

Revenue Policy

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| Policy type | Council |
| Function | Corporate Services |
| Policy Owner | Corporate and Community Services |
| Effective date | 27 June 2019 |

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles used by Council in 2025/2026 financial year for:

- The setting and levying of rates and charges;
- exercising its powers to grant rebates and concessions (including the purpose for the concessions);
- Infrastructure charges for a new development;
- recovery of unpaid amounts of rates and charges; and
- the establishment of cost-recovery methods (fees).

2. Scope

A Revenue Policy forms part of Council's budget each year. The Local Government Regulation 2012 identifies the matters that a local government must include in its Revenue Policy (this 'Policy'). This policy applies to the revenue raised by rates and charges for the Cassowary Coast Regional Council.

3. Statement

In preparing the Revenue Policy for the 2025/2026 financial year, Council considered the Guideline on Equity and Fairness in Rating for Queensland Local Governments, issued by the Department of Local Government.

This guideline is intended to promote best practice and sets out the principles to assist local government implement fair and equitable rating systems while ensuring flexibility for raising sufficient own source revenue. The principles are:


- Equity for like properties
- User pays
- Meaningful contribution
- Predictability
- Fairness

4. Procedure

4.1 The Levying of Rates and Charges

Council will apply the following principles in setting rates and charges:

- seek to maximise revenue from direct user charges, grants and subsidies, contributions and other sources (user pays);

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- (b) transparency in setting rates and charges by communicating the Council's charging processes and each ratepayer's responsibility under the rating system (fairness);
 - (c) operating a rating system whereby land is categorised into rates categories developed by Council for differential rating purposes by having regard to such factors but not limited to, actual and potential demands placed on Council, location and use of land, the unimproved and site value of land and the land's capacity to generate revenue (equity for like properties);
 - (d) ensuring the levying system is simple and streamlined to administer (fairness);
 - (e) timing the levy of rates to ensure a sustainable cash flow for operations of the Council and to spread the burden on ratepayers over the financial year (fairness & predictability);
 - (f) flexible payment arrangements for all ratepayers (fairness & predictability);
 - (g) acknowledging that, with an extensive rural road network and the demand for upgrades to support industries such as sugar, grazing, horticulture, and aquaculture, Council expects properties located in these rural areas to contribute appropriately to the general rate revenue base. In addition, Council recognises that broader community services - including recreation and sporting facilities, swimming pools, community and cultural venues, libraries, welfare services, parks, cemeteries, public amenities, and civic buildings - are services that also should be funded collectively through general rates (meaningful contribution).

Council may consider levying special and separate rates and charges where appropriate, to recover the costs associated with a particular service, project, or facility that provides direct or additional benefit to the ratepayers or class of ratepayers.

4.2 Concessions for rates and charges

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

- (a) same treatment for ratepayers with similar circumstances;
- (b) being transparent by making clear the requirement necessary to apply and receive concessions;
- (c) flexibility to allow council to respond to local economic issues.

The purpose of concessions is to provide relief to certain sectors of Council's community through the concessions application process to:

- (a) provide assistance to ratepayers suffering genuine financial hardship;
- (b) reduce the financial burden of rates and charges payable by pensioners;
- (c) provide assistance to those ratepayers without a smart meter who have a concealed leak;
- (d) support the community activities of not-for-profit organisations; and
- (e) reduce the cost of water usage charge for home dialysis users.


Consideration may be given by Council to granting a class concession in the event that all or part of a local government area is declared a natural disaster area by the State Government.

4.3 Principles used for the recovery of rates and charges

Council will exercise its rate recovery powers in order to reduce the overall rate burden on ratepayers.

It will be guided by the principles of:

- (a) transparency by making clear the obligations of ratepayers and the processes used by Council in assisting them to meet their financial obligations;
- (b) making the processes used to recover outstanding rates and charges clear, simple and streamlined to administer;

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- (c) capacity to pay in determining appropriate arrangements for different sectors of the community;
 - (d) having regard to providing the same treatment for ratepayers with similar circumstances; and
 - (e) flexibility by responding where necessary to changes in the local economy.

Interest is charged on all overdue rates and charges. Council's Debt Recovery Policy sets out the details of the processes used to recover outstanding rates and charges.

4.4 Principles used for cost-recovery (Fees and Charges)

Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2009* allows Council to set cost-recovery fees.

The Council recognises the validity of fully imposing the user pays principle for its cost-recovery fees, unless the imposition of the fee is contrary to its express social, economic, environmental and other corporate goals. This is considered to be the most equitable and effective revenue approach, and is founded on the basis that the Region's rating base cannot subsidise the specific users or clients of Council's regulatory products and services.

However, in setting its cost-recovery fees, Council will be cognizant of the requirement that such a fee must not be more than the cost to Council of providing the service or taking the action to which the fee applies.

4.5 Physical and social infrastructure costs

Council raises some of its community infrastructure funding through grants and subsidies provided by the Queensland State Government and the Commonwealth Government of Australia.

The cost of providing community infrastructure is offset through the imposition of infrastructure charges on new development pursuant to the provisions of the *Planning Act 2016*.

The amount Council can collect in infrastructure charges is limited by the *Planning Regulation 2017*.

5. Infrastructure Charges for a New Development

Under Section 113 of the *Planning Act 2016* local governments may, by resolution, adopt charges for providing trunk infrastructure for development (infrastructure charges). Schedule 16 of the *Planning Regulation 2017* states the maximum amount for each charge.

Infrastructure Charges are levied by an Infrastructure Charges Notice issued with a Development Approval. Infrastructure charges contribute to the provision of trunk infrastructure as contained in Council's Local Government Infrastructure Plan for: trunk water supply, wastewater, stormwater, transport, parks and land for community facilities networks that supports the growth and development in the Region.

Infrastructure Charges rates are contained in Council's Infrastructure Charges Resolution. Infrastructure charges rates are identified for particular types of development (residential and non-residential) in a particular area that are no greater than the maximum amount for each charge contained in the *Planning Regulation 2017*. Quarterly increases are applied to the Infrastructure Charges rates using the Consumer Price Index: All Groups, Brisbane.

6 Associated Documents

- Revenue Statement 2025-2026
- Guideline on equity and fairness in rating for Queensland local governments
- Rating Concessions policy 2025-2026
- Financial Hardship policy 2025-2026
- Debt Recovery policy 2025-2026
- Fees and Charges 2025-2026
- Infrastructure Charges Resolution (No. 1) 2019
- Development Incentives: Reduction in Infrastructure Charges policy

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| Related forms, policies and procedures | Rating Concessions Policy Debt Recovery Policy Financial Hardship Policy Revenue Statement |
| Relevant legislation | <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> <i>Local Government Regulation 2012</i> <i>Planning Regulation 2017</i> |
| Reference and resources | |

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