



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL



Annual Business Plan

2023-24

Welcome


This is our Annual Business Plan for 2023-24 which outlines how we plan to achieve our goals over the next financial year. These goals are linked directly to our *Strategic Plan 2020-24 – A Brighter Future*, but also come from our other plans and strategies. Our priorities for this year have been refined through community consultation held over the period 12 May to 2 June 2023.

The Annual Business Plan meets the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999*, and also provides relevant information for our community.

This publication is provided for our ratepayers, residents, business operators, visitors, government agencies and other interested people.

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Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional lands and waters of the Peramangk and Kaurna people.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land.

Overview

The *Annual Business Plan 2023-24* shows our services, programs and projects for this financial year. It also shows how we will allocate our resources to achieve the goals we set out in our *Strategic Plan 2020-24 – A Brighter Future*, while ensuring Council's long term financial sustainability.

Our focus in 2023-24 is to continue to support and strengthen the Adelaide Hills community, environment and economy.

Some key projects and activities we will be undertaking include:

- Continued development of the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub
- Participation in the federally funded Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program to further invest in our region's assets
- Development of a new Strategic Plan which sets Council's goals and objectives over the next 4 years
- A trial of modified frequency of general kerbside waste pickup and the introduction of food organics/green organics collections in rural areas

The key elements of the Annual Business Plan are outlined in the table to the right and explained in more detail throughout this document.

Planned Activities

- In addition to our regular service delivery, our strategic initiatives contribute towards achieving our long term goals. These include:
 - **32** capital initiatives (\$7.5m)
 - **24** operating initiatives (\$1.5m)

Capital Budget

- **\$7.5m** for capital expenditure on new or upgraded assets
- **\$10.4m** for capital expenditure on renewal of existing assets

Operating Budget

- Proposed Operating Surplus of **\$1.228m** which is slightly below the 2023-24 Adopted Long Term Financial Plan target

Borrowing

- Net Borrowings of **\$6.4m**, resulting in forecast total borrowings at 30 June 2024 of **\$23.0m**

Rates

- Average increase in general residential rates of **6.9%** which will allow for continued financial sustainability, maintain our much-needed services and fund new initiatives
For an average value residential property this equates to an annual increase of approximately \$159

Financial Sustainability

- Adjusted operating surplus ratio of **2.2%** which is in line with Council's target of 1% to 5%
 - Net financial liabilities ratio **54%** in line with Council's target of 25% to 75%
 - Asset sustainability ratio **100%** in line with Council's target of 95% to 105%
-

We Are Unique

The size of a Regional Council with the expenses and population of a City Council



618km of Sealed Roads
399km of Unsealed Roads



124km of Footpath



3 Libraries
3 Community Centres



39 Playgrounds
100+ Pieces of equipment



Inspect approx.
12,200 properties
(bushfire prevention)



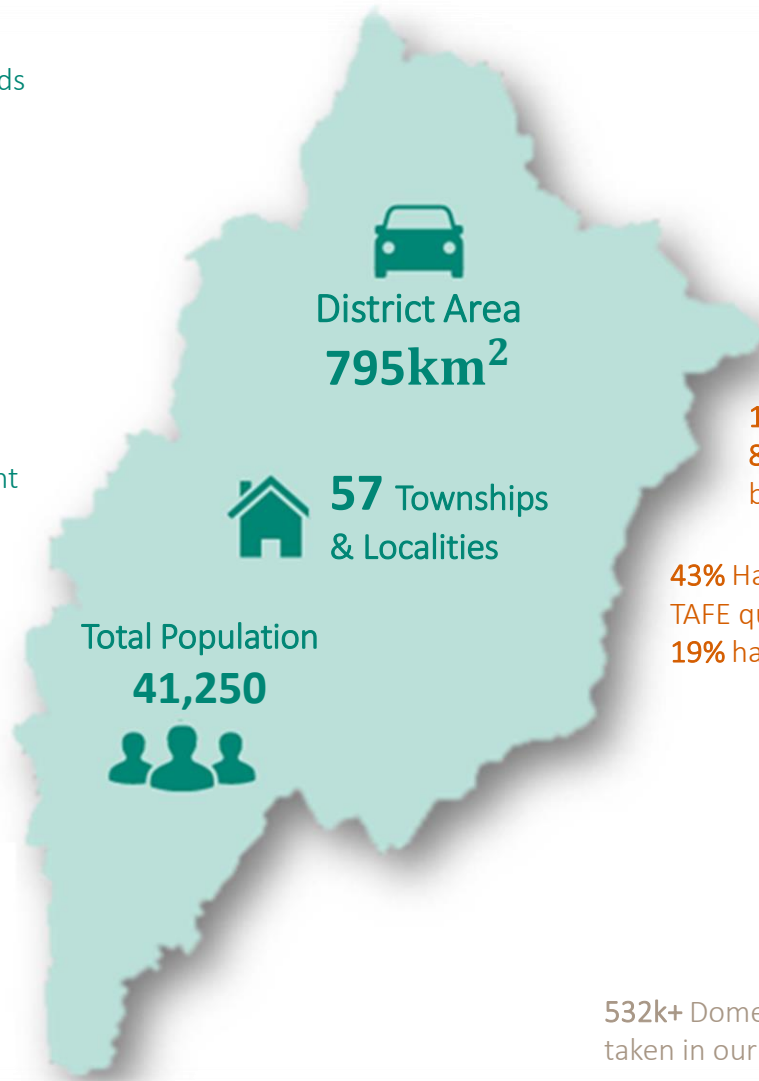
373 Council Owned
Buildings



Waste and Recycling
cost over \$5.5m



8,855 Dog Registrations
1,396 Cat Registrations



Median Age
44



Volunteers
30% of population



3.8% Need
help at home



16,267 Households
84% Own or are
buying a home



43% Have a university or
TAFE qualification
19% have a trade qualification



4,243 Businesses

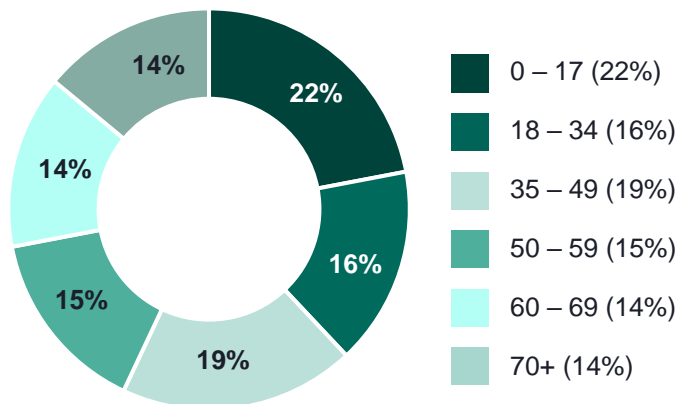


12,823 Local jobs

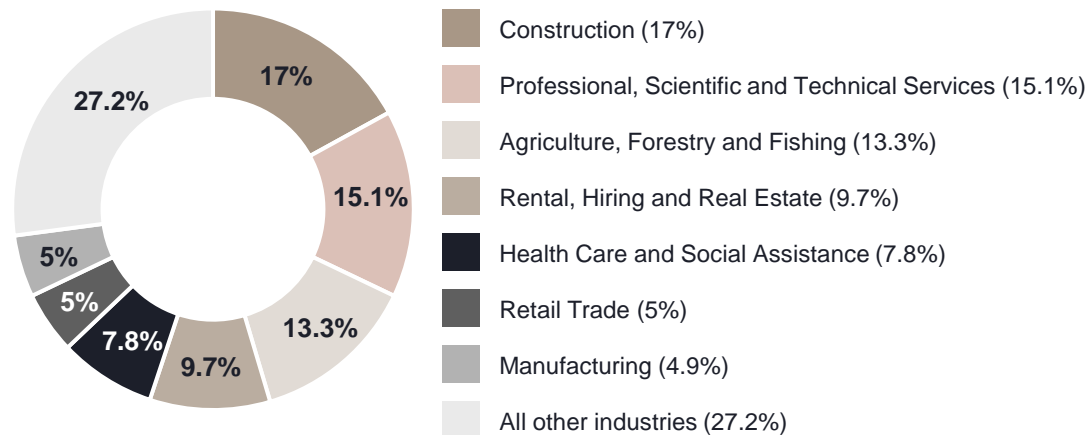


532k+ Domestic Day Trips were
taken in our region in 2021-22

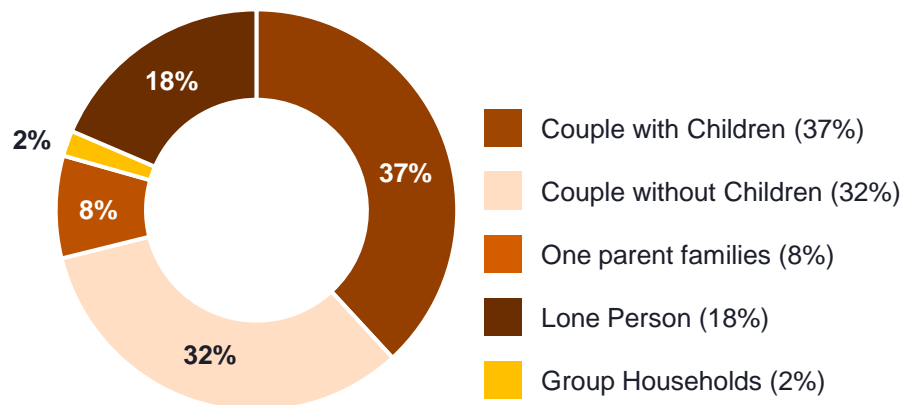
Age Profile of the Adelaide Hills



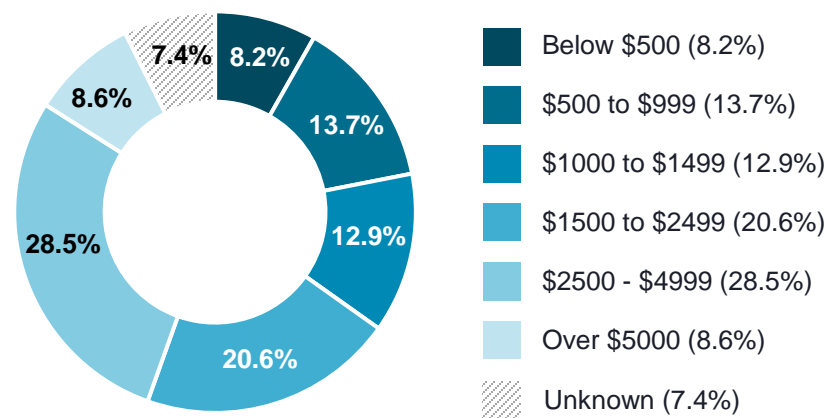
Number of registered businesses by industry



Household Types



Weekly Household Income



Data Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016, and ABS Count of Australian Business 2021

A message from our Mayor...

Our 2023-24 Annual Business Plan and Budget has been developed in economic circumstances not seen in a generation.

The cost of living has increased at a rate not seen for decades, placing more pressure on households to make ends meet. The cost of delivering council services has likewise increased markedly, most noticeably in construction, professional services, energy, fuel and materials.

At the same time grants from government become increasingly scarce. The State Government continues to freeze public library funding and Federal Government finance assistance grants continue to decline.

However there will always be the expectation that Council continues to pursue initiatives of community importance. Our current Strategic Plan is now in its final year. So this year we will develop a new Strategic Plan to prioritise Council initiatives for the next four years.

We have already taken a number of steps towards further environmental sustainability by developing a tree strategy and leading by example with the transition of the Council's vehicle fleet to electric vehicles. We have also adopted the Our Watch Toolkit for Local Government as a commitment to doing our part in preventing violence against women and children, and we are actively exploring ways to further engage and recognise our First Nations community.

Furthermore, we will complete the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub development at Lobethal and continue to advocate for the State Government to complete the Amy Gillett Bikeway to Birdwood both of which are key economic and social assets in our region, as well as advocate for improved public transport and a safer M1 freeway. We are also dedicated to continuing our efforts and advocacy for developing resilience in our natural disaster-prone communities and funding for bushfire mitigation.

