbik.</p>

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<p>2. Sherrilyn Ballard continued</p> <p>Upgrades to the Diamond Creek Swimming pool. We have lived in Diamond Creek for 34 years and haven't seen any significant works happen. The toilet block could do with some upgrades, flooring, toilets, shelving for toiletries in showers. Ask consumers who use the pool what they think. Potential for using the pool over winter months?</p>	<p>3) Moving forward Youth Services will continue to strengthen partnerships with other youth service providers. Youth Services are a member of the 'Banyule and Nillumbik Youth Services Network' whom are the major connecting body for youth services in the sub-region and cover a breadth of issues affecting young people and includes workers in a range of fields.</p> <p>Nillumbik Shire Council has undertaken the following works to the Diamond Creek Outdoor Pool in the last 5 years:</p> <p>2012-2013 - Replacement of the concourse to the main pool area (\$98,000)</p> <p>2015-2017 - Painting of all external and internal walls of the building, installation of partitions and doors in the shower areas, new tiles to male and female change rooms and repairs to fascia and guttering at the facility (\$59,113)</p> <p>2015-2016 - Landscaping works to improve amenity of toddler pool area, new pool concourse, garden beds, fencing, seating areas (\$19,919)</p> <p>2016 - Provision of a portable hoist to improve access for people with limited mobility (\$6,754).</p> <p>In 2017-2018 Council will purchase new inflatables to meet Life Saving Victoria safety recommendations and provide passive aquatic recreation outcomes for patrons, particularly children and young people.</p> <p>Council will undertake broader community infrastructure planning across Diamond Creek in 2017-2018 to determine the prioritised provision of new or upgrade to existing facilities to better respond to community needs in Diamond Creek.</p> <p>The additional cost to Council to open the facility from April to October (on reduced hours) is \$149,912. This cost would be in addition to the current cost to Council for the November to March season of \$171,409.</p> <p>The current contract management group (YMCA) provide ongoing opportunities for customers to provide feedback in relation to facility operations and improvements. This feedback highlights areas for improvement in terms of service and facilities. Council continues to work with the YMCA to act on all feedback provided.</p>

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<p>2. Sherrilyn Ballard continued Infrastructure – Gipson Street Bridge duplication – Unsure why this is on the plan? Fire risk, replacement needed? Traffic across this bridge is not an issue. Diamond Creek residents who use this bridge are courteous and wave when you give way, no matter what side of the bridge you are on. It creates the country feel that we moved here for and value. Duplication of the bridge will also mean chopping down some beautiful trees surrounding the current bridge which will have an impact on the physical environment. I would rather this funding be spent on programs for youth, families, elderly if it's not deemed necessary to duplicate the bridge.</p>	<p>This project was identified as part of DPO1 and 2 schedules to the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. These Development Plan Overlays were created to identify areas of future residential development in Diamond Creek. The project to duplicate the Gipson Street Bridge (among others) was included in the DPO and required developer contributions to ensure its construction. Council is legally obligated to deliver the projects in the DPO.</p> <p>As the bridge also services the existing community the Developers Fees aren't covering the full cost, the additional cost is being funded from Roads to Recovery which is a Commonwealth grant.</p>
<p>3. Vincent Sicari Requests that the Shire of Nillumbik makes a financial commitment in supporting the development of the Sporting Precinct as outlined in the "Sporting and Recreation Precinct Master Plan-Final Report" prepared by the Otium Planning Group Pty Ltd in 2016.</p>	<p>Eltham High School has prepared a community sporting precinct masterplan in partnership with Council and community sporting groups. Council is seeking funding through the State Government's Shared Facilities Fund to implement stage one of the masterplan to upgrade sporting facilities for wider community use. The School has approached Council and sporting clubs seeking financial contributions towards facility improvements, subject to Council securing the grant.</p> <p>Subject to the outcome of Council's application to State Government's Shared Facility Fund, any Council investment at Eltham High School through capital contributions and ongoing maintenance would be referred for consideration in the preparation of the 2018-2019 budget. This reflects the timing of the works.</p>

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4. Carlota Quinlan

Concerned about the allocation of \$600,000 in the budget for 'Increased maintenance of roadside vegetation and open space' and 'Proactive tree management in high public use areas'. Given the attitude of some and the fact that labour is expensive one suspects that 'roadside maintenance' could result in the overly enthusiastic slashing and mowing of low vegetation and felling of trees. One hopes that 'proactive tree maintenance' will not render parks and reserves devoid of trees, with any tree within cooee of a playground or walkway felled 'just in case'. Living in a treed environment involves taking personal responsibility for protecting that environment as well as accepting the associated minimal risk.

