

HEAD OF POWER

- *Local Government Regulation 2012*, section 169(2)(c) and section 193

INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Council complies with its obligations of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* to outline the principles applied by Council in generating its own source revenue and which the revenue statement relies upon.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, Councillors and Councillor Advisor.

DEFINITIONS

Employee means a local government employee as defined in the *Local Government Act 2009*.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Principles used for the making and levying of Rates and Charges

- a) Equity – ensuring the fair and consistent application of lawful rating and charging principles without bias, taking account of all relevant considerations;
- b) Transparency and clarity– openness in the processes involved in the making of rates and charges, and providing meaningful information on rate notices to enable ratepayers to clearly understand their responsibilities;
- c) Simplicity – a rating regime that is simple to understand and cost effective to administer;
- d) Consistency – by scheduling the issue of rates notices on a regular basis;
- e) Fiscal responsibility – levying an amount sufficient to allow Council to meet its budgetary responsibilities;
- f) Flexibility – responding where possible to unforeseen changes in the local economy and providing a wide range of payment options;
- g) Sustainability – revenue decisions supporting the financial strategies for the delivery of infrastructure and services identified in Council's long-term planning; and
- h) Predictability – consulting with affected ratepayers where possible on significant changes to the charging structure

2. Principles used for granting Concessions for Rates and Charges and the purpose for the Concessions

- a) Equity – the same treatment for ratepayers with similar circumstances;
- b) Transparency and clarity – publishing concessions granted in corporate documents;
- c) Simplicity – a framework that is simple to understand and cost effective to administer;
- d) Consistency – where possible providing a reasonably consistent concession to ratepayers each year;
- e) Fiscal responsibility – ensuring the value of concessions does not provide an unnecessary burden on other ratepayers;
- f) Flexibility – to allow Council to respond to local economic issues;

Printed copies are considered uncontrolled. Before using a printed copy, verify that it is the current version.

- g) Sustainability – revenue decisions supporting the financial strategies for the delivery of infrastructure and services identified in Council’s long-term planning; and
- h) Predictability – consulting with affected ratepayers where possible on significant changes to granting concessions.

Consideration may be given by Council to granting a class concession in the event all or part of the Bundaberg Regional Council area is declared a natural disaster area by the State Government or impacted by a Pandemic called by the Australian Government.

2.1 Council will apply concessions for the following groups, for the purposes outlined:

- a) Concession for rates and charges for pensioners – Council acknowledges that certain classes of pensioners have a reduced capacity to pay on demand and to the full quantum; and
- b) Concessions for rates and charges for community, sporting and welfare groups – Council acknowledges the contribution of non-profit community, sporting and welfare groups based on the level of their community assistance and economic value to the region and community.

3. Principles used for the recovery of overdue Rates and Charges

- a) Equity – having regard to providing the same treatment for ratepayers with similar circumstances;
- b) Transparency and clarity – making the obligations clear to ratepayers and the processes used by Council to assist ratepayers to meet these obligations;
- c) Simplicity – making the processes used to recover outstanding rates and charges clear and simple to administer and cost effective;
- d) Consistency – by scheduling the recovery of overdue rates and charges within a consistent timeframe;
- e) Fiscal responsibility – having regard to ratepayers individual circumstances and ability to pay;
- f) Flexibility – by responding where necessary to changes in the local economy;
- g) Sustainability – ensuring overdue rates and charges remain at a sustainable level that doesn’t impact service and asset delivery; and
- h) Predictability – consulting with affected ratepayers where possible on significant changes to the recovery of overdue rates.

4. Principles used in Cost-recovery methods

- a) Equity – ensuring the fair and consistent application of lawful cost-recovery methods without bias, taking account of all relevant considerations;
- b) Transparency and clarity – in the legislative requirement for the charge and the method of calculating the amounts payable by the recipient of the service;
- c) Simplicity – to make the levying of cost-recovery fees simple, efficient, and inexpensive to administer;
- d) Fiscal responsibility – through full cost recovery, endeavouring to recover the full cost of the service for which the fee is remitted to minimise the effect on ratepayers;

- e) Consistency – in the calculation methods for the cost-recovery charges;
- f) Flexibility – to charge less than the cost of the function where appropriate;
- g) Sustainability – revenue decisions supporting the financial strategies for the delivery of infrastructure and services identified in Council’s long-term planning; and
- h) Predictability – consulting with affected ratepayers where possible on significant changes to cost-recovery fees.

5. The extent to which physical and social infrastructure costs for a new development are to be funded by charges for the development

In setting infrastructure charges, Council seeks to achieve a balance between affordability and sustainability, with infrastructure charges below the State Government cap. By levying infrastructure charges for new development, Council intends to fund the physical and social costs of providing trunk infrastructure to service development within the Bundaberg Region.

Council’s infrastructure charges aim to provide a reasonable and equitable distribution of costs between Council and developers of land, managing the impact of infrastructure costs of new development on existing ratepayers. To encourage development and longer-term job generating businesses, Council may discount certain types of infrastructure charges payable for new development applications in accordance with the terms of the relevant Policy at that time.

Council’s infrastructure charging framework has been established in accordance with the legislative requirements of the *Planning Act 2016*.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Charges Resolution (No.1) 2021
- Fees and Charges Register
- Hardship Policy
- Revenue Statement
- Water Leak Relief Policy
- Water Charge Concession (Home Haemodialysis) Policy

DOCUMENTS CONTROLS

Council will review this policy annually or in response to changes to law or best practice.

POLICY OWNER

Chief Financial Officer.