We have kept the average residential rate increase below the cost of living increase by adjusting services and identifying operational savings within our organisation. We have also strengthened the Council's long term financial sustainability by achieving an operational surplus within our target range and keeping borrowings within our established limits.

The Essential Services Commission of South Australia independently reviewed a number of South Australian Councils in 2023 and found Adelaide Hills to be in a financially sustainable position. This enviable result reinforces the work done by both the Elected Council and Council's staff in developing strategies and delivering programs and services which meet the community's needs in an affordable manner.

This 2023-24 Annual Business Plan will guide us in cherishing our past and embracing our future while protecting our environment and aiming to leave no-one behind. It is our promise to the Community and look forward to working with Councillors, staff and volunteers to bring it to fruition so that you can feel safe in, proud of and ambitious for our wonderful community.

Dr Jan-Claire Wisdom
Mayor

Our Elected Council



Mayor
Jan-Claire Wisdom



Deputy Mayor
Cr Nathan Daniell
(Ranges Ward)



Cr Kirrilee Boyd
(Ranges Ward)



Cr Adrian Cheater
(Ranges Ward)



Cr Pauline Gill
(Valleys Ward)



Cr Chris Grant
(Valleys Ward)



Cr Malcolm Herrmann
Valleys Ward)



Cr Lucy Huxter
(Valleys Ward)



Cr Leith Mudge
(Ranges Ward)



Cr Mark Osterstock
(Ranges Ward)



Cr Louise Pascale
(Ranges Ward)



Cr Kirsty Parkin
(Ranges Ward)



Cr Melanie Selwood
(Valleys Ward)

About us

Council and Committees

The Elected Council’s role is to provide for the governance and stewardship of the Council. It does this through representing the interests of the community; providing and coordinating public services and facilities; encouraging and developing initiatives to improve the community’s quality of life; and exercising its functions under legislation and its strategic management plans.

A number of committees have been established in accordance with legislation to assist the Council and the Administration to discharge their responsibilities in specific areas. These are the Audit Committee, the Chief Executive Officer Performance Review Panel, the Council Assessment Panel, the Boundary Change Committee, the Building Fire Safety Committee and the Health & Safety Committee.

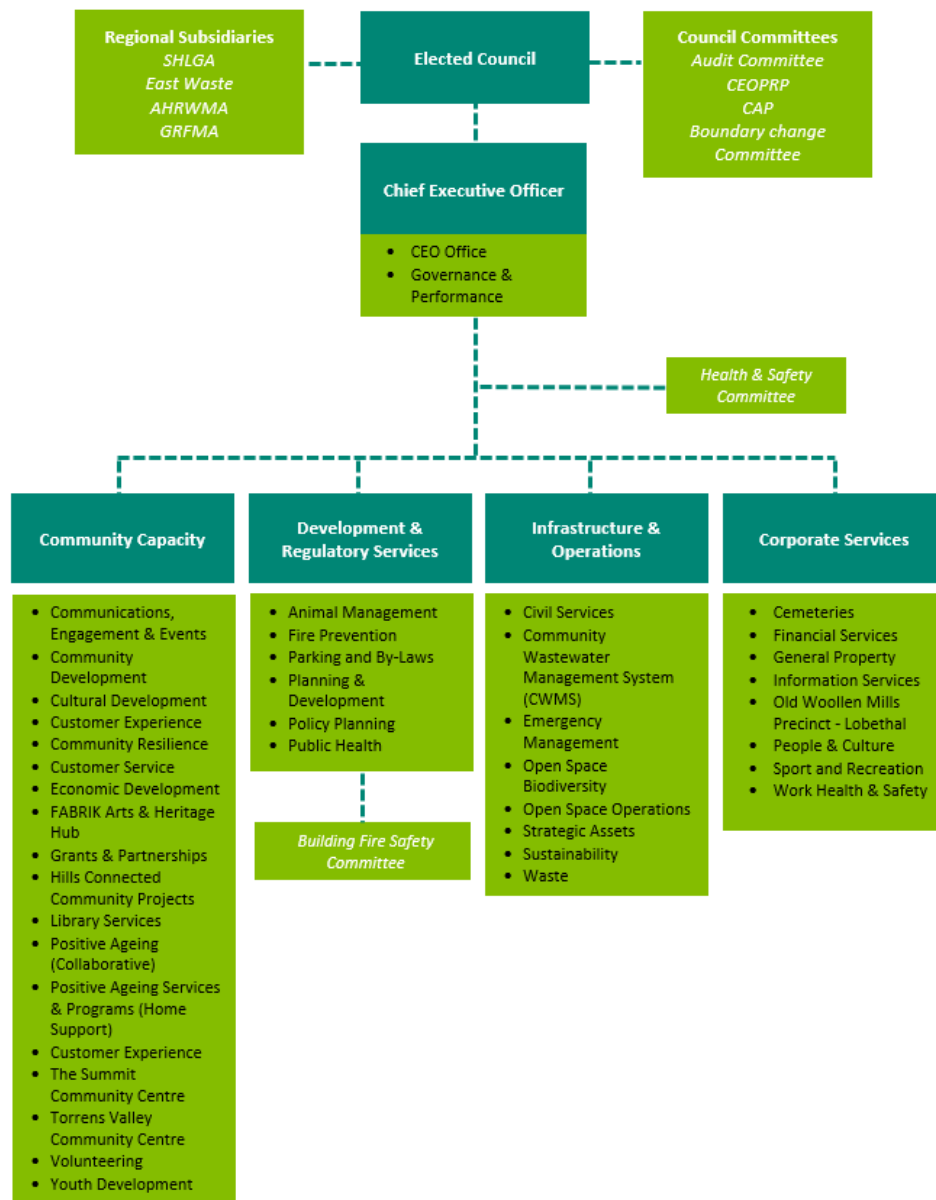
Regional Subsidiaries

Council is a member of four regional subsidiaries which assist in the strategic planning and service delivery activities. The subsidiaries are the Southern and Hills Local Government Association, the Eastern Waste Management Authority (East Waste), the Adelaide Hills Region Waste Management Authority, and the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority.

Administration

The Council's Administration is led by a Chief Executive Officer appointed by the Council.

The Chief Executive Officer appoints staff and engages other resources to carry out the functions and duties delegated to them and to implement Council decisions. The Administration is organised into directorates, each with a specific area of focus and functional responsibilities. The arrangement of the directorates provides for the separation of the regulatory activities, as far as practicable, from the other activities of the Council.



Our Goals

The Annual Business Plan has been developed to align with our *Strategic Plan 2020-24 – A Brighter Future*, which was adopted by Council on 28 April 2020 and sets out what we wanted to achieve over the four year period. These goals and objectives are listed in the table below. Over the following pages we will show how our day to day activities, recovery efforts and strategic initiatives will help us to deliver each of these long term goals.

A functional Built Environment

B1 Our district is easily accessible for community, our businesses and visitors

B2 Preserve and enhance the unique character of the Hills for current and future generations

B3 Consider external influences in our long term asset management and adaptation planning

B4 Sustainable management of our built assets ensures a safe, functional and well serviced community

Community Wellbeing

C1 A community for everyone - that is inclusive, welcoming and accessible

C2 A connected, engaged and supported community

C3 A community that grows together

C4 An active, healthy, thriving and resilient community

C5 Respect for Aboriginal Culture and values

C6 Celebrate our community's unique culture through arts, heritage and events

A prosperous Economy

E1 Support and grow our region's existing and emerging industries

E2 Provide local infrastructure to drive growth and productivity

E3 Encourage, attract and retain a creative, talented and skilled workforce in our region

E4 Cultivate a clear, unique and consistent regional identity that can be leveraged to attract national and international attention

A valued Natural Environment

N1 Conserve and enhance the regional natural landscape character and amenity values of our region

N2 Recognise the benefits of ecosystem services and improve environmental resilience by reducing environmental impacts

N3 Nurture valuable partnerships and collaborations and engage the local community in the management of our natural environment

N4 Reduce the impact of waste to landfill by maintaining a robust waste and resource management framework

N5 Assist our community to reduce the impact of waste to landfill on the environment

A progressive Organisation

O1 We have the right people with the right knowledge and skills in the right jobs and they are supported and developed

O2 Our customers find it easier to interact and do business with Council and have an improved customer experience

O3 Our organisation is financially sustainable for both current and future generations

O4 We actively represent our community

O5 We are accountable, informed, and make decisions in the best interests of the whole community

O6 Technology and innovation is utilised to better meet our community's expectations and deliver value for money



Our Aspiration

Ensure that all decisions regarding the built environment recognise our unique character and natural environment to maintain and enhance liveability for our community.

Some of the key highlights we have planned for 2023-24 include:

- Delivery of road safety initiatives under the federally funded black spot program.
- Installation of further Electric Vehicle charging stations.
- Stormwater master planning and implementation for the management of stormwater in the Balhannah township.

Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP) 2023-24

Council is applying for Federal funding for local road and community infrastructure projects that involve the construction, maintenance and/or improvements to council-owned assets (including natural assets) that are generally accessible to the public.

When funding is secured, Council will identify key priority projects which will deliver benefits to the community and region, such as improved accessibility, visual amenity and safety benefits.

How we will measure our success

Our success will be demonstrated through service based performance measures and customer feedback in delivering what our community needs and what we aspire to achieve under our Capital Works Program, Civil Zone Maintenance Program, Asset Management Plans, and energy usage targets.

Our suite of Corporate Performance Indicators (*Annexure C*) will be used in our reporting to Council each quarter, and in our Annual report for 2023-24.

Our Services

- **Planning & Development** – Assessment of development applications and activities within the region. Inspection of approved buildings and swimming pools and taking compliance action where required. Reviewing safety of publicly accessible buildings.
- **Policy Planning** – undertaking policy and project work such as amendments to the new Planning and Design Code, and preparation of urban design guidelines.
- **Customer Service** – frontline customer service including processing of development applications.
- **Property Services** - Ongoing maintenance and management of Council's real estate assets including some 380+ parcels of land and 180+ buildings.
- **Cemeteries** – Ongoing maintenance and management of 16 Council owned cemeteries within the region.
- **Strategic Assets** – Develops and refines the Asset Management Plans and the future renewal Capital Works Programs. Manages Council's Geographic Information Systems and associated corporate data.
- **Open Space Operations** – Carries out Capital Works upgrades for projects such as playgrounds.
- **Civil Services** – Ongoing management, maintenance and replacement planning of public infrastructure including roads, bridges, signage, stormwater, kerbs and footpaths.
- **Community Wastewater Management Systems (CWMS)** – Management of CWMS and associated infrastructure e.g. septic tanks, treatment ponds.

Our Objectives and Priorities

Objectives

B1 *Our district is easily accessible for community, our businesses and visitors*

B2 *Preserve and enhance the unique character of the Hills for current and future generations*

B3 *Consider external influences in our long term asset management and adaptation planning*

B4 *Sustainable management of our built assets ensures a safe, functional and well serviced community*

Priorities

B1.1 Increase accessibility to our district through the development and delivery of high priority trails and routes for all cyclists (on-road, off road, commuters, recreational) and pedestrians

B2.1 Continue to embrace and support community led public place revitalisation across our district

B3.1 Improve water security by maximising water reuse opportunities, reducing reliance on ground water and improving water efficiencies for open space irrigation and building facilities

B4.1 Ensure the long term management of the built form and public spaces occurs in consideration of the relevant financial, social and environmental management matters

B1.2 Improve outcomes for the elderly by incorporating Council's Age Friendly Strategic Plan into built environment design and delivery

B2.2 Incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design principles within Council developments and projects and advocate for other developments within the region to do the same

B3.2 Aim to achieve 100% renewable energy use for our corporate operations and strive towards carbon neutrality

B4.2 Embrace innovative and new technology solutions to proactively maintain our built assets that further enhance the provision of efficient services to the community

B1.3 Progress state-wide and inter-regional connectivity of cyclist routes by partnering with neighbouring councils

B2.3 Proactively work with developers to ensure that built form complements or enhances existing local character whilst preserving the character and amenity of our towns, historic buildings and scenic environment

B3.3 Investigate and source recyclable materials for asset renewal projects wherever practical and in doing so promote the circular economy

B4.3 Ensure Council owned or managed assets, including staff accommodation, are functional and adaptive to meet service requirements. Also, where appropriate and endorsed by Council, equitably assist community owned site (halls and recreation sites) to ensure their facilities are functional and meet service standards

B1.4 Ensure that the key road network is accessible for heavy vehicles used by the primary production, tourism and construction sectors through engagement with industry and Government

B2.4 Ensure our planning framework, council policies and guidelines support privately owned local heritage places

B3.4 Proactively adapt our built environment to changes in social and environmental factors to minimise the impact from natural hazards such as fire and flood

B4.4 Improve road safety through a safe system approach to road design, construction and maintenance including on-going applications to the State and Federal Road Blackspot program

B1.5 Provide accessibility for the full range of users by ensuring Council's road, footpath and trails network is adequately maintained and service levels for all users are developed and considered

B2.5 Continue to collaborate with other councils and stakeholders in pursuing our World Heritage Bid to protect the landscapes, sites and facilities that represent the State's aboriginal and early colonial history

B2.6 Support communities recovering from natural disasters with expedited development assessment services

B4.5 Explore and provide the infrastructure to support Electric Vehicles (EV) and investigate infrastructure requirements for emerging technological transport such as Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAV)

Built Environment - Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives are specially funded and prioritised activities, projects and programs of work that are planned over the next 3 years. “Capital” initiatives are generally related to new physical assets and infrastructure investment, while “Operating” initiatives are related to administrative projects, community programs and other activities and tasks.

