



Rate Relief Policy

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| Policy Identification: | |
| Policy type: | Finance - rates |
| Summary: | To ensure that Council has a policy in place to assist its ratepayers in meeting financial obligations, by providing alternative options for rate debts where hardship is shown to exist. |
| Record number: | 7.63.1 |
| Date of adoption or approval: | 14 July 2006 |
| Last review date: | 20 July 2018 |
| Next review date: | July 2019 Annual review |
| Authorised by: | Council |
| Responsible department: | Corporate and Community Services |
| Responsible officer: | Chief Financial Officer |
| Review officer: | |
| Consultation required: | |
| Relevant references: | |
| Delegations: | |
| Legislation: | |
| Related policies: | Financial Hardship Policy |
| Related procedures: | |

1. Purpose

To ensure that Council has a policy in place to assist its ratepayers in meeting financial obligations, by providing alternative options for rate debts where hardship is shown to exist.

2. Policy Statement

Council is aware that ratepayers may suffer from financial hardship and that this can be caused by, or exacerbated by the imposition of Council's rates and charges. In accordance with the Local Government Act 1999, Council has the power to negotiate alternative payment arrangements, defer payments or to waive all or part of a debt.

Council will assess the degree of financial hardship and where appropriate provide a payment arrangement schedule or defer payments for an agreed period of time in accordance with The Local Government Act 1999, s182. In these instances the debt against the property will continue to accrue fines and interest.

In cases of severe hardship, a confidential report will be forwarded to Council recommending the waiving of the debt in part or full, or the waiving of fines and interest. In such cases the ratepayer will be requested to provide a letter of request outlining the level of hardship imposed by the debt.

3. Principles

This policy has been developed to meet Council's core values. Our core values are the principles, attributes and qualities we hold as important that we will display in the way we go about our business.

Core Values

We are
GENUINE

Adhering to moral and ethical principles, being honest, accountable, trustworthy and authentic.

We will
LISTEN

Communicating as well as engaging the community in an open, honest and constructive manner at all times.

We are
CARING

Showing respect, compassion and empathy and being supportive of each other and our community.

We will be
INNOVATIVE

Seeking out and making use of new ideas and opportunities, showing initiative and being progressive, proactive and creative.

We are
UNITED

Working as a team in an inclusive, co-ordinated and collaborative manner to achieve our common goals.

We will aim for
EXCELLENCE

Consistently delivering quality service outcomes and endeavouring to be a high performance organisation.



3. Conditions

- i) the applicant is required to provide details of assets and evidence by way of statements from the respective financial institution/s indicating financial position when applying for deferment of rates or waiving of rates or fines and interest
- ii) the applicant is required to provide details of current income and expenditure when applying for deferment of rates or waiving of rates or fines and interest
- iii) where the ratepayer ceases to own the property within the financial year of application, the determination in relation to this policy will be revoked and rates must be paid in full at time of settlement.

4. Council will consider:

- i) all applications on a case by case basis
- ii) the health of the ratepayer and the ratepayer's family
- iii) the financial status of the ratepayer
- iv) whether financial assistance could be sought from any other agencies
- v) the implication to the Council if applying a deferral or waiving of rates.

Council encourages ratepayers who wish to apply for hardship relief to initiate contact with Council's Rate Administrator on 08 8541 0700.

5. Availability of policy

This Policy will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Loxton or Waikerie during ordinary business hours at no charge.

Copies of this Policy will also be available from Council's website www.loxtonwaikerie.sa.gov.au or postal copies may be obtained from the Council Office free of charge.

6. Document history and version control

| Date | Version | Authorisation: Council/ Committee/ Senior Management Team | Amendment history |
|------------|---------|---|---|
| 14/07/2006 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 14 July 2006 | First version |
| 07/08/2007 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 7 August 2007 | No changes noted |
| 18/07/2008 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 18 July 2008 | No changes noted |
| 17/07/2009 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 17 July 2009 | No changes noted |
| 16/07/2010 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 16 July 2010 | No changes noted |
| 22/07/2012 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 22 July 2012 | No changes noted |
| 01/08/2013 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 1 August 2013 | No changes noted |
| 08/08/2014 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 8 August 2014 | No changes noted |
| 03/07/2015 | 1.0 | Council at the meeting of 3 August 2015 | No changes noted |
| 08/08/2016 | 1.1 | Council at the special meeting of 8 August 2016 | Minor amendment to note the adopted policy template and the addition of document history and version control. |
| 03/08/2017 | 1.1 | Council at the special meeting of 3 August 2017 | No changes noted |
| 20/07/2018 | 1.2 | Council at the meeting of 20 July 2018 | Addition of council's value statement and notation that hard copies of policy are provided free of charge. |
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