It appears that no money is allocated to replacement tree planting – either located where trees have been removed or in parks generally. Succession planting for future generations is our responsibility. The tree canopy we now enjoy and value will deteriorate. Unless this generation plants trees, our grandchildren will not have tree canopy in 30 years when climate change effects are impacting on their lives.

The huge increase in Cash and Investments [page 7] over the next four years e.g. \$51 million in 2019-20 includes 'developer contributions.' With the community very wary and concerned about the unprecedented level of development that threatens the very 'liveability' and character of Eltham and Nillumbik there is concern that council may look more favourably on inappropriate development in order to increase the 'developer contributions' .

Council is committed to maintaining the treed character of the Green Wedge for future generations. Council has allocated significant funding in the 2017-18 budget for proactive tree management in high public use areas and on roadsides which includes tree replacement. Council's Environment Department will record all tree removals and develop a program to ensure that the number of trees replaced exceeds the number removed. Replacement trees will be planted in parks and streets guided by relevant masterplans and landscape plans. Council has an existing annual allocation of more than \$80,000 for tree replacement.

Council budgets to receive developer contributions for items such as drainage and open space. These contributions only form a small component of the value of the cash and investments in the balance sheet.

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<p>5. Multiple submissions Concerned about the lack of funding allocation for protection and enhancement of the natural environment in the Strategic Resource Plan.</p>	<p>Council's Environment team has an operating budget of more than \$2.2 million for 2017-18 which funds protection and enhancement of Council's native vegetation in Council's environmental reserves and on private land. Additional funding of \$300,000 has been allocated in 2017-18 for roadside vegetation management which will include removal of weeds. Council's existing budget allocations provide support for volunteer groups including Landcare and Friends groups. Council works collaboratively with other land management agencies to achieve landscape scale protection and enhancement of the natural environment.</p> <p>In addition these budgets support significant projects under Council's environmental strategies and plans including responses to climate change, conservation and protection of biodiversity. Other grant funding for protection and enhancement of the natural environment to the value of approximately \$150,000 is expected in 2017-18.</p>
<p>6. Rob Serpell Concerned about the difficulty for retired people to afford a high level of rates.</p>	<p>Council has frozen rates for 2017-18 and is conscious of people on fixed incomes being able to afford their rates.</p>
<p>7. Sharon Turner Unimpressed with councils decision to forgo a rates rise seeing as the State Government put in place a 2% cap anyway . One way or another we ratepayers will have to cover the costs . I would have liked to see more spent on maintaining and enhancing the natural environment (for many reasons).</p>	<p>Council has frozen rates for 2017-18 and is conscious of people on fixed incomes being able to afford their rates.</p> <p>Council's Environment team has an operating budget of more than \$2.2 million for 2017-18 which funds protection and enhancement of Council's native vegetation in Council's environmental reserves and on private land. Additional funding of \$300,000 has been allocated in 2017-18 for roadside vegetation management which will include removal of weeds. Council's existing budget allocations provide support for volunteer groups including Landcare and Friends groups. Council works collaboratively with other land management agencies to achieve landscape scale protection and enhancement of the natural environment.</p> <p>In addition these budgets support significant projects under Council's environmental strategies and plans including responses to climate change, conservation and protection of biodiversity. Other grant funding for protection and enhancement of the natural environment to the value of approximately \$150,000 is expected in 2017-18.</p>

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<p>8. Nick Bean While we live in a Green Wedge shire, surrounded by rare and endangered plants and wildlife, I can't find any reference to the preservation of such "assets". There's motherhood statements about living in this shire, but no substance. Regarding funds, page 52 - Capital works - Funding sources - Reserves - \$26.8 million: What does this refer to? Is this a plan to sell off land/assets within the Shire?</p>	<p>Council's Environment team has an operational budget of more than \$2.2 million for 2017-18 which funds protection and enhancement of Council's native vegetation in Council's environmental reserves and on private land. This also includes significant projects under Council's environmental strategies and plans including responses to climate change, conservation and protection of biodiversity. Other grant funding for protection and enhancement of the natural environment to the value of approximately \$150,000 is expected in 2017-18.</p> <p>The reference to the reserves funding source on page 52 includes projects not completed by 30 June 2016 that were carried forward to the 2016-17 financial year. Council maintains a number of financial reserve funds for specific future expenditure including landfill rehabilitation, development contributions, major projects and public open space. Council is currently investigating options for its land sales program. A list will be made public once research is completed in July.</p>
<p>9. Anne and Kevin Stoneman Supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• plan to pay down debt;• selling off the former shire office site in Eltham;• the focus on roads and public transport;• reviewing the Green Wedge Management Plan. It was a flawed process and should be abandoned.	<p>Submission noted.</p>