Project ID	Strategic initiatives (Operating and Capital)	Area	Objective and/or Priority	Type	Budget 2023-24 (\$'000)	Long term financial plan (\$'000)	
						2024-25	2025-26
B1003	New Bus Shelter Installation Program	Infrastructure & Operations	B1.3	Capital	20	-	-
B1004	New and upgraded footpaths	Infrastructure & Operations	B1.5	Capital	404	292	237
B1007	Recreation Trails & Cycling Routes Framework Implementation	Corporate Services	B1.1	Capital	140	150	160
B1008	Amy Gillett Bikeway Contribution (Stage 4) which includes \$100k carried forward from 2022-23	Infrastructure & Operations	B1.1	Operating	125	125	125
B1009	DDA Upgrades Minor access upgrades region wide (compliance)	Infrastructure & Operations	B1.5	Capital	21	21	21
B2001	Federation Park and Oval masterplan implementation	Infrastructure & Operations	B2	Capital	-	-	50
B2008	Local Heritage (Privately Owned) Planning and Design Code Amendment	Development & Regulatory Services	B2	Operating	30	-	-
B2009	Place making and community planning	CEOs Office	B2.1	Operating	40	-	-
B3002	Implement irrigation systems (renewal / upgrades)	Infrastructure & Operations	B3.1	Capital	100	100	100
B3003	Investigate and Implement central irrigation control system (region wide)	Infrastructure & Operations	B3	Capital	24	24	24
B3004	Prepare turf and irrigation design/management plans for key bore water use areas	Infrastructure & Operations	B3	Operating	20	-	-
B3005	Carbon Management Plan - Energy Upgrades, Battery & Efficiency Actions	Infrastructure & Operations	B3.2	Capital	50	50	-
B3011	Carbon Offsets Policy	Infrastructure & Operations	B3.2	Operating	5	-	-
B3014	Review the Corporate Carbon Management Plan	Infrastructure & Operations	B3.2	Operating	25	-	-
B4006	Asset management - Confirm Web and Connect Licenses and Field Devices	Corporate Services	B4	Capital	40	-	-

Legend: **G** Grant funding



Built Environment - Strategic Initiatives *continued...*



Project ID	Strategic initiatives (Operating and Capital)	Area	Objective and/or Priority	Type	Budget 2023-24 (\$'000)	Long term financial plan (\$'000)	
						2024-25	2025-26
B4009	Building Upgrades - minor	Corporate Services	B4	Capital	133	158	162
B4010	Cemeteries Upgrades	Corporate Services	B4	Capital	40	41	42
B4011	Community Wastewater Management System Capacity Upgrades (Birdwood & Woodside gravity mains)	Infrastructure & Operations	B4	Capital	120	120	250
B4014	Road Safety Program including co-contribution to Road Blackspot (G)	Infrastructure & Operations	B4	Capital Income Capital Expenditure	-1,110 1,310	- 158	- 158
B4015	Installation of further Electric Vehicle charging stations	Infrastructure & Operations	B4.5	Capital	125	TBC	TBC
B4016	Purchase of Electric Vehicles cars for fleet	Infrastructure & Operations	B4	Capital	240	-	-
B4020	Reporting on embodied energy of materials used in Council activities	Infrastructure & Operations	B4	Operating	-	-	30
B4042	Operational worksite review including forward planning	Corporate Services	B4.3	Capital Income Capital Expenditure	- 800	-1,000 -	- -
B4043	Hamilton Hill, Dunfield Estate & Crest Maintenance	Infrastructure & Operations	B4	Operating	55	61	92
B4044	Feasibility Studies for future projects	Corporate Services	B4	Operating	100	100	100
B4045	Stormwater projects	Infrastructure & Operations	B4.1	Capital	445	522	544
B4050	Merchants Hill retaining wall	Infrastructure & Operations	B4	Capital	48	-	-
B4051	Croft road resealing	Infrastructure & Operations	B4	Capital Income Capital Expenditure	-600 1,200	- -	- -
B4052	Renew the fuel monitoring and delivery system	Infrastructure & Operations	B4.3	Capital	-	40	-
B4053	Next step planning for Adelaide Hills War Memorial Swimming Centre, Woodside	Corporate Services	B4.3	Operating	30	-	-
B4054	Houghton Recreation Grounds facility contribution	Corporate Services	B4	Operating	TBC	-	-

Legend: **G** Grant funding **TBC** To be Confirmed



Our Aspiration

An inclusive and prosperous community with the capacity to flourish and fulfil their potential through opportunities to engage, connect, participate and enhance wellbeing.

Some of the key highlights we have planned for 2023-24 include:

- Continued development of Fabrik Arts and Heritage as a facility offering exceptional cultural experiences, providing social, educational and economic outcomes for the region.
- Implementation of the Community and Recreation Facilities Framework and the Play Space Framework.
- Implementation of the “Our Watch Toolkit for Local Government” for the prevention of domestic and family violence in our community.
- Implementation of the Towards Community Led Resilience Program.
- Identification of initiatives to develop community connections within and between the established and newly developed areas of Woodforde.

How we will measure our success

We demonstrate our success by:

- The achievement of targets for our service standards
- Surveying participants in our community programs to ascertain whether they are better off as a result of participation
- Seeking feedback about our customers’ experiences through online and mobile surveys
- Reporting on library visitation, usage and borrowings

Our suite of Corporate Performance Indicators (*Annexure C*) will be used in our reporting to Council each quarter, and in our Annual report for 2023-24.



Our Services

- **Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub** – Providing community exhibitions, workshops and events. Supporting community with creative recovery after the Cudlee Creek Bushfire and COVID-19 pandemic. Continuing to promote and preserve our vibrant cultural and historical hub.
- **Libraries** - Providing access to information resources for learning or leisure. Providing opportunities for community to engage, learn and connect.
- **Customer Services** – Providing ready access to Council services and responding to customer enquiries through three physical service centres, a phone contact centre and an online request portal.
- **Volunteering** – Encouraging voluntary participation across the Adelaide Hills through provision of opportunities, training and support for volunteer involving groups.
- **Property Services** – Management and maintenance of Council’s community facilities.
- **Public Health** – Inspections of food businesses, waste water and public swimming pools to provide safe public environments.
- **Parking and By-law Enforcement** – Monitoring and regulating parking and particular public activities to ensure safe and accessible environments.
- **Cultural Development** – Focusing on cultural diversity, Aboriginal respect and recognition, and the arts in all its forms.
- **Youth Development** – Providing a range of programs and activities to support and develop youth in our community.
- **Positive Ageing** – Providing home and social support, particularly under the Commonwealth funded Commonwealth Home Support Program. Developing and implementing targeted strategies and programs in our region.
- **Community Centres** – Providing opportunities to improve health and wellbeing, participate in lifelong learning and sharing skills with others.
- **Communications, Engagement and Events** – Ensuring communication between the Council and community is accurate, relevant, valuable and engaging. Promoting and supporting community events.
- **Community Development** – Overseeing community wellbeing and disability access and inclusion programs, as well as a number of regional support programs, including provision of funding to The Hut Community Centre and the Adelaide Hills Community Passenger Transport Network.
- **Sport & Recreation Planning** – Management and utilisation of Council’s sport, recreation and open space assets; and support of clubs and the community’s recreational activities throughout the region.
- **Grants & Partnerships** – Grant giving programs supporting community-based initiatives. Partnerships with other stakeholders to deliver local and regional outcomes.

Our Objectives and Priorities

Objectives

C1 - A community for everyone that is inclusive, welcoming and accessible

C2 - A connected, engaged and supported community

C3 - A community that grows together

C4 - An active, healthy, thriving and resilient community

C5 - Respect for Aboriginal Culture & values

C6 - Celebrate our community's unique culture through arts, heritage & events

Priorities

C1.1 Provide welcoming spaces and places for the community through our libraries, community centres, and Council and community facilities

C2.1 - Work with community to provide a range of programs and opportunities to connect and engage around shared interests

C3.1 - Provide and support programs and services that encourage and enhance personal growth, lifelong learning and professional development

C4.1 - Support community wellbeing through our contribution to public health planning, disaster recovery activities and the implementation of strategies that aim to measure and enhance wellbeing.

C5.1 - Partner with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to develop our second Reconciliation Action Plan (Innovate) and actively participate in Reconciliation Week

C6.1 - Develop Fabrik as a vibrant cultural hub for the Adelaide Hills, fostering community connections and creativity and presenting the significant history of the Woollen Mill site

C1.2 Support and promote opportunities for social inclusion and celebration of our cultural diversity

C2.2 - Support our ageing community to access services and continue to participate and contribute to community life

C3.2 - Support volunteering both organisationally and in the community as an essential element in delivering community outcomes and building wellbeing

C4.2 - Support the provision of formal and informal sport, recreation and play spaces for the community to enjoy

C5.2 - Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal culture and heritage through participation in and the delivery of programs and activities that engage our community in cultural experience and learning

C6.2 - Develop, support or bring events to our district that have social, cultural, environmental or economic benefits

C1.3 Make the district more accessible and welcoming for all with a focus on youth participation, positive ageing, disability inclusion and multiculturalism

C2.3 - Facilitate opportunities for our youth to develop skills, build resilience and be actively involved in and connected to their community.

C3.3 - Empower our community groups and leaders to shape and determine change in their community through the provision of training opportunities, grants that meet strategic priorities, building relationships and supporting communities to be cohesive in progressing local projects.

C4.3 - Recognise that trails are a destination in their own right and support both commuter and recreational trail opportunities

C5.2 - Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal culture and heritage through participation in and the delivery of programs and activities that engage our community in cultural experience and learning

C6.3 - Recognise, encourage and support artists, emerging artists, writers and performers through promotion of the Arts and supporting opportunities to exhibit and perform

C1.4 Advocate and Seek opportunities to improve transport options for those who need it most

C2.4 - Increase participation from the broadest range of our community and engage with them to shape policies, places and decisions that affect them

C3.4 - Build partnerships with community and other stakeholders to enhance our capacity to provide and support opportunities for them to thrive

C4.4 - Support clubs and groups to continue to provide sport and recreation activities to the community

C5.2 - Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal culture and heritage through participation in and the delivery of programs and activities that engage our community in cultural experience and learning

C6.4 - Foster the development of Public Art that adds value to public spaces and supports place making in our community

C1.5 - Encourage more housing opportunities where provided for in the Development Plan

C2.5 - Continue to work with government agencies and non-governmental organisations to support the community recovery from natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic.

C4.5 - Take an all hazards approach to emergency management so we can support the emergency services and the community before, during and after disaster events.

Community Wellbeing - Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives are specially funded and prioritised activities, projects and programs of work that are planned over the next 3 years. “Capital” initiatives are generally related to new physical assets and infrastructure investment, while “Operating” initiatives are related to administrative projects, community programs and other activities and tasks.

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C1004	Libraries print release and photocopy service	Community Capacity	C1.1	Capital	-	7	7
C4006	Play Space Framework Implementation	Corporate Services	C4	Capital	-	273	280
C4012	Climate Change Adaption Plan Projects - All hazards emergency management	Infrastructure & Operations	C4.5	Capital	20	-	-
C4021	Community & Recreation Facilities Framework Implementation	Corporate Services	C4	Capital	72	158	162
				Operating	187	192	197
C4022	Towards Community Led Resilience Program (G)	Community Capacity	C4.5	Operating Income	-533	-205	-
				Operating Expenditure	533	205	-
C4024	Implement activities from “Our Watch Toolkit for Local Government”	Community Capacity	C4	Operating	CO	CO	CO
C5003	Actions from adoption of Aboriginal Place Naming Action Plan	Community Capacity	C5	Capital	5	5	5
C6001	Fabrik Activation Capital (G)	Corporate Services	C6	Capital	1,060	-	-
C6003	Capital Divestment – Sale proceeds	Corporate Services	C6	Capital	-	-	-1,230
C6006	Tour Down Under	Community Capacity	C6.2	Operating	61	63	64

Legend: **G** Grant funding **CO** Core Operating Budget



A prosperous Economy



Our Aspiration

Our region's economy is diverse and sustainable with a reputation for quality, niche products, services and experiences underpinned by a culture of creativity and innovation.

Some of the key highlights we have planned for 2023-24 include:

- Support the Tour Down Under in 2024.
- Collaborate with Adelaide Hills Tourism to promote and support tourism across our region.
- Encourage and support the continued development of a Home-Based Business Network.
- Undertake a biannual business survey.
- Advocate for key economic development issues in the region with other levels of government.

How we will measure our success

Council plays a limited but crucial role in the success of the local economy. We monitor broader indicators like local employment levels, indices of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage, gross regional product and visitor numbers.

Our particular initiatives seek to address areas where local government can support broader economic outcomes and we measure the effectiveness of these by the local business sector biennially, and surveying participants in our initiatives to find out if they are better off as a result.

Our suite of Corporate Performance Indicators (*Annexure C*) will be used in our reporting to Council each quarter, and in our Annual report for 2023-24.

Our Services

- **Economic Development** - Undertaking activities in line with the Economic Development Plan including:
 - Promoting tourism and supporting operators, through funding the work of Adelaide Hills Tourism,
 - Identifying and promoting local regional development opportunities through providing core funding to the local Regional Development Australia board,
 - Responding to the needs of established or potential local business operators,
 - Identifying and promoting opportunities for government investment in key local infrastructure developments, and
 - Undertaking niche projects to address particular economic development needs.
- **Property Services** – Facilitating appropriate events, outdoor dining, roadside trading and mobile food vans on Council managed land and roads.
- **Fabrik Arts and Heritage** – Establishing a thriving arts and heritage hub to support creative industries and the broader local economy through increased tourism.
- **Public Health** – Monitoring and addressing food safety and public health to ensure a safe environment and food businesses. Providing clinics to enable the community to access vaccinations easily.
- **Communications, Engagement and Events** – Managing, promoting and supporting events which have social and economic benefits to the district.
- **Development Advice & Approvals** – Assisting businesses and landowners when wishing to develop their properties.

Our Objectives and Priorities

Objectives

E1 - Support and grow our region's existing and emerging industries

E2 - Provide local infrastructure to drive growth and productivity

E3 - Encourage, attract and retain a creative, talented and skilled workforce in our region

E4 - Cultivate a clear, unique and consistent regional identity that can be leveraged to attract national and international attention

Priorities

E1.1 - Support and encourage local and international tourists to visit the Adelaide Hills

E2.1 - Work with all levels of Government to ensure the region's infrastructure needs are understood and prioritised

E3.1 - Attract and encourage professional and business development and networking activities

E4.1 - Work with key stakeholders to develop a realistic, yet inspiring, collective vision to connect the region and its industries

E1.2 - Take advantage of the full potential of our region's primary production and associated value adding activities

E2.2 - Explore and advocate for the opportunities that new technologies could bring to our region

E3.2 - Understand the nature of skills our region's businesses will require to prosper into the future

E4.2 - Work with our communities and businesses to encourage co-ordinated and strategic regional projects that enhance and support the regional identity

E1.3 - Support and encourage the growth and development of our region's creative industry micro businesses

E2.3 - Support changes to planning and development that leverages and encourages sustainable economic development

E3.3 - Work with our local communities and businesses to create active, attractive and vibrant places

E4.3 - Support and encourage events that supports the region's identity and generates social, cultural and economic benefits

E1.4 - Promote, support and encourage our existing and emerging businesses to respond to economic changes by being creative, innovative, productive and resilient to unexpected impacts.

E2.4 - Manage and maintain Council assets to maximise their utilisation and benefit to the community

E3.4 - Enable start-ups and home based business through services, information and networking opportunities

E4.4 - Support the continued development and community engagement for the World Heritage nomination of the region

E1.5 - Engage and assist our region's key business and industry groups to be resilient, proactive and successful

E1.6 - Encourage and facilitate local supplier participation in all level of Government tendering processes

Economy - Strategic Initiatives

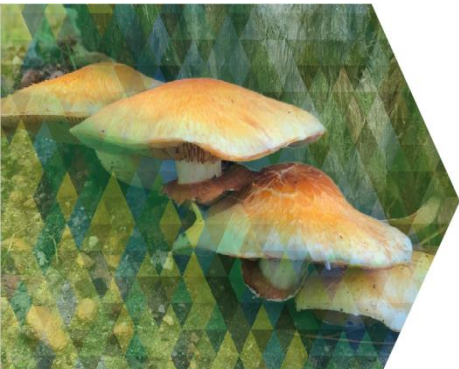
Strategic Initiatives are specially funded and prioritised activities, projects and programs of work that are planned over the next 3 years. “Capital” initiatives are generally related to new physical assets and infrastructure investment, while “Operating” initiatives are related to administrative projects, community programs and other activities and tasks.

Project ID	Strategic initiatives (Operating and Capital)	Area	Objective and/or Priority	Type	Budget 2023-24 (\$'000)	Long term financial plan (\$'000)	
						2024-25	2025-26
E2001	Review and upgrade Council signage and branding	Community Capacity	E2	Capital	15	5	-
E4001	Additional Tree safety work required to support the Tour Down Under	Infrastructure & Operations	E4	Operating	30	31	32

Legend: **G** Grant funding



A valued Natural Environment



Our Aspiration

The natural environment of the Adelaide Hills contributes significantly to the character of the region and is greatly valued by our local community and visitors.

Some of the key highlights we have planned for 2023-24 include:

- Undertaking a trial on kerbside bin system collection frequency changes and a trial on increased rural food organics/green organics waste collections.
- Local climate adaptations for landscape conservation.
- Post prescribed burn weed management.
- Develop a strategy for the management of Council trees across the district.

How we will measure our success

The services we provide and the influence we have in the community will demonstrate our success in maintaining a healthy and resilient region. In particular this will be shown through community education outcomes, achieving biodiversity targets, and service driven performance in managing animals, waste and resources, and our natural spaces.

Our suite of Corporate Performance Indicators (*Annexure C*) will be used in our reporting to Council each quarter, and in our Annual report for 2023-24.

Our Services

- **Sustainability** – Including climate change considerations into Council decision making, providing strategies for carbon neutrality, water management and renewable energy in response to climate change impacts.
- **Open Space Biodiversity** – Undertaking activities such as weed management, habitat conservation and expansion, research and knowledge development, and supporting community in their related activities.
- **Animal Management** - Promoting responsible dog and cat ownership, responding to nuisance and hazards caused by other animals including livestock, eradicating European wasp nests and conducting a Feral Cat Study.
- **Open Space Operations** – Maintaining parks and reserves, biodiversity activities, and fire breaks/ tracks.
- **Fire Prevention** – Legislative function of ensuring identified properties are prepared for the bushfire season. Assessing the extent of bushfire hazards within the Council area and providing advice to land owners in respect of bushfire prevention and management.
- **Wastewater Systems Compliance** – Working with landowners to ensure their on-site wastewater systems are compliant and operating correctly to minimise impact on the water catchment.
- **Waste** - Providing waste collections and recycling services to 16,500 properties, green waste organics kerbside collections in townships, ‘at call’ hard waste collection, and operates the Heathfield Resource Recovery Centre for community use.

Our Objectives and Priorities

Objectives

Priorities

N1 - Conserve and enhance the regional natural landscape character and amenity values of our region

N1.1 - Enhance and manage horticultural amenity, including succession planning for street trees that contribute to and reinforce our distinctive streetscapes and villages

N1.2 - Manage reserves and open space to support the community, whilst balancing biodiversity conservation, resource use and environmental impacts

N2 - Recognise the benefits of ecosystem services and improve environmental resilience by reducing environmental impacts

N2.1 - Monitor and manage areas of high biodiversity or habitat value on Council reserves and Native Vegetation Marker Scheme (NVMS) sites using best practice methodologies

N2.2 - Explore opportunities and take appropriate actions to monitor current and emerging threats to biodiversity including feral cats and Phytophthora

N2.3 - Mitigate bushfire risks across the landscape by undertaking fuel reduction activities including woody weed control, maintenance of asset protection zones and educate & enforcement to reduce fuels on private property

N2.4 - Work with supporting organisations and agencies to foster the restoration of native flora and fauna habitat following the 2019-20 bushfire

N3 - Nurture valuable partnerships and collaborations and engage the local community in the management of our natural environment

N3.1 - Increase knowledge and environmental awareness within the community through engagement and education

N3.2 - Collaborate and engage with public and private organisations, schools and community members (including the Aboriginal community as the first nation peoples), to improve biodiversity outcomes and land management practices.

N3.3 - Continue to work in partnership with the Resilient Hills and Coasts region to build Council and community resilience to the impacts of climate change

N4 - Reduce the impact of waste to landfill by maintaining a robust waste and resource management framework

N4.1 - We will work with partners to analyse the benefits and feasibility of introducing a fee incentive to property owners to produce less waste in relation to the kerbside bin service

N4.2 - We will explore more Green Organics options to achieve improved environmental and financial outcomes.

N4.3 - We will provide specific education to the community to increase their level of food scrap recycling

N4.4 - Implement new or improved waste service opportunities whilst continuing to provide ongoing resource recovery and waste service to our community

N5 - Assist our community to reduce the impact of waste to landfill on the environment

N5.1 - Encourage and educate the community to help minimise the generation of household waste by advocating the principles of the Waste Management Hierarchy to avoid, reduce and reuse

N5.2 - Support and assist the community to prevent valuable resources going to landfill and reduce contamination in kerbside recycling bins

Natural Environment - Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives are specially funded and priority activities, projects and programs of work that are planned over the next 3 years. “Capital” initiatives are generally related to new physical assets and infrastructure investment, while “Operating” initiatives are related to administrative projects, community programs and other activities and tasks.

Project ID	Strategic initiatives (Operating and Capital)	Area	Objective and/or Priority	Type	Budget 2023-24 (\$'000)	Long term financial plan (\$'000)	
						2024-25	2025-26
N1006	Best practice procedure for maintenance of AHC riparian zones	Infrastructure & Operations	N1.1	Operating	-	6	-
N1007	Develop a strategy for the management of Council trees across the district	Infrastructure & Operations	N1.1	Operating	COB	-	-
N2008	Develop informative and attractive signage in Council reserves/playgrounds	Corporate Services	N2	Capital	10	10	10
N2010	Post prescribed burn weed management	Infrastructure & Operations	N2.3	Operating	55	53	50
N2011	New Dog and Cat facility	Development & Regulatory Services	N2	Capital	200	270	-
N3001	Local Climate Adaptations for landscape conservation	Infrastructure & Operations	N3	Operating	10	10	11
N3002	Resilient community facilities and open space including water fountains	Infrastructure & Operations	N3	Capital	30	31	32
N4002	Kerbside bin system collection frequency change and rural FOGO trial	Infrastructure & Operations	N4.1	Capital	30	-	-
				Operating	90	30	-

Legend: **G** Grant funding **CO** Core Operating Budget



A progressive Organisation



Our Aspiration

Council is recognised for its skilled and agile workforce, for its representative and accountable governance, its commitment to cost effectiveness and efficient service delivery.

Some of the key highlights we have planned for 2023-24 include:

- Development of a new Strategic Plan which sets Council's goals and objectives over the next 4 years
- Conducting a representation review.
- Further developing Council's new website to provide more streamlined customer services and access to information commonly sought by the community.
- Upgrading the GPS units for operational vehicles to run on the 4G network.
- Upgrading the Customer Relationship Management System.

How we will measure our success

As an organisation, our measures of success include service-driven performance measures, achievement of financial targets, evidence of our corporate governance, implementation of innovative processes and technology, and organisational development achievements.

Our suite of Corporate Performance Indicators (*Annexure C*) will be used in our reporting to Council each quarter, and in our Annual report for 2023-24.

Our Services

- **Customer Experience** – Driving organisational improvement and innovation to improve the customer experience.
- **Information, Communication and Technology** – Providing support for over 1300 devices, 250 system users and 100 public access devices for libraries and community centres. Manages system security, asset maintenance and renewal.
- **Financial services** – Providing accounting and financial activities including procurement support, payments, collection of rates and debt recovery, treasury management and support to Council in financial decision making.
- **Organisational Development and Work Health & Safety** – Providing support to our people covering organisational development, human resource management, work health and safety and payroll.
- **Governance** – Supporting the Mayor, Councillors, CEO, the Administration and community with their legislated roles and responsibilities including coordination of Council & Committee meetings, elections, risk management, audit and review activities, and corporate planning and reporting activities.
- **Property Services** – Ongoing maintenance and management of Council's service centres and operational sites.
- **Information Systems** – Systems for the capture, dissemination, storage, security, accessibility and management of information received and generated by Council.
- **Emergency Management** – Working collaboratively to prevent, prepare, respond and recover from natural disasters and other hazards.

Our Objectives and Priorities

Objectives

O1 - We have the right people with the right knowledge and skills in the right jobs and they are supported and developed

O2 - Our customers find it easier to interact and do business with Council and have an improved customer experience

O3 - Our organisation is financially sustainable for both current and future generations

O4 - We actively represent our community

O5 - We are accountable, informed, and make decisions in the best interests of the whole community

O6 - Technology and innovation is utilised to better meet our community's expectations and deliver value for money

Priorities

O1.1 - Progressively enhance our safe systems of work to maintain emotional and physical safety of our people

O1.2 - Continue to develop a positive culture through supporting an equitable, diverse and continuously improving work environment

O1.3 - Support our people leaders in further developing the skills necessary to lead engaged and productive teams

O1.4 - Continue to support all staff through training, mentoring, coaching and development to enable the achievement of organisational and community goals

O2.1 - Develop our digital channels to better meet customers' current and future needs

O2.2 - Modernise our services and enhance the customer experience by making service delivery faster, more convenient and more proactive

O2.3 - Build the capabilities of our people through a focus on two-way communication, cooperation and placing customers at the centre of everything we do

O2.4 - Continuously strive to measure and improve performance and service delivery across all functions

O3.1 - Ensure the delivery of agreed strategic plan requirements whilst meeting endorsed long-term targets for a sustainable operating surplus and level of debt

O3.2 - Ensure that renewal of assets and the associated maintenance is based on current asset management plans which consider reviewed service levels and whole of life costing

O3.3 - Actively pursue alternative funding opportunities to reduce reliance on rates income

O3.4 - Assess the range and level of services undertaken to ensure they fulfil Council's legislative and strategic intent

O4.1 - Optimise opportunities for the community to access and provide input into the decision-making processes

O4.2 - Attract and develop a diverse and capable elected body that represents, promotes and reflects the composition of the community

O4.3 - Advocate to, and exert influence with, our stakeholders on behalf of our community to promote the needs and ambitions of the region

O4.4 - Explore council boundary reform options that best serve the community

O5.1 - Enhance governance structures and systems to prudently adapt to changing circumstances and meet our legislative obligations

O5.2 - Make evidence-based decisions and prudently assess the risks and opportunities to our community before taking action.

O5.3 - Demonstrate accountability through robust corporate planning and reporting that enhances performance, is relevant and easily accessible by the community

O6.1 - Progressively strengthen Council's systems security to minimise the impact of cyber attack

O6.2 - Utilise technology to enable more evidence based and efficient delivery of services to the community

O6.3 - Provide more resilient business systems by utilising cloud technologies where appropriate

O6.4 - Utilise our online engagement tools to reach a wider range of community members to obtain their views and input.

O6.5 - Support the delivery of services to the community through improved utilisation and connectivity of existing business systems

O6.6 - Ensure the way in which we provide our digital services delivers an enhanced experience for our community

Organisation - Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives are specially funded and priority activities, projects and programs of work that are planned over the next 3 years. “Capital” initiatives are generally related to new physical assets and infrastructure investment, while “Operating” initiatives are related to administrative projects, community programs and other activities and tasks.

Project ID	Strategic initiatives (Operating and Capital)	Area	Objective and/or Priority	Type	Budget 2023-24 (\$'000)	Long term financial plan (\$'000)	
						2024-25	2025-26
O1005	GPS for operational vehicles	Infrastructure & Operations	O1.1	Capital	40	-	-
O3002	Diversified income study	CEOs Office	O3.3	Operating	25	-	-
O4005	Representation review	CEOs Office	O4.4	Operating	15	15	-
O5005	Resource to manage building and swimming pool compliance inspections	Development & Regulatory Services	O5	Operating	89	92	-
O5006	Strategic Plan development	CEOs Office	O5	Operating	20	-	-
O5007	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system upgrade	Corporate Services	O5	Capital	300	340	-
O6007	Community perception survey	Community Capacity	O6	Operating	-	11	-

Legend: **G** Grant funding



Financial Overview

Key financial information for 2023-24 is summarised below:



Budget Summary		\$'000
● General Rates Income		44,583
● All Other Operating Income (including initiatives)		12,060
Total Operating Income		56,643
● Core Operating Expenses (excluding Initiatives)		54,050
● Operating Initiatives		1,516
Total Operating Expenditure		55,416
Operating Surplus		1,228
● Gross Capital Renewal Program Expenditure		10,424
● Gross capital expenditure on new /upgraded assets		7,485
Total Gross Capital Expenditure		17,909
Estimated New Borrowings		7,000

Council’s projected operating income is sufficient to meet projected operating expenses and means Council is financially sustainable.

Long Term Financial Plan

The *Local Government Act 1999* requires the Council to prepare and maintain a *Long Term Financial Plan* (LTFP) as part of its suite of strategic management plans.

Prior to the development of the *Annual Business Plan* a detailed review of the LTFP was undertaken in consultation with the community. The revised LTFP was adopted at Council’s 26 April 2023 meeting and can be found at ahc.sa.gov.au.

The key objective of our LTFP is to demonstrate that the Council is financially sustainable over the 10 year term of the LTFP, while achieving the objectives outlined in the *Strategic Plan*. This includes:

- Implementation and funding of the appropriate level of maintenance and renewal of the portfolio of infrastructure assets
- Meeting the ongoing expectations of service delivery to our community
- Managing the impact of cost shifting from other levels of government
- Enabling the delivery of strategies identified within the *Strategic Plan* as well as other endorsed Functional Strategies
- The appropriate use of debt as a means of funding new capital expenditure
- Ensuring the financial sustainability of Council’s operations.

The LTFP has been used to set the context and targets for the development of the 2023-24 Budget

Elements of the Budget: Income and Expenses

Income

Rate revenue accounts for approximately 80% of Council's operating income, while grants, fees and charges make up the majority of the other operating income. We continue to pursue grant income and partnerships with external funders where possible to minimise the requirement for revenue via rates.

Fees and Charges

Section 188 of the *Local Government Act 1999* sets out how fees and charges are managed in Council. Council reviews its fees and charges each year, in conjunction with the development of the annual budget to ensure that the fees proposed:

- reflect (or move progressively toward) the cost of the services' provision
- are comparable with market rates, where appropriate
- take into account benefit derived by users of community facilities
- are consistent with Council directions articulated through existing policy or plans
- are consistent with Council's LTFP assumptions

Generally, this has resulted in proposed fee increases that are in line with CPI, insofar as this is practicable.

Expenses

42% of the Council's operating expenditure is attributable to the payment of salaries and wages and around 37% is applied to materials, contracts and other expenses.

Key financial targets and financial sustainability

Financial sustainability is considered with reference to Council's agreed target ranges in three key ratios:

Indicator	Adopted Target	2023-24 Budget
Operating Surplus Ratio	1 - 5%	2.2%
Adjusted Operating Surplus Ratio	1 -5%	2.2%
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	25 - 75%	54%
Asset Renewal Funding Ratio	95- 105%	100%

In conclusion, Council aligns with the targets for all ratios which provides a level of certainty to the community that financial sustainability will be maintained.

Council's Operating Surplus is important to financial sustainability as it improves Council's ability to absorb the expenditure impacts from unexpected events such as bushfires, floods, or pandemics. It also provides capacity to reduce our liabilities (borrowings) by funding a proportion of new capital / upgrade expenditure.

Impact on ratepayers

The overall amount existing ratepayers will pay in general rates will increase on average by 6.9%. For a residential property of average value, this equates to an increase of approximately \$159 for the 2023-24 year. Rate increases may vary from the average where there has been new development, capital improvements or other significant change to the value of the property.

To reduce the impact of significant valuation changes for 2023-24 Council proposes:

- Applying a rate rebate to limit the maximum general rate increase to 15% across residential and primary production land use categories
- Make the rebate automatic (similar to the 2022-23 financial year) but also retaining an application process
- Retaining the exclusion of the cap for valuation increases due to improvements, changes in land use and rateability
- Adjusting the exclusion of change of ownership properties to those properties sold after 30 June 2022

Significant influences for the 2023-24 budget

A number of factors have influenced the preparation of Council's *2023-24 Annual Business Plan*. These include:

- Current financial climate resulting in ongoing cost pressures on interest rates, fuel, electricity, and other Council expenditure which traditionally tracks above the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Currently CPI increases are at historic high levels.
- Consideration of waste costs and volumes relating to recyclables, hard and green waste, including an increase in free green organic drop off days and anticipated movements in the solid waste levy imposed by the State Government
- Provision for Enterprise Development Agreements for staff which determines conditions of employment and provide for annual salary and wages increases, largely based on CPI and a separate increase of 0.5% in the Superannuation Guarantee levy
- Maintaining asset management (renewal) expenditure at a sufficient level to ensure long term maintenance of Council infrastructure, property and IT assets
- Increased maintenance requirements due to an increase in capital works and construction of new assets over recent years
- Ensuring key strategies from Council's *Strategic Plan* and Functional Strategies are costed appropriately
- The cessation of some of the Arts and Heritage Hub activities as a result of a significant upgrade of the site impacting on both revenue and expenditure
- A hardening insurance market resulting in premiums increasing significantly in excess of CPI

In addition, the Campbelltown City Council's (CCC) Woodforde/Rostrevor boundary reform proposal, if successful, has the potential to materially impact Council's financial sustainability. The latest advice received from the Boundaries Commission of SA is that they are seeking a cost estimate for the Inquiry. Once the estimate is obtained it will be provided to CCC and the inquiry will only proceed if CCC, on consideration of the cost estimate which they will be required to fund, provides a clear direction to proceed.

No financial or resource implications have been built into the 2023-24 budget at this stage.





