



Gladstone Regional Council

Council Policy

Title	REVENUE
Policy Number	P-2020-04
Business Unit/s	FINANCE GOVERNANCE AND RISK
Date of Adoption	19 MAY 2020
Resolution Number	G/20/4194
Review Date	19 MAY 2021
Date Repealed	

1.0 PURPOSE:

Under section 169(2)(c) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Gladstone Regional Council's (Council) budget must include a Revenue Policy. Section 193 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* sets out what the Revenue Policy must state and section 193(3) requires that "a local government must review its revenue policy annually and in sufficient time to allow an annual budget that is consistent with the revenue policy to be adopted for the next financial year".

This Revenue Policy seeks to meet the above requirements.

2.0 SCOPE:

In accordance with section 193(1) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, the scope of this policy is to set out the principles to be used by Council in the framing of its rates and charges for the 2020/2021 year in the following areas:

- levying of rates and charges; and
- granting of concessions for rates and charges; and
- purpose for granting concessions for rates and charges; and
- recovery of overdue rates and charges; and
- setting of cost recovery methods; and
- the extent to which physical and social infrastructure costs for a new development are to be funded by charges for the development.

This Revenue Policy may also (under section 193(2)) state guidelines that may be used for preparing the local government's revenue statement. No such guidelines have been included in this policy.

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

- *Local Government Act 2009*;
- *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Revenue Statement;
- Debt Administration Corporate Standard.

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation of this policy, definitions that apply are available in the dictionary of the:

- *Local Government Act 2009*; and
- *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

6.1 Principles used for the levying of rates and charges

Council will be guided by State and Federal government legislative requirements and will apply in general the principles of "user pays" in the making of rates and charges in a regional context to:

- treat all ratepayers in an equitable manner; and to
- minimise the impact of rating on the efficiency of the regional economy.

Council will give due consideration to the requirement to balance its service levels, the needs and expectations of the community, and the setting of appropriate rates and charges to adequately resource its roles and responsibilities. In discharging this responsibility, Council will have regard to the principles of:

- transparency in the making of rates and charges;
- sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure;
- delivery of effective services;
- establishment of rating categories to recognise the different demands placed on Council resources;
- having in place a rating regime that is simple and inexpensive to administer; and
- equity by considering the varying degrees of potential to produce income for differing land uses.

Council will seek to achieve financial sustainability and will when levying rates and charges, minimise the impact of rates and charges upon the community and distribute the rate burden equitably across the community.

With respect to general rates, it is accepted that land valuations are an appropriate basis in achieving the equitable imposition of general rates across the community, with different rating categories established based primarily on land use and development potential.

When determining rates and charges, Council will:

- have regard to its long term financial plan and relevant drivers and prices paths;
- have regard to local economic conditions and where possible and appropriate, phase in increases to avoid significant price escalation in any one year;
- utilise various smoothing mechanisms available to Council under the *Local Government Act 2009* to mitigate significant fluctuations in property valuations;
- utilise discounts to encourage the prompt payment of rates;
- make the levying system simple and inexpensive to administer; and

- equity through flexible payment arrangements for ratepayers with a lower capability to pay.

6.2 Principles used for the recovery of overdue rates and charges

Council will exercise its rate recovery powers in order to reduce the overall rate burden on ratepayers. Council will be guided by the principles of:

- transparency by making clear the obligations of ratepayers and the processes used by Council in assisting them to meet their financial obligations;
- making the processes used to recover outstanding rates and charges clear, simple to administer, and cost effective;
- determining appropriate arrangements for different sectors of the community, considering the ratepayer's capability to meet those arrangements;
- equity by having regard to providing the same treatment for ratepayers with similar circumstances;
- flexibility by responding where necessary to changes in the local economy; and
- ratepayers are expected to pay all rates and charges by the due date and Council will consider legal action if rates remain outstanding.

6.3 Principles used for the granting of concessions for rates and charges

In considering the application of concessions Council will be guided by the principles of:

- encouraging pensioners to be independent and live in their own home where possible which Council believes has a "quality of life" benefit;
- acknowledging the role of community and sporting organisations by providing financial assistance to those non-profit organisations that would otherwise have difficulty in paying their general rates without such concession;
- applying the same treatment for ratepayers with similar circumstances; and
- transparency by making clear the requirements necessary to receive such concessions.

6.4 Principles used in determining the purpose for granting concessions for rates and charges

Principles set under Part 10 of Chapter 4 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* will be used by Council in determining the purpose for granting concessions for rates and charges.

6.5 Principles used in the setting of cost-recovery methods

Council considers that in almost all instances it is appropriate, and in the community interest, to apply full cost recovery to its water, sewerage, cleansing, and waste management utility charges. In accordance with the long term financial forecast the methods used may include obtaining a return on capital for assets used in the delivery of these services as appropriate.

A return on capital will only be calculated and charged where permissible under the *Local Government Act 2009* or *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

By imposing charges that accurately reflect the full cost of the provisions of services Council will promote efficiency in both provision and use of the services.

Full cost-recovery methods will also be set for other services and activities for which Council believes it is appropriate.

From time to time, Council may choose to subsidise a fee or a charge when Council believes that it is in the community interest to do so.

6.6 Principles used for determining the extent to which physical and social infrastructure costs for a new development are to be funded by charges for the development

Council will fund the physical and social costs of any new development by levying charges upon that development so that the burden on existing ratepayers is minimised, noting that this may be subject to legislative constraint per the provisions of the *Planning Act 2016*.

Council may choose to subsidise from other sources (e.g. general rate revenue) the charges payable for the development when Council believes that it is in the community interest to do so having regard for the capability to pay within the local community, and recognising that there may be broader economic issues, at times, that may require the flexibility in the determination of infrastructure charges by Council.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS:

Nil.

8.0 REVIEW MECHANISM:

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related legislation or governing documents are amended or replaced; or
2. Other circumstances as determined by resolution of Council or the CEO; or
3. Annually in preparation of budget adoption.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS			
Document History	Date	Council Resolution No.	Notes (including the prior Policy No, precise of change/s, etc)
Originally Approved	03 June 2008	08/241	
Amendment 1	16 June 2009	09/334	
Amendment 2	15 June 2010	10/194	
Amendment 3	21 June 2011	G/11/588	
Amendment 4	03 July 2012	G/12/1114	
Amendment 5	04 June 2013	G/13/1568	
Amendment 6	20 May 2014	G/14/2010	
Amendment 7	5 May 2015	G/15/2410	
Amendment 8	17 May 2016	G/16/2811	
Amendment 9	06 June 2017	G/17/3065	
Amendment 10	19 June 2018	G/18/3436	Changes to financial year and Planning legislation update
Amendment 11	18 June 2019	G/19/3815	Prior Policy P-2018-19
Amendment 12	19 May 2020	G/20/4194	Formerly P-2019-12.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER