

# Rating Policy

Policy Author	General Manager Corporate Services
Date of next review	June 2026

## 1. Statement of Intent

In South Australia, council rates are a form of property tax levied by Local Government as the primary source of funding for the many mandatory and discretionary services provided by councils. Rates are administered by each council in line with the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act). This document sets out the Council's policy for setting and collecting rates from its community.

Council rates are not a fee for service but a system of taxation for Local Government purposes.

All land within the Council's area is rateable except land that is subject to an exemption under the Act.

Council considers a general rate, which consists of two components – one based on the value of the land and the other a fixed charge – to be the fairest and most equitable method of imposing rates. A fixed charge is a means of ensuring all ratepayers contribute equally to Council services and the development and maintenance of community infrastructure.

Council may impose differential general rates that vary based on land use. It assesses rates against each piece or section of land subject to separate occupation, except for land with a commercial or industrial land use where rates are assessed against each piece or section of such land subject to separate ownership.

Council's aim is to have a competitive rating environment for commercial properties. Its strategy is to gradually reduce the rate in the dollar for commercial properties in a staged approach, that balances the demands from businesses for rate relief with the needs from residential rate payers to continue to provide a sustainable level of services.

Council's rates are based on the capital values of land in its area as assessed by the Valuer General. An owner of land may, in accordance with the *Valuation of Land Act 1971*, object to a valuation made by the Valuer-General of their land.

Council considers that this method of valuing land provides the fairest method of distributing the rate burden across all ratepayers on the following basis:

- Rates constitute a system of taxation, and the equity principle of taxation requires that ratepayers of similar wealth pay similar taxes, and ratepayers of greater wealth pay more tax than ratepayers of lesser wealth.
- Property value is considered a relatively good indicator of wealth, and the capital value, which closely approximates the market value of a property, provides the best indicator of overall property value.

Council is required to collect a separate rate, the Regional Landscape Levy, to reimburse the Council for the funding contribution required by the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* for the Green Adelaide Board. The total value of this contribution is fully recoverable. This separate rate is effectively a state tax and Council does not retain the revenue collected by way of the separate rate.

Council may apply rate remissions, postponements, and rebates in accordance with the Act and the Rate Rebate Policy. In addition, if a ratepayer is experiencing hardship with paying their rates, they may make an application for rate relief by way of a remission or postponement in accordance with the Act and Council's Hardship Policy. Fines and interest apply to overdue rates and if an amount payable by way of rates is in arrears for three years or more, Council may sell the land for non-payment of rates.

### Disclaimer

A rate cannot be challenged on the basis of non-compliance with this Policy and must be paid in accordance with the required payment provisions.

Where a ratepayer believes that Council has failed to properly apply this Policy, they should raise the matter with Council.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all ratepayers within the Council's area.

## 3. Legislation and References

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rating Procedure.

Related documents include:

- *Landscapes SA Act 2019*
- *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations*
- *Local Government (General) Regulations 2013* – Regulation 14
- *Local Government Act 1999* – Sections 148, 151 and 152
- *Valuation of Land Act 1971*
- City of Playford Annual Business Plan and Budget
- City of Playford Global Glossary.
- City of Playford Long Term Financial Plan
- City of Playford Strategic Plan
- Debt Recovery Procedure
- Hardship Policy and Procedure
- Rate Rebate Policy and Procedure

This Policy should not be considered as the only document that may relate to rating matters; other tiers of government, agencies or organisations may have legislation or policies that also apply.

## 4. Application

CEO	To facilitate the endorsement of the Rating Policy as part of the Annual Business Plan (ABP) and Long Term Financial Planning (LTFP) process.
General Manager Corporate Services	To ensure an effective rating system.

Senior Manager Financial Services	To facilitate and deliver an effective rating system as part of ABP and LTFP.
Manager Rates	To oversee the consistent application of the Rating Policy.
Rates Officers	To apply consistent delivery of the Rating Policy to ratepayers.

## 5. Relevance to Risk Appetite Statement

### Regulatory Compliance

The City of Playford has **ZERO TOLERANCE** for non-compliance with applicable legislation. The Rating Policy and Procedure are updated annually to ensure compliance is maintained for each financial year, as part of the ABP and LTFP process.

### Service Delivery

The City of Playford has a **MODERATE** appetite for service delivery requirements. Maintaining the Rating Policy and Procedure ensures service delivery within required timeframes.

## 6. Feedback

Your feedback on this Policy is invited and can be directed to the Manager Governance via email to [governance@playford.sa.gov.au](mailto:governance@playford.sa.gov.au) or by calling the Customer Contact Team on 8256 0333.

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### Administration use only

ECM document set no.	3994059
Version no.	7
Procedure link	Rating Procedure
Policy author	General Manager Corporate Services
Endorsed by	Council
Resolution no.	6302
Legal requirement	Section 123(2)(d) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>
Review schedule	Annually
Date of current version	June 2025
Date of next review	June 2026

## Version history

Version no.	Approval date	Approval by	Change
1	02 July 2019	Council	Annual review
2	30 June 2020	Council	Annual review
3	22 June 2021	Council	Annual review
4	28 June 2022	Council	Annual review
5	27 June 2023	Council	Name change of Regional Landscape Levy
6	25 June 2024	Council	Annual review, author position title change
7	24 June 2025	Council	Annual review

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