Additional costs included in the 2023-24 budget

A number of additional costs have impacted on Council's Operating Surplus including:

- Higher interest rate costs for borrowings and Council's cash advance debenture
- Insurance premium increases & distribution reductions
- Fuel costs and in particular diesel.
- Electricity costs relating to community facilities and street lighting
- Increase in depreciation as a result of revaluations largely relating to cost escalation in infrastructure and building costs

These costs have been included in the *Annual Business Plan 2023-24* together with the financial impact of the following strategies that have been costed and included in the 2023-24 Budget:

- Additional Community & Recreation Facilities Framework implementation costs
- Further maintenance costs from new development at Hamilton Hill, Dunfield and The Crest
- Kerbside bin system collection frequency change and rural Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) trial
- Costs relating to the Towards Community Led Resilience Program noting that this program is wholly externally funded

Other Service changes undertaken in recent years impacting on costs

Over the years Council has increased its services and related service levels in many areas including:

- Tree Management / Horticultural program
- Playground/park furniture/cemeteries resourcing
- Sport & Recreation Planning
- Waste including impact of recyclables due to China Sword
- FABRIK Arts & Culture Hub development
- Economic Development resources to support the business community
- Disability and Community Well Being support
- Community Centre resourcing
- Digital Literacy
- CWMS oversight and operational support
- Emergency Management – COVID & Fires
- Other support area resourcing including Procurement, Governance and Event Management

These have resulted in offsetting savings implemented over a number of years to ensure that Council has maintained an Operating Surplus in line with the adopted LTFP and financial sustainability indicators.

For the 2023-24 financial year Council has implemented specific saving strategies in the order of \$830k to assist in keeping rate increases to the minimum possible whilst also implementing agreed new strategies.

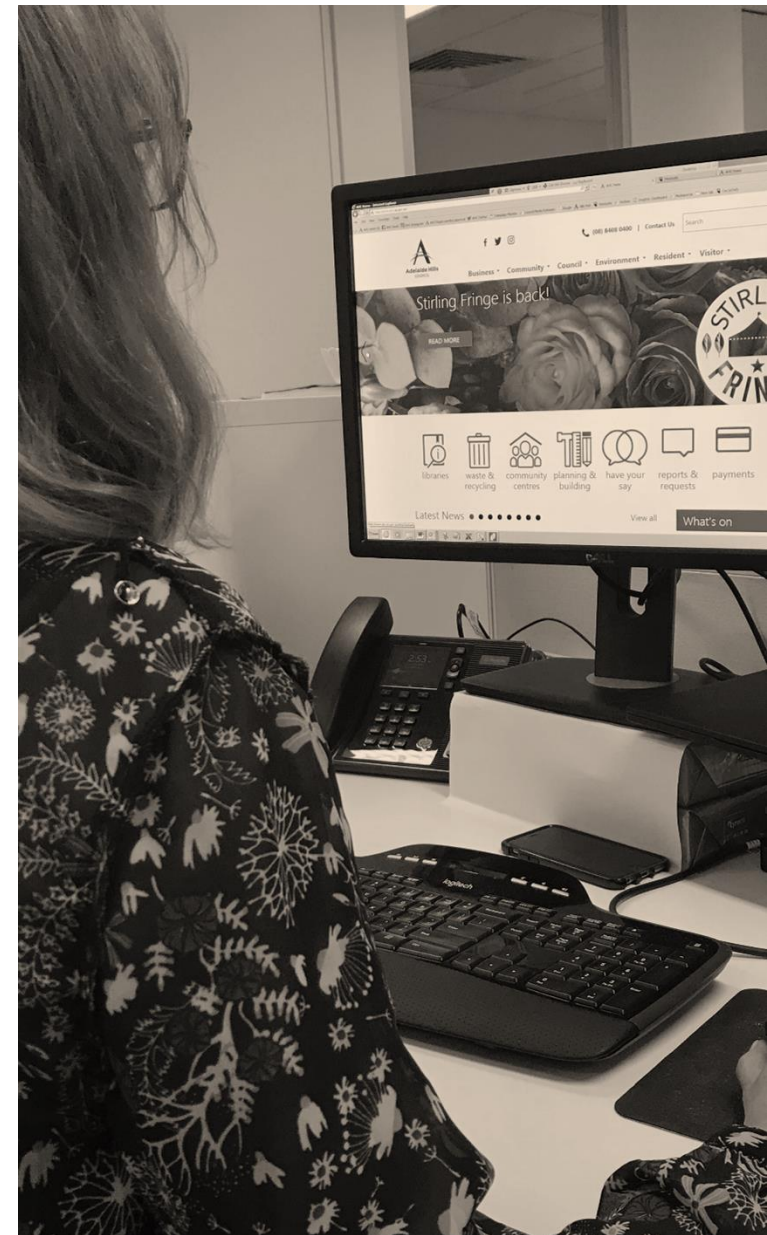
Savings Strategies included in the 2023-24 budget

To help address these emerging cost pressures and new strategies, further savings and efficiencies have been identified which will improve Council's operating result over the period of the LTFP.

Items included under the saving and efficiency strategies include:

- The reduction of materials, contract and other expenses budgets where contracts and costs are not linked to CPI or regular increases
- Adjustments to the operating hours for customer service in line with comparable organisations and service providers
- Reduction in funding for digital content, digital resources and CD collections in Libraries
- Changes in service levels for cleaning back of house areas and vermin baiting
- Reduction of technology costs associated with printing, desktop computing and mobile services to align with service delivery and usage patterns
- Reduction in subscription costs and funding relating to corporate membership fees including Murray Darling Association
- Insourcing opportunities including continuation of tree management and maintenance activities, signage provision for planning public notifications and club workshop training
- Vacancy management budget adjustments
- Leave management budget adjustments
- Other saving opportunities including reductions in media monitoring, major event attraction including limiting the commitment to Tour Down Under, signage, waste education (redirected to waste pilot) and river trash racks

These estimated savings of approximately \$830k have been factored into the *Annual Business Plan 2023-24*.





Borrowings

Borrowing is an important funding source, especially for expenditure relating to new Capital and is undertaken in accordance with Council's *Treasury Policy*. The key objective of the Policy is to manage the finances of the Council holistically in accordance with the overall financial sustainability strategies and targets.

An independent local government report on financial sustainability encourages the increased use of borrowings to promote intergenerational equity. This involves spreading costs in relation to significant capital expenditure based on the pattern of benefits over time so that one generation is not excessively subsidising another.

Where there is a persuasive argument relating to intergenerational equity, Council will consider the appropriate use of borrowings. This will be managed within financial targets with the intention that future cash flows are sufficient to recoup borrowings with minimal impact on general operations over the medium term.

Estimated New Fixed Term Borrowing as shown in the following table for 2023-24 is \$7.0m and together with a minor decrease in Council's Cash Advance Debenture results in an estimated borrowings at 30 June 2024 of \$23.0m.

Borrowing	\$'000
Forecast Opening Balance of Borrowings July 2023	16,651
Estimated New Borrowing for 2023-24	7,000
Repayment of principal for 2023-24	(561)
Estimated movement in Cash Advance Debenture for 2023-24	(70)
Forecast Closing Balance of Borrowings June 2024	23,020
Split as follows:	
Cash Advance Debenture (Short Term Borrowings)	8,277
Fixed Term Borrowings	14,168
Lease Liabilities	575
Forecast Closing Balance of all Borrowings June 2024	23,020

Operating Budget by Directorate and Function

Directorate	Function	Revenue			Expenditure			Net Cost /	Staff FTE
		2023-24 LTFP Target \$'000	2023-24 Budget \$'000	Variance Fav/(Unfav) \$'000	2023-24 LTFP Target \$'000	2023-24 Budget \$'000	Variance Fav/(Unfav) \$'000	(Revenue) 2023-24 Budget \$'000	
CEO	CEO Office	0	0	0	356	374	(18)	374	1.0
	Governance and Performance	37	37	0	2,187	2,187	0	2,150	4.0
	CEO Total	37	37	0	2,543	2,561	(18)	2,525	5.0
Community Capacity	Communications, Engagement & Events	0	0	0	754	758	(4)	758	4.2
	Community Development (M&P)	0	0	0	442	442	(0)	442	2.3
	Cultural Development	0	0	0	195	195	(0)	195	1.0
	Customer Experience	0	0	0	145	145	(0)	145	1.0
	Community Resilience	584	533	(51)	584	533	51	0	3.2
	Customer Service	0	0	0	908	923	(16)	923	8.6
	Director's Office Community Capacity	0	0	0	359	402	(43)	402	1.7
	Economic Development	95	110	15	597	623	(27)	513	2.0
	FABRIK Arts & Heritage Hub	80	80	0	452	453	(0)	373	2.9
	Grants & Partnerships	0	0	0	216	215	1	215	0.0
	Hills Connected Communities Projects	67	72	4	68	72	(4)	(0)	0.6
	Library Services	349	343	(6)	2,096	2,104	(8)	1,761	15.4
	Positive Ageing (Collaborative)	86	90	4	86	90	(5)	0	0.7
	Positive Ageing (Home Support)	1,122	1,152	30	1,181	1,204	(23)	52	6.1
	The Summit Community Centre	16	16	0	206	211	(4)	195	1.6
	Torrens Valley Community Centre	40	40	0	208	209	(0)	168	1.6
	Volunteering	0	0	0	92	96	(3)	96	0.7
	Youth Development	2	2	0	180	181	(0)	179	1.0
	Community Capacity Total	2,441	2,437	(4)	8,768	8,855	(87)	6,418	54.5
Corporate Services	Cemeteries	369	369	0	167	170	(3)	(198)	1.0
	Director's Office Corporate Services	6	6	0	411	406	5	401	1.2
	Financial Services	47,730	47,752	22	4,031	3,988	44	(43,764)	9.8
	General Property	126	83	(43)	1,838	1,888	(50)	1,805	7.0
	Information Services	0	0	0	2,783	2,800	(17)	2,800	12.0
	Old Woollen Mills Precinct - Lobethal	340	340	0	248	242	6	(98)	1.0
	People and Culture	1	0	(1)	809	807	1	807	6.3
	Sport and Recreation	11	11	0	795	828	(33)	816	3.4
	Corporate Services Total	48,582	48,560	(21)	11,082	11,129	(47)	(37,431)	41.7

Operating Budget by Directorate and Function

Directorate	Function	Revenue			Expenditure			Net Cost / (Revenue)	Staff FTE
		2023-24 LTFP Target \$'000	2023-24 Budget \$'000	Variance Fav/(Unfav) \$'000	2023-24 LTFP Target \$'000	2023-24 Budget \$'000	Variance Fav/(Unfav) \$'000	2023-24 Budget \$'000	2023-24 Budget
Development & Regulatory Services	Animal Management	561	550	(11)	533	531	2	(19)	3.2
	Director's Office DRS	0	0	0	381	377	3	377	2.0
	Fire Prevention	15	115	100	172	178	(6)	63	1.3
	Parking and By-Laws	50	95	46	125	125	(0)	29	0.8
	Planning & Development	705	703	(1)	2,351	2,328	24	1,624	16.3
	Policy Planning	0	0	0	174	197	(23)	197	1.0
	Public Health	179	179	0	578	596	(18)	416	3.8
	Development & Regulatory Services Total	1,510	1,644	134	4,313	4,332	(18)	2,688	28.5
Infrastructure & Operations	Civil Services	2,064	2,064	0	5,583	5,659	(76)	3,596	44.2
	CWMS	1,779	1,743	(36)	1,120	1,097	23	(646)	1.2
	Director's Office Infrastructure & Operations	0	0	0	331	351	(20)	351	2.0
	Emergency Management	0	0	0	121	120	1	120	0.2
	Open Space - Operations	0	0	0	3,637	3,583	55	3,583	27.8
	Open Space - Biodiversity	0	0	0	751	814	(63)	814	3.6
	Strategic Assets	0	0	0	11,028	11,037	(9)	11,037	3.8
	Sustainability	0	0	0	270	296	(26)	296	1.4
	Waste	157	159	2	5,578	5,581	(4)	5,422	1.4
	Infrastructure & Operations Total	3,999	3,965	(34)	28,418	28,538	(120)	24,573	85.6
ORGANISATION TOTAL		56,568	56,643	75	55,125	55,416	(290)	(1,228)	215

Capital Budget Overview

The 2023-24 Capital Budget continues to focus on the renewal of infrastructure. The Council has in excess of \$600m (Current Replacement Values) of infrastructure assets that it manages, to ensure that our current and future communities have access to the ongoing services these assets provide.

