

Financial situation timeline: 2020-2022

Timeline

- 1 June 2022 – Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman MP announced the local government election for Central Coast Council will be held on 14 September 2024. Until this time, the Administrator acts as the Council.
- 10 May 2022 – IPART approved maintaining the one-off, temporary 15 percent Special Variation rate increase for a further seven years to June 2031.
- 17 March 2022 - Minister for Local Government, the Hon Wendy Tuckerman MP, tabled the report into the Public Inquiry of Central Coast Council. Commissioner Roslyn McCulloch made eight recommendations, including that the Councillor roles be declared vacant and that an Administrator be appointed to serve until the Central Coast Council election, the date to be determined in consultation with the NSW Electoral Commission.
- 3 February 2022 – Council resolved to apply to IPART to maintain rates at their current levels for additional seven years, ten years in total to 2031. Council adopted the revised Community Strategic Plan; Delivery Program 2022-2025 (including Operational Plan 2022-23); Resourcing Strategy which includes the Long-Term Financial Plan, Workforce Management Strategy and Revised Asset Management Strategy; and Fees and Charges 2022-23.
- September 2021 to January 2022 – Council notified IPART of its intention to make a submission in 2022 to maintain the current rates beyond the three years determined by IPART on 17 May 2021. Community consultation was undertaken.
- 27 September to 19 October 2021- Public hearings conducted by Commissioner Roslyn McCulloch for the Public Inquiry into Central Coast Council.
- 17 May 2021 – Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) approved a 15 percent Special Variation (SV) rates increase for the Central Coast for three years.
- 13 May 2021 – Rik Hart commenced as Interim Administrator of Central Coast Council following end of the term of Mr Dick Persson AM.
- 11 May 2021 – Council resolved to hold a Constitutional Referendum on 4 September 2021 to ask the community if they are in favour of reducing the number of Central Coast Councillors from 15 to nine, resulting in a reduction of Wards from five to three.
- 26 April 2021 – The NSW Government announced a Public Inquiry into Central Coast Council's financial situation.
- 15 April 2021 – Administrator's Final Report outlined a number of recommendations to the Minister for Local Government including to take whatever action necessary to prevent the return of the currently suspended Councillors, and to delay the September 2021 election to

allow for a formal inquiry to determine what is needed to achieve the successful merger of the two previous Councils.

- 12 April 2021 – Mr David Farmer commenced as CEO and Mr Rik Hart (Acting CEO) and Mr Malcolm Ryan (interim Chief Operating Officer) stepped down.
- 9 March 2021 – Council received the 'Clayton Utz Legal and Financial Forensic Review' and implemented monthly finance reports.
- 3 March 2021 – Mr David Farmer was appointed as the new CEO for Central Coast Council.
- 8 February 2021 – Council resolved to apply to IPART for a 15 percent one-off permanent special rate increase. Council adopted the revised Long-Term Financial Plan (General Fund) as well as the Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy for purpose of public exhibition.
- 3 February 2021 – Council resolved to consult with the community and hold a Constitutional Referendum for the reduction of Councillors (from 15 to 9) in conjunction with the then proposed September 2021 Local Government Elections.
- 3 February 2021 – Administrator's 3 Month Progress Report updates about the Business Recovery plan.
- 8 January 2021 to 1 February 2021 – Community consultation on the rate variation options undertaken.
- 14 December 2020 – Council endorsed community consultation for an additional rate variation option for a one-off Special Variation of 13 percent in 2021-22 to remain permanently in the rate base. This additional option responded to further work undertaken in forecasting the reduction in service levels to achieve sustainable long-term financial plans and repay restricted reserves.
- 2 December 2020 – Administrator's 30 Day Interim Report sets out preliminary findings and conclusions about Council's financial situation. It states that Council has failed to understand or practise the basics of sound financial management and that the investigation found no evidence of theft or corruption. However there had been unlawful use of restricted funds.
- 30 November 2020 – It was determined that the former CEO Mr Gary Murphy did not meet required standards of his role particularly regarding the core requirement of sound financial management and his contract was terminated.
- 26 November 2020 – Council endorsed the making of an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a one-off Special Variation of eight percent in 2021-22 to remain permanently in the rate base for seven years. Council further resolved to undertake community consultation on the application.

- October 30 2020 - Minister for Local Government, Shelley Hancock MP suspended the Council and appointed Administrator, Mr Dick Persson AM. Mr Persson is supported by appointment of Mr Rik Hart as Acting CEO to oversee Council's operational recovery. The Council suspension was extended until 29 April 2021.
- 26 October 2020 – Council engaged Clayton Utz and Clayton Utz engaged KPMG to undertake a targeted forensic review of a sample fund to gain understanding of Council's financial accounting practices and adherence to the Office of Local Government Guidelines.
- 16 October 2020 – Natalia Cowley appointed as Chief Financial Officer and the temporary appointment of Malcolm Ryan as Chief Operating Officer on 30 November 2020 to assist with the implementation of structural change in Council.
- 6 October 2020 – Council announced it was in a 'serious financial situation' and faced an 'immediate and serious liquidity' issue. The Office of Local Government was advised. An immediate review of Council's budget and 100-Day Business Recovery Plan were implemented.

Related resources

- [Administrator's 30 Day Interim Report – 2 December 2020](#)
- [Administrator's 3 Month Progress Report – 3 February 2021](#)
- [Administrator's Final Report – 15 April 2021](#)
- [Central Coast Council Public Inquiry Report – 10 February 2022](#)