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10. **Betty Russell**

Recommends :

- embed initiatives for protecting, sustaining and enriching Nillumbik Green Wedge

- remove both the “Economic Development Strategy” and the “Yarrambat Township Plan” new initiatives as they were items in the previous 2016-17 budget

Council’s Environment team has an operating budget of more than \$2.2 million for 2017-18 which funds protection and enhancement of Council’s native vegetation in Council’s environmental reserves and on private land. Additional funding of \$300,000 has been allocated in 2017-18 for roadside vegetation management which will include removal of weeds. Council’s existing budget allocations provide support for volunteer groups including Landcare and Friends groups. Council works collaboratively with other land management agencies to achieve landscape scale protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

In addition these budgets support significant projects under Council’s environmental strategies and plans including responses to climate change, conservation and protection of biodiversity. Other grant funding for protection and enhancement of the natural environment to the value of approximately \$150,000 is expected in 2017-18.

The ‘Economic Development Strategy’ concerns the year by year implementation of actions within the Economic Development Strategy, which Council adopts for 5 year timeframes.

The ‘Yarrambat Township Plan’ is a staged project, with the 2017-18 required to respond to the conditions of amendment authorisation required by the Minister for Planning. The new initiative funding will enable the preparation of a detailed township plan which builds upon the earlier draft framework.

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<p>10. Betty Russell continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hold rates at current level plus CPI and use the extra income generated on some of the items listed under "Missing" below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green projects relevant to climate change (and therefore to bushfire and flood mitigation), e.g. energy-saving projects, water saving projects, carbon sinks, increased tree-planting, changes to planning laws to give greater protection and conservation enrichment to gullies, areas of environmental significance and wildlife corridors. - Green Wedge compatible Activity Projects relevant to economic development and health & well-being, e.g. Hurstbridge trail - A project aimed at increasing support for migrants, refugees and overseas students and addressing racism • The financial projections beyond 2020 serve no purpose. This council has no control over these years and projections beyond 2021 are mostly flat. Recommends remove all projections beyond life of this council. 	<p>Council has frozen rates for 2017-18 and is conscious of people on fixed incomes being able to afford their rates.</p> <p>Submission noted.</p> <p>Submission noted.</p>
<p>11. Karen Coulston - U3A Nillumbik</p> <p>Requesting consideration be given for a permanent "home" in the current planning and building / redevelopments in the current draft budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because we run most of our classes during the day on week days, sharing rooms and facilities with a sporting club is logical. Multifunctional rooms in the Research Park pavilion and / or the Eltham North Reserve pavilion would suit our classroom needs and office requirements if office access and storage space can be secure. As stakeholders could we have a say in the planning of these community rooms? • A seniors community hub in central Eltham is also on our wish list. In the Eltham Activity Centre precincts 3 and 4 could we see inclusion of at least a community information centre, possibly including the U3A office and a drop in centre for coffee / chat and again multifunctional space for community groups' use? • It is proposed that the old Eltham CFA building be purchased by Council. It may be destined for demolition to make room for the Activity Centre precinct but could it be fixed up to accommodate U3A? Its central, street level location suits our immediate needs if the rooms can be made functional, safe and comfortable for we older citizens. 	<p>Council will consider where it can create opportunities for U3A to utilise existing Council assets and notes the requirement for a larger office space.</p>

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<p>12. Greg Johnson The 2017-18 draft budget pushed costs onto future years. A good example is road infrastructure: The last budget had it at \$6.5 million; this budget it's at \$2.2 million! This is a very political budget - designed to achieve a particular outcome i.e. zero rate rise. The cost of retaining Lot 1 Graysharps Road, Hurstbridge in council ownership is disguised in the reduction of the Landfill Rehab. Fund: Last council budget had it projected to be \$3,986K for 2017-18. This current budget has it at \$1,093K which is a huge drop. Does this comply with EPA requirements? Making a budget strategy reliant on the ongoing sale of public assets is neither sustainable nor responsible. What if property prices fall? Would the fall back plan be to abandon the accelerated debt reduction, or take on more debt? Rate freezes just panders to the anti-council rates prejudice which exists among some in the community. It is not good leadership and will convince people that rate rises are the result of poor financial management, which is incorrect. Eltham traders using the council owned and refurbished Circulatory Road traders' car park are being heavily subsidised by ratepayers contrary to council's financial principles.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>The costs associated with meeting EPA requirements is recognised in a provision for landfill rehabilitation in Council's balance sheet.</p> <p>Council is currently looking for greater equity arrangements to pay for parking at Circulatory Road.</p>
<p>13. Rex Nevin Supports plans for precinct 3 & 4, especially if the two sides of Main Rd can be linked overhead somehow.</p> <p>Expressed concern about 0% rate rise, highlighting loss of income and limiting ability to pay for capital works projects as primary impacts.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>Council has frozen rates for 2017-18 and is conscious of people on fixed incomes being able to afford their rates.</p>

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<p>14. Rob Thornton Budget Cash Position Statement 2017-18. I note total recurrent operating income is approx. \$83 million . I also note that Employee costs are \$32.5 million, that is 39% of the income!!! It is not clear exactly what this includes.</p> <p>I assume the cost of running the council offices are included in Other Expenses \$ 9.3 million. On first glance this looks unreasonable, however I need to see more detail before I can decide whether the budget should be supported or not.</p> <p>I do note the intention to remove debt which would seem to directionally the right thing to do.</p>	<p>Council has recently undertaken a benchmarking exercise, comparing employee costs as a percentage of rates and charges. Results showed Nillumbik had lower than average employee costs as a percentage of rates and charges, when compared to the other benchmarked councils. Employee costs include wages and salaries, superannuation, long service leave, fringe benefits tax and other oncosts.</p> <p>Other expenses includes (but is not limited to) contributions to the Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service, internal and external audit fees, councillor allowances, heavy fleet and IT operating leases, waste management costs, program and event delivery, bank fees, other IT and office costs.</p> <p>Support for debt reduction noted.</p>
<p>15. Eltham Community Action Group The term 'developer contribution' is used in relation to the increased amount of Cash & Investments. It would be educational to expand on exactly what is mean by this term as developers, generally in the wider community, is not a positive term and their contributions may be viewed with suspicion. Are the contributions still in the form of land for public use which was the original aim of developer contributions or land and money or just money. What proportion of the projected large increase in Cash and Investments in 2019-20 is from the sale of Council owned assets which have been funded historically by ratepayers and the proportion funded by developers.</p> <p>We note that no money has been allocated for compensatory or replacement tree planting.</p>	<p>Council budgets to receive developer contributions for items such as drainage and open space. These contributions only form a small component of the value of the cash and investments in the balance sheet. Where developer contributions are referred to in the context of cash & investments, this relates to monetary contributions.</p> <p>The proceeds from any sale of Council land is reflected in the increase in cash and investments. Proceeds are allocated to fund future major capital projects within the Shire.</p> <p>Council is committed to maintaining the treed character of the Green Wedge for future generations. Council has allocated significant funding in the 2017-18 budget for proactive tree management in high public use areas and on roadsides which includes tree replacement. Council's Environment Department will record all tree removals and develop a program to ensure that the number of trees replaced exceeds the number removed. Replacement trees will be planted in parks and streets guided by relevant masterplans and landscape plans. Council has an existing annual allocation of more than \$80,000 for tree replacement.</p>

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<p>16. Ian and Oriana Halliwell Support Council in their initiative to budget without increasing rates but express concerns how this will impact future rates rises as a consequence of the proposed 2017-2018 State Budget that will centralise all property valuations to a yearly basis and in affect result in Council loss of revenue.</p> <p>How will this impact Council Budget 2017-2018? Will this mean significant rate increases in future years to make up for the oversight?</p> <p>Opposed the proposed expenditure on Diamond Creek to Hurstbridge trail along the Creek.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>Council have budgeted to keep rate rises at or below the rate cap set by the minister on an annual basis in future financial years.</p> <p>Submission noted.</p>
<p>17. Nillumbik Horse Action Group Inc Support the provision of funding for the development of an Equine Industry & Activity Strategy, for recreation trails and for the provision of a recreation trail communication tool.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p>
<p>18. Rob & Janet Bassett-Smith Support fire safety measures and Council's advocacy of the North East Link.</p> <p>Interim measures to be considered Is \$80m appropriate? It is extremely low for highly rated properties and a large land area municipality. 40%, \$33m for 310 permanent staff; 4%, \$3m roads & bridges (not enough to reduce current gridlock); recreation/parks/sporting 12%, \$10m; buildings 7%, \$6m; grants slashed significantly this year but will increase next year. No rate increased this year but rate increases continue in the following year – why? Is this realistic?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need value for money through services, infrastructure and staff • To fully utilise and unlock the community's intelligence by effective communication and collaboration – this would give confidence providing hope, new opportunities and better utilisation of resources if there are realistic targets. Inclusion brings out the best in people whether staff, councillors, rate payers or residents • Collaboration within the community is absolutely essential as Desires have to be fair and equitable, affordable for more adaptable to the fast moving changing world and expectations • We need to implement projects immediately (rather than spend years making plans) that will allow the whole community to access and use these resources 	<p>Submission noted.</p>