This year our capital works program will include:



- **\$10.424m** Capital renewal detailed in the Capital Expenditure Renewal Summary Table (to the right)
- **\$7.485m** in capital expenditure on new or upgraded assets, detailed in the strategic initiative pages

The total of \$17.909m for the capital works program is less than the Long Term Financial Plan target of \$19.600m and is considered to be the appropriate level of sustainable investment to meet the Council strategic goal to have a proactive long term view regarding the renewal and maintenance of its infrastructure.

As in previous years, a significant portion of the program is applied to road works, with buildings, footpaths, stormwater and plant accounting for a large proportion of the remaining allocation.

To see a detailed listing of our Capital projects, refer to the *Capital Works Program 2023-24* published on our website.

Capital Expenditure Renewal Summary

Asset Category	2023-24 Allocation \$'000	LTFP Target Renewal \$'000	Variance to LTFP Fav/(Unfav) \$'000
Bridges	310	313	3
Buildings	360	550	190
CWMS	75	597	522
Footpaths	421	424	3
Kerb & Water	67	68	1
Other*	226	198	(28)
Road Pavement	2,080	1,618	(462)
Road Seal	1,995	1,992	(3)
Shoulders	284	284	0
Sport and Recreation (including Playgrounds)	240	554	314
Stormwater	115	113	(2)
Unsealed Roads	834	1,302	468
Plant and Fleet	1,844	1,844	0
Information, Communication & Technology	465	505	40
Minor Plant & Equipment (including Library)	60	62	2
Project Delivery Costs	1,048	1,048	0
RENEWALS	10,424	11,472	1,048

*Other includes Guardrail, Retaining Walls, Cemeteries, Street Furniture, and Traffic Control

Rates Overview

In setting the rates for 2023-24, Council proposes to change its current method of rating so that there is a differential rate for each land use together with a fixed charge, applied against the capital value of properties. Council considers this to be a fair and equitable method of rating for the Adelaide Hills Council.

Rates are a form of property taxation, and property values determine how much each property contributes. This system of taxation means that the rates paid may not directly relate to the services used by each ratepayer.

The 2023-24 budget was developed from Council's LTFP which had a rate revenue target that incorporated a general rates increase of 6.9% and estimated new development of 0.9%. The 6.9% has been set at 1.0% below the Annual March 2023 Consumer Price Index. This is considered appropriate to maintain an Operating Surplus in line with financial sustainability indicator targets, while keeping the impact on Council ratepayers to an acceptable level.

The new development (budgeted at 0.9% mentioned above) is defined as capital improvements to existing properties and changes to value as a result of land divisions. This is primarily related to the Woodforde, Mount Torrens and Inverbrackie developments.

This year's valuation of the Council area by the Valuer-General has continued to show variability in valuation increases across all land uses. As such, Council is proposing to reduce the impact of significant valuation changes for 2023-24 by:

- Differentiating all land uses to enable differences in valuation for land use categories to be taken into account
- Setting the maximum general rate increase at 15%
- Applying a rate rebate to residential and primary production land use categories where the increase exceeds 15%
- Make the rebate automatic (similar to the 2022-23 financial year) but also retaining an application process
- Excluding the rebate on properties where there is any change of rateability, land use, improvements or change in ownership of properties from the previous year

The table below provides a summary of the average residential rate increases that have been applied in recent years as well as the proposed increase for 2023-24 as discussed above.

Description	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
To meet inflation (CPI)	1.25%	2.3%	1.8%	2.4%	1.5%	4.7%	6.9%
To fund increased capital renewal	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.55%	1.0%	0.2%	-
Solid Waste Levy	-	-	\$10 (0.5%)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCREASE	2.25%	3.3%	3.3%	2.95%	2.5%	4.9%	6.9%



Summary Basis of Rating (*Rating Policy*)

Key elements of the Policy include:

Rating Structure

- The Council is proposing that differential rates be applied to all rateable properties based on their predominant land use. This is a change in rating structure from previous years and will allow Council to ensure that the proposed average rate increase for existing ratepayers is consistent across all land uses before other factors relating to the cost of services and comparability to other councils are considered for individual land uses.
- A fixed charge rating structure that includes a fixed charge applying to all properties. This charge is to increase from \$733 to \$784 which represents a 6.9% increase in line with the average increase previously highlighted.

Stirling Separate Rate

- A separate rate for businesses in Stirling that generates \$110k [increased from \$95k per Stirling Business Association (SBA) request] that is distributed to the SBA to promote Stirling as a destination, the "Gateway to the Hills" through a new funding agreement. Council also sets a maximum amount ('top') and a minimum amount ('tail') per property each financial year for this separate rate.
- Council also proposes in accord with Council's taxation principles to increase the top and tail of the separate rate in line with CPI to better maintain an even distribution across all separate ratepayers.

Regional Landscape Levy

The Regional Landscape (RL) Levy is a State Tax paid by all ratepayers and is collected by Council on behalf of the Hills and Fleurieu Regional Landscape Board. For 2023-24 there is a significant increase of 47% in this tax imposed on Council's ratepayers by the Board.

Other Rates and Levies

A separate rate to provide for the sealing in 2014-15 of the northern end of Verrall Road, Upper Hermitage. This rate is levied on those properties that actually adjoin this section of road. The 2023-24 financial year is the last year of this separate rate.

Help when you need it

An empathetic and individually tailored approach is provided to ratepayers who are experiencing financial difficulties through the provision of a number of alternative arrangements made available to ratepayers including:

- smaller, more regular payment options
- acceptance of reduced payments toward Council Rates arrangement
- Deferral or postponement of payment of rates in whole or in part for an agreed period
- consideration of the waiving of fines & interest where appropriate

The *Rating Policy* also includes a number of options to address financial hardship specifically targeted to those ratepayers that have been significantly and permanently impacted by events such as the current financial climate, COVID and bushfires.



Impact of Office of Valuer-General Valuation Changes

Council's valuations used for rating purposes are undertaken by the Office of the Valuer-General.

For 2023-24 valuation data received from the Valuer-General indicates that there is still significant variability in valuation increases within the Council area across all land uses as well as townships/suburbs.

This is likely to result in a number of rate assessments experiencing a change in rates payable higher or lower than the average rate increase proposed.

As a response to the impact of these market adjusted valuation changes from the Valuer-General, Council's rating policy position for the *2023-24 Annual Business Plan* is to apply a rebate to reduce the impact of significant valuation changes for 2023-24.

It is proposed to effectively cap the maximum rate increase at 15%.

The table below summarises key details of the rebate.

Rebate to limit the maximum general rate increase to 15%
Applied automatically but also retaining an application process
Maximum general rate increase 15%
Applied to residential and primary production land use categories
Does not apply to properties sold after 30 June 2022
Does not apply to properties with a change in land use or rateability from 2022-23
Does not apply to properties with new development / improvements since the 2022-23 valuation

Rate Statistics

Council has just over **19,100** assessments split by land use as follows:



13 750 +
Residential



680
Commercial and
Industrial Light



< 50
Industrial Other



3,000 +
Primary
production



620 +
Vacant



290
Other



830 +
Non-rateable

Rates Modelling

The valuation of the Council area by the Valuer-General has been completed and information provided to reflects an average increase of over 13% in valuation for existing properties.

Analysis indicates that:

- Residential properties, representing over 70% of the overall valuation, has an average valuation **increase** of nearly 13%
- Primary production properties, being 17% of total assessments, have an average valuation **increase** of just over **14%**
- Commercial and Industrial Light properties have had an average valuation **increase** of between **20% - 30%**
- Industrial Other properties have had an average valuation **increase** of just under **19%**
- Vacant land valuations have **increased** on average by **12%**.

The percentage of total rate revenue required from each land use category takes into account the proposed rating structure changes to phase in higher differential rates in relation to Commercial, Industrial and Vacant Land land use categories across a three-year period and this breakup is used to determine the rate in the dollar (differential rate) for each category to provide an overall increase in general rate revenue of 6.9% excluding new development.

Allocation of Rates Burden

The Council uses the capital value method of valuing properties. This method values the land and all improvements on the land. It is the most widely-used method across South Australian councils.

Council considers this valuation method the most equitable method to spread the rates burden across the measure of wealth within the Adelaide Hills Council area. It equates to the taxation principle that people should contribute to community, social and physical infrastructure in accordance with their capacity to pay as measured by property wealth.

Further, in determining how rates are applied, and the rate in the dollar, Council has also made specific policy choices in relation to the use of differential rating for each land use category and a fixed charge rather than a minimum rate to allocate the rates burden across the community.

Differential Rates

Section 153 of *Local Government Act 1999* (the “Act”) allows councils to ‘differentiate’ rates based on the use of the land, the locality of the land, the use and locality of the land or on some other basis determined by the council. The application of a Differential General Rate is generally intended to alter the amount payable by particular land uses.

In formulating the rating structure, Council has considered issues of consistency and comparability of other councils and across council areas in the imposition of rates on various sectors of the business and wider community. Currently Council’s average residential rate is high by comparison to other councils whereas the average commercial and industrial rate is low.

As a result, Council proposes a change in rating structure by phasing in higher differential rates as follows:

- Properties categorised as “Commercial” or “Industrial Light” to pay a higher differential rate in the dollar than residential with the increase of 35% relative to the current differential rate to be phased over 3 years.
- Properties categorised as “Industrial Other” to pay a higher differential rate in the dollar than residential with an increase of 60% relative to the current differential rate to be phased in equally over three years
- Those properties categorised as “Vacant Land” within township zones as defined by Council to pay a higher differential rate in the dollar than residential with an increase of 30% relative to the current differential rate to be phased in equally over three years.

Council conducted public consultation in accordance with S156(14a) of the Act on the proposed Rate Structure Change above in conjunction with the broader Annual Business Plan consultation.

The percentage of total rate revenue required from each land use category after taking into account the proposed rating structure changes will be used to determine the rate in the dollar (differential rate) for each category.

Fixed Charge

Under the Act, Council has some mechanisms available to enable all ratepayers to contribute more equitably to the administration of Council’s services and the development and maintenance of the community’s infrastructure. Council considers a fixed charge (applying equally to all rateable properties) to be the most fair and equitable means of achieving this.

For the 2023-24 year, it is proposed to increase the fixed charge from \$733 to \$784, representing a 6.9% increase in line with the overall average increase in rates.

Community Wastewater Management System

The Council provides Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) to some areas within the Council district. To fund the provision of this service Council imposes an annual service charge to recover the cost to the Council of establishing, operating, maintaining, improving and replacing infrastructure (taking into account depreciation of any assets and including future capital works).

Council undertakes an annual detailed assessment of the cost of providing CWMS services, in accordance with the guidelines set by the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA). For the 2023-24 financial year, the CWMS service charges have been retained at the same level as the previous year to achieve the full cost recovery.



Annexure A: Budgeted Financial Statements

Adelaide Hills Council
BUDGETED UNIFORM PRESENTATION OF FINANCES
2023-24 Budget

2022-23 Budget \$'000		2023-24 Proposed Budget \$'000
	INCOME	
44,384	Rates	48,357
1,378	Statutory charges	1,544
903	User charges	968
1,141	Grants, subsidies and contributions - Capital	788
5,112	Grants, subsidies and contributions - Operating	4,299
22	Investment income	25
236	Reimbursements	196
236	Other income	367
100	Net gain - equity accounted Council businesses	100
53,512	Total Income	56,644
	EXPENSES	
20,846	Employee costs	23,172
20,656	Materials, contracts & other expenses	20,556
10,446	Depreciation, amortisation & impairment	11,106
594	Finance costs	582
-	- Net loss - equity accounted Council businesses	-
52,542	Total Expenses	55,416
	970 NET BUDGETED SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) BEFORE CAPITAL AMOUNTS	1,228
	Net Outlays on Existing Assets	
(10,740)	Capital Expenditure on Renewal and Replacement of Existing Assets	(10,424)
636	Proceeds from Sale of Replaced Assets	899
10,446	Depreciation	11,106
342	NET OUTLAYS ON EXISTING ASSETS	1,581
	Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets	
(8,629)	Capital Expenditure on New and Upgraded Assets & Remediation costs	(7,485)
5,621	Capital Grants and Monetary Contributions for New and Upgraded Assets	2,150
1,494	Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Assets	124
(1,514)	NET OUTLAYS ON NEW AND UPGRADED ASSETS	(5,211)
	(202) NET LENDING/ (BORROWING) RESULT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR	(2,401)
(24,015)	Net Financial Liabilities at Beginning of Year	(24,746)
(429)	Decrease / (increase) in Other	(3,440)
(100)	Non Cash Equity Movement	(100)
(24,746)	Net Financial Liabilities at End of Year	(30,688)

In any one year, the financing transactions identified below are associated with either applying surplus funds stemming from a net lending result or accommodating the funding requirement stemming from a net borrowing result.

