

## Strategic Rating Policy

Strategic Reference	Objective 1; A caring, healthy and resilient community. Strategy 1.7; Achieve or implement the statutory and core responsibilities of Council.
File reference	AR18/3243
Responsibility	Community & Corporate Department
Revision Number	2
Effective date	December 2011
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Minutes reference	088/18, 081/15, 392/11
Next review date	Every Three Years, May 2021
Applicable Legislation	Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies	Annual Rating Policy Rate Rebate Policy
Related Documents	

### 1. Policy objective

This document sets out the strategic policy of the Coorong District Council for the determination of setting and collection of rates annually.

### 2. Scope

The policy covers:

- method used to value land
- adoption of valuations
- business impact statement
- Council's revenue raising powers
- differential general rates
- separate rates and service charges
- payment of rates
- late payment of rates
- remission and postponement of rates
- rebate of rates
- non-payment of rates

## ***Strategic Rating Policy***

### **3. Strategic focus**

Rates are a system of taxation on the community for local government to deliver goods and services needed by the community. In setting of its annual rating policy, Council considers the following:

- Coorong District Council's strategic management plans
- The economic climate, inflation and interest rate trends
- Specific issues faced by Council:
  - the need to update and maintain its infrastructure and assets to enable efficient service
  - the intergenerational impact of annual rating decisions
  - the maintenance and improvement of community assets
  - the impact of rates on the community
  - the principle that the rate in the dollar should be the same for all properties except where there is a differential level of services available to ratepayers
  - levying fees and charges for goods and services on a user pays basis where that option is appropriate

### **4. Valuation of land for rating purposes**

Council may adopt one of the following valuation methodologies for properties in its area:

- *Capital Value* – the value of the land and all of the improvements on the land.
- *Site Value* – the value of the land and any improvements which permanently affect the amenity or use of the land excluding buildings
- *Annual Value* – a valuation based on the rental value of the property

Council presently uses capital value as the basis for valuing land within the Council area.

### **5. Adoption of valuations**

Council adopts the valuations of the Valuer-General annually.

### **6. Business impact statement**

Council considers the following impact of rates on businesses in the Council area in annual rate setting of rates:

- the equity of the distribution of the rate burden
- Council's policy on encouraging local economic development
- current economic conditions
- changes in the valuation for the year based on the general valuation assessment

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### **7. Council's revenue raising powers**

All land within a Council area, except for land specifically exempt, is rateable. The Local Government Act provides for a Council to raise revenue through a general rate, which applies to all rateable properties, or differential general rates, which apply to different classes of properties. Council can raise separate rates, for specific areas of the Council or service rates or charges for specific services.

### **8. Differential General Rates**

Council undertook a review of its Strategic Rating Policy during 2010/11.

### **9. Fixed charge**

Council has the power to impose a fixed charge on each property, set on an annual basis during the budget cycle.

### **10. Separate rates and service charges**

#### **10.1 Community wastewater management schemes (CWMS)**

Where Council provides a septic tank effluent disposal system to its township properties it sets an annual fee to apply to all property owners to recover the capital and operating costs of each scheme.

#### **10.2 Water supply**

Council provides water supply systems to residential and commercial properties in small townships. A service charge is made to properties receiving this service.

#### **10.3 Waste Management Charge**

Where Council provides waste management services to designated areas within the Council area, an annual charge is to apply to all property owners that receive the service.

### **11. Single farm enterprise**

Section 152(2)(d) of the Local Government Act 1999 provides that where a Council declares a general rate which is based in whole or in part, on a fixed charge: *"If two or more pieces of rateable land within the area of the Council constitute a single farm enterprise only one fixed charge may be imposed against the whole of the land"*.

### **12. Payment of rates**

Council determines the process for payment of rates on an annual basis during the budget process

Rates may be paid in a variety of ways determined annually by the Council.

#### **12.1 Late payment of rates**

The Local Government Act provides that Councils can impose a prescribed penalty on any payment for rates that is received late.

#### **12.2 Remission and postponement of rates**

Where the payment of rates will cause a ratepayer demonstrable hardship, Council may make extended payment provision or defer the payment of rates on application.

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### **12.3 Rebate of rates**

The Local Government Act requires Councils to rebate the rates payable on some land. Specific provisions are made for land used for health services, community services, religious purposes, public cemeteries, the Royal Zoological Society and educational institutions. Discretionary rebates may be applied by Council under Section 166 of the Act and are determined annually.

Council will not rebate rates that have been subject to State or Commonwealth rebates/payments where those authorities have modified the policy or criteria for that entitlement.

### **13. Non-payment of rates**

The Local Government Act provides that a Council may sell any property where the rates have been in arrears for three years or more. Except in extraordinary circumstances, Council will enforce the sale of land for arrears of rates.

### **14. Further information**

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council offices listed below during ordinary business hours and available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's website: [www.coorong.sa.gov.au](http://www.coorong.sa.gov.au).

#### **Coorong Civic Centre**

95-101 Railway Terrace  
Tailem Bend  
Phone: 1300 785 277  
Fax: 8572 3822

#### **Meningie Information Hub**

49 Princes Highway  
Meningie

#### **Tintinara Customer Service Centre**

37 Becker Terrace  
Tintinara

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request. Email [council@coorong.sa.gov.au](mailto:council@coorong.sa.gov.au).

Any grievances in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of Council.