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<p>18. Rob & Janet Bassett-Smith continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate micro management i.e. Council to lead by example and offer best practice codes • Focus on core areas and deliver value in key areas • Take advantage of innovation • Utilise the best practical technology and be able to adapt to further change • Council should be clear and transparent in particular to town planning matters • Put the brakes on heavy development until infrastructure is in place otherwise we will be permanently grid locked and unable to afford to rectify the situation. • Rural Green Wedge lifestyle/agricultural development need to be encouraged to enable the land to be effectively managed for the future • Council to maintain Farm Rate for properties that comply with the Valuation of Land Act definition • The SAR (Sustainable Agricultural Rebate) is costing the Council more than the rebate provided and is also discriminatory to farms of less than 30Ha. Therefore SAR should be removed from the budget and replaced by a fairer Farm Rate of 50% or thereabouts of the General Rate as in previous times (this can be fully explained if required). The result through rate incentive would be that farm lands would be better managed for the well being of the Shire's Green Wedge 	<p>Submission noted.</p>
<p>19. Wayne Lascelles</p> <p>Supports reduction of Council debt as soon as practicable.</p> <p>One area which has been neglected by previous Councils and ward councillors over the years is in the village of Panton Hill where the roadside area between the hall and General store has been allowed to drift into dilapidation where landscaping following the hall's construction was never completed and where rotten sleeper steps, railing and drainage pit have collapsed. We seek not just another quick patch up or a lazy strip of asphalt along the road edge but the finalisation of terraced landscaping using local indigenous shrubs and more permanent steps down from the General store to the roadway. During home football matches visitors cars park all over this area and attractive landscaped terraces would dissuade this practice. Hurstbridge provides an excellent example of how this form of terraced landscaping might be achieved if in a scaled down form. We commend the above to serious consideration in order that this ongoing neglect may be finally addressed. May I suggest that Councillors visit this area on foot to get a better understanding of what needs to be addressed here.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>For 2017-18, Council has funded a \$400,000 program of township streetscape upgrades including Diamond Creek, Eltham, Hurstbridge, Panton Hill, St Andrews and Yarrambat.</p>

Nilumbik Shire Council - Public submission on draft budget 2017 - 2018

Submitter and Key Points

Officer Response

20. Nilumbik PALs - Pro Active Landowners
The Strategic Resource Plan actions and debt reduction targets are supported.

Submission noted.

21. Colleen Hackett

Heading the four page colour information post-out is news of Council's Plan to forego a rate rise for one year, 2017-2018.

Thanks to the Labour State Government rates in Victoria are capped at 2%. Council's plan to forego the 2% is good news. However a closer look at details of the Budget reveals increases to fees and charges for child care, parking, hall and community spaces hire, market stall hire, Edendale schools program, meals on wheels, home care and many other services.

Though increases are small most people would access a number of these services making it possible that the accumulated costs would render the much heralded no rate rise of little or no real value to the average community member with children and elderly parents who need care.

Submission noted.

I also question the selling off of assets obviously intended to offset the record number of infrastructure projects and the lack of a rate rise. Selling the silver is never a solution; it is a one off with benefits to the temporary Council incumbents perhaps but offering few benefits to the community in the future.

Just how any sales will be effectively linked to tourism and employment remains to be seen, and..... good luck with asking the CFAs to buy the buildings they currently use! I suspect that selling off over \$26 million of community assets over three years will not be a popular move.

Submission noted.

22. Graeme Sweeney

- 1) Council should be careful with the assumption that it is a good thing not to increase rates.
- 2) Council should be careful with the assumption that it is a good thing to pay off the debt during this period of low interest rates. The \$14 million might be better spent on things that the community needs.

Submission noted.