Financing Transactions

	(202) NET LENDING/ (BORROWING) RESULT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR	(2,401)
670	Proceeds from Bonds & Aged Care Facilities deposits	-
(859)	Increase/(Decrease) in Short Term Draw Down	(70)
2,700	(Increase)/Decrease in Cash & Investments	-
-	- Estimate of Capital Carry Forwards to be adjusted this year	(3,000)
(2,922)	(Increase)/Decrease in Working Capital	-
(271)	Principal Repayments on Borrowings	(561)
(429)	Repayment of Lease Liabilities	(440)
(403)	Reinstatement/Restoration Provision Payment	(427)
(1,184)	Retirement Village Debenture Payment on Sale	-
(100)	Non Cash Equity Movement	(100)
(3,000)	Reduction in Borrowings/(New Borrowings) for Financial Year	(7,000)

It should be noted that the figures in this appendix have been rounded and consequently individual sub-totals, whilst being correct, may differ slightly from the sum of the rounded amounts.

Adelaide Hills Council
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
2023-24 Budget

2022-23 Budget		2023-24 Proposed Budget
\$'000		\$'000
	INCOME	
44,384	Rates	48,357
1,378	Statutory charges	1,544
903	User charges	968
1,141	Grants, subsidies and contributions - Capital	788
5,112	Grants, subsidies and contributions - Operating	4,299
22	Investment income	25
236	Reimbursements	196
236	Other income	367
100	Net gain - equity accounted Council businesses	100
53,512	Total Income	56,644
	EXPENSES	
20,846	Employee costs	23,172
20,656	Materials, contracts & other expenses	20,556
10,446	Depreciation, amortisation & impairment	11,106
594	Finance costs	582
-	Net loss - equity accounted Council businesses	-
52,542	Total Expenses	55,416
970	OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	1,228
764	Asset disposal & fair value adjustments	(50)
5,621	Amounts received specifically for new or upgraded assets	2,150
-	Physical Resources Received Free of Charge	-
7,355	NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	3,328
5,300	Changes in revaluation surplus - infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	5,687
-	Other Comprehensive Income	-
-	Share of Other Comprehensive Income JV	-
5,300	Total Other Comprehensive Income	5,687
12,655	TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	9,015

Adelaide Hills Council
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
2023-24 Budget

2022-23 Budget		2023-24 Proposed Budget
\$'000	ASSETS	\$'000
	Current Assets	
515	Cash and cash equivalents	515
3,025	Trade & other receivables	3,025
32	Inventories	32
<u>3,572</u>		<u>3,572</u>
-	Non-current Assets held for Sale	-
<u>3,572</u>	Total Current Assets	<u>3,572</u>
	Non-current Assets	
-	Financial assets	-
2,516	Equity accounted investments in Council businesses	2,616
458,747	Infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	473,605
<u>461,263</u>	Total Non-current Assets	<u>476,221</u>
<u>464,835</u>	Total Assets	<u>479,793</u>
	LIABILITIES	
	Current Liabilities	
6,215	Trade & other payables	6,215
8,347	Borrowings - Short Term Draw Down	8,277
936	Borrowings - Other	961
3,669	Provisions	3,242
<u>19,167</u>	Total Current Liabilities	<u>18,695</u>
	Non-current Liabilities	
-	Trade & Other Payables	-
7,368	Borrowings	13,782
1,751	Provisions	1,751
<u>9,119</u>	Total Non-current Liabilities	<u>15,533</u>
<u>28,286</u>	Total Liabilities	<u>34,228</u>
<u>436,549</u>	NET ASSETS	<u>445,565</u>
	EQUITY	
155,319	Accumulated Surplus	158,648
281,131	Asset Revaluation Reserves	286,818
99	Other Reserves	99
<u>436,549</u>	TOTAL EQUITY	<u>445,565</u>
<u>24,746</u>	NET FINANCIAL LIABILITIES	<u>30,688</u>

Adelaide Hills Council

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY 2023-24 Budget

	Accumulated Surplus	Asset Revaluation Reserve	Other Reserves	TOTAL EQUITY
2023-24 Proposed Budget	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at end of previous reporting period	155,319	281,131	99	436,549
Net Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	3,328	-	-	3,328
Other Comprehensive Income				
Gain on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	-	5,687	-	5,687
Transfers between reserves		-		-
Balance at end of period	158,648	286,818	99	445,565

2022-23 Budget				
Balance at end of previous reporting period	147,964	275,831	99	423,894
Restated opening balance				
Net Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	7,355	-	-	7,355
Other Comprehensive Income				
Changes in revaluation surplus - infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	-	5,300	-	5,300
Share of Other Comprehensive Income Equity Businesses				-
Other Equity Adjustments - equity accounted Council businesses				-
Transfers between reserves				-
Balance at end of period	155,319	281,131	99	436,549

FINANCIAL INDICATORS

2022-23 Budget	2023-24 Budget
Operating Surplus Ratio	
1.8% <u>Operating Surplus</u> Total Operating Revenue	2.2%
Operating Surplus Ratio using Underlying Surplus	
1.4% <u>Operating Surplus</u> Total Operating Revenue	2.2%
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	
46% <u>Net Financial Liabilities</u> Total Operating Revenue	54%
Asset Renewal Funding Ratio	
104% <u>Asset Renewals</u> Infrastructure & Asset Management Plan required expenditure	100%

Adelaide Hills Council

CASH FLOW STATEMENT 2023-24 Budget

2022-23 Budget		2023-24 Proposed Budget
\$'000	<u>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</u>	\$'000
	<u>Receipts</u>	
44,384	Rates - general & other	48,357
1,378	Fees & other charges	1,544
903	User charges	968
6,253	Grants	5,087
22	Investments	25
236	Reimbursements	196
236	Other revenues	367
	<u>Payments</u>	
(20,846)	Employee costs	(23,172)
(21,059)	Materials, contracts & other expenses	(20,984)
(594)	Finance payments	(582)
10,913	NET CASH USED IN OPERATING ACTIVITIES	11,807
	<u>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</u>	
	<u>Receipts</u>	
3,000	Proceeds from Borrowings	7,000
670	Proceeds from Aged Care Facility Deposits	-
	<u>Payments</u>	
(271)	Repayment from Borrowings	(561)
(429)	Repayment of Lease Liabilities	(440)
(1,184)	Repayments of Aged Care facility deposits	-
1,786	NET CASH USED IN FINANCING ACTIVITIES	5,999
	<u>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</u>	
	<u>Receipts</u>	
2,699	Grants for new or upgraded assets	2,150
636	Sale of replaced assets	899
1,494	Sale of surplus assets	124
	<u>Payments</u>	
(8,629)	Expenditure on new/ upgraded assets	(9,495)
(10,740)	Expenditure on renewal/ replacement of assets	(11,414)
(14,540)	NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(17,736)
(1,841)	NET INCREASE / (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD	70
(5,991)	CASH AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	(7,832)
(7,832)	CASH AT END OF YEAR	(7,762)
	515 Cash & Investments	515
(8,347)	Short Term Drawdown	(8,277)
(7,832)		(7,762)



Annexure B: Statement of Expected Rate Revenue

Statement of Expected Rate Revenue

Please note: These figures represent a considered estimate of Expected Rate Revenue based on the most current information available at the time of going out to consultation on the DRAFT Annual Business Plan and Budget (ABP&B). This information is updated regularly and therefore these figures may be subject to confirmation at the time of actual adoption of the ABP&B.

Expected Rates Revenue

	2021/22 (BR3)	2022/23 (estimated)	Change	Comments
General Rates Revenue				
General Rates (existing properties)		\$41,038,396 (a)		The proposed rates increase for 2022/23 is 4.9% on average.
General Rates (new properties)		\$439,604 (b)		
General Rates (GROSS)	\$39,121,445	\$41,478,000 (c)		
Less: Mandatory Rebates	(\$299,579)	(\$314,700) (d)		
General Rates (NET)	\$38,821,866	\$41,163,300 (e)	6.0%	
	(e)=(c)+(d)			
Other Rates (inc. service charges)				
Regional Landscape Levy	\$968,260	\$1,117,410 (f)		The Regional Landscape Levy is a state tax collected on behalf of the Hills & Fleurieu Regional Landscape Board by the Dept of Environment, Water & Natural Resources. It is not retained by council.
CWMS	\$1,819,764	\$1,677,900 (g)		(\$415) for each vacant land property and (\$826) for each occupied property.
Stirling Business Separate Rate	\$95,000	\$95,000 (h)		A separate rate for businesses in Stirling will be applied to carry out the activity of promoting and enhancing business viability, profitability, trade & commerce within the zone.
Verrall Road Separate Rate	\$5,148	\$5,148 (i)		\$858 per property.
	<u>\$41,710,038</u>	<u>\$44,058,758</u>		
Less: Discretionary Rebates	(\$215,892)	(\$168,300) (j)		
Total Council Rate Revenue	\$40,525,886	\$42,773,048 (k)	5.5%	Excluding the Regional Landscape Levy
	(k)=(e)+(g)+(h)+(i)+(j)			

Estimated growth in number of rateable properties

Number of rateable properties	18,061 <i>Actual</i>	18,196 <i>Estimate</i>	(l)	0.7%
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'Growth' is defined in the regulations as where new properties have been created which has added rateable properties to council's ratepayer base. Growth can also increase the need and expenditure related to infrastructure, services and programs which support these properties and residents.

Estimated average General Rates per rateable property

Average per rateable property	\$2,166	\$2,280	(m)	5.2%
	(o)=(c)/(n)			

Councils use property valuations to calculate each rateable property's contribution to the required rate revenue total. Councils do not automatically receive more money because property values increase but this may alter how rates are apportioned (or divided) across each ratepayer (ie. some people may pay more or less rates, this is dependent on the change in value of their property relative to the overall valuation changes across the council area).

The total General Rates paid by all rateable properties will equal the amount adopted in the budget.

These 'averages' are based on the total of all rateable properties and are therefore not necessarily indicative of either the rate or change in rates that all ratepayers will experience.

Notes

(d) Councils are **required** under the Local Government Act to provide a rebate to qualifying properties under a number of categories:

Health Services - 100 per cent	Religious purposes - 100 per cent	Royal Zoological Society of SA - 100 per cent
Community Services - 75 per cent	Public Cemeteries - 100 per cent	Educational purposes - 75 per cent

The rates which are foregone via Mandatory Rebates are redistributed across the ratepayer base (ie. all other ratepayers are subsidising the rates contribution for those properties who receive the rebate).

(e) Presented as required by the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011* reg 6(1)(ea)

Please Note: The percentage figure in (e) relates to the change in the total amount of General Rates revenue to be collected from all rateable properties, not from individual rateable properties (ie. individual rates will not necessarily change by this figure).

(f) Councils are required under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* to collect the levy on all rateable properties on behalf of the State Government. The levy helps to fund the operations of regional landscape boards who have responsibility for the management of the State's natural resources.

(g) Community Wastewater Management Systems are provided by council to some areas within the council district. To fund the provision of this service, Council imposes an annual service charge to recover the cost of establishing, maintaining, improving and replacing infrastructure.

(j) A council **may** grant a rebate of rates or service charges in a number of circumstances. The rates which are foregone via Discretionary Rebates are redistributed across the ratepayer base (ie. all other ratepayers are subsidising the rates contribution for those properties who receive the rebate).

(k) Expected Total Council Rate Revenue excludes other charges such as penalties for late payment and legal and other costs recovered.

(l) 'Growth' as defined in the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011* reg 6(2)

Statement on Expected Rate Revenue

Please note: These figures represent a considered estimate of Expected Rate Revenue based on the most current information available at the time of going out to consultation on the DRAFT Annual Business Plan and Budget (ABP&B). This information is updated regularly and therefore these figures may