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<p>23. Friends of Nillumbik Propose budget expenditures and projects be available and open for submissions in February rather than May/June.</p> <p>Highlight concerns regarding 0% rate rise relies on once off asset sales and that some of the budget data does not appear to support services will be maintained.</p> <p>Suggest user charges be further increased. Propose substantial increase in Eltham traders parking fees.</p> <p>Express concern over the funding of capital and infrastructure programs, including budgeted grant income and lack of detail of which assets are to be sold.</p> <p>Express concern over lack of environmental expenditure and erosion of service levels.</p> <p>Request a definition of "Monetary Unit".</p> <p>Suggests funding for improvements to Nillumbik U3A facilities.</p> <p>Requests information regard the cost of the decision to keep Lot 1 Graysharps Road, Hurstbridge in Council ownership.</p>	<p>Budget timelines and procedures are reviewed on an annual basis, suggestion noted.</p> <p>0% rate rise is funded through various means, including ongoing savings in operational expenditure. The budget has been prepared with no decline in service levels modelled.</p> <p>User charges are reviewed on an annual basis. Fees have increased in line with statutory requirements and the internal review process.</p> <p>Council is currently investigating options for its land sales program and at this point there are no specific properties identified for sale.</p> <p>Council's Environment team has an operating budget of more than \$2.2 million for 2017-18 which funds protection and enhancement of Council's native vegetation in Council's environmental reserves and on private land. Additional funding of \$300,000 has been allocated in 2017-18 for roadside vegetation management which will include removal of weeds. Council's existing budget allocations provide support for volunteer groups including Landcare and Friends groups. Council works collaboratively with other land management agencies to achieve landscape scale protection and enhancement of the natural environment.</p> <p>In addition these budgets support significant projects under Council's environmental strategies and plans including responses to climate change, conservation and protection of biodiversity. Other grant funding for protection and enhancement of the natural environment to the value of approximately \$150,000 is expected in 2017-18.</p> <p>A monetary unit is a penalty or fee defined under the Monetary Units Act 2004.</p> <p>Suggestion noted.</p> <p>Future use options and costs are currently being assessed.</p>

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<p>24. Jill Chan The proposal to assess and sell off vacant land is of concern.</p> <p>The proposed sale of the former shire office site needs to have community involvement and consultation.</p> <p>Concerned that the proactive management of vegetation in public areas could be interpreted as clearing or heavily pruning trees and other vegetation in order to avoid the remote chance of a limb dropping or some other event.</p> <p>Highlights need for passive areas of recreation in our parks and reserves and raises concerns that The Lower Eltham Park should not become transformed into the Diamond Valley Railway park.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p>
<p>25. Rex Nevin for Nillumbik Greens Expresses concern regarding the 0% rate rise.</p> <p>Recommends all financial projections beyond the life of this Council be removed.</p> <p>Promotes the following projects: Only 2% of project budget could be considered a green initiative (solar panels). Are there no projects for energy saving / water saving / emissions reduction / carbon sinking?</p> <p>Recycling bins in shopping precincts – helps reduce litter AND maintain Nillumbik’s premier spot in responsible waste management.</p> <p>No spending allocated for Hurstbridge trail – not even for fund-raising campaign from Canberra! Golf course upgrades – does operating a golf course not generate its own income? Eltham woodworkers – why does council pay for the facilities of this group and not (say) U3A? A replacement of the measures for Green Wedge protection intended by C101 needs planning. Although not infrastructure, this should be a significant budget item. Why not? Middle-eastern refugees in Eltham – are there no projects for (e.g.) enhancing integration of this group?</p>	<p>Council has frozen rates for 2017-18 and is conscious of people on fixed incomes being able to afford their rates.</p> <p>Submission noted.</p> <p>Council’s Resource Conservation Fund is an annual allocation of \$100,000 for works to reduce energy and water use in Council buildings.</p> <p>Council has implemented Public Place Recycling (PPR) in Eltham and Diamond Creek and will continue to implement PPR with streetscape upgrades.</p> <p>Submission noted.</p>

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25. **Rex Nevin for Nillumbik Greens** continued
Capital works will be part- funded by \$7.7M in "Council Reserves". Is this not the same as a surplus?
Recommendation – review key projects with an eye to fairness across the community, and include energy-saving.

Trader Parking in Eltham – still an unmerited gift of several million to traders - why?
Recommendation - Mayest those who can pay, do so

Council maintains a number of financial reserve funds for specific future expenditure including landfill rehabilitation, development contributions, major projects and public open space.

Council is currently looking for greater equity arrangements to pay for parking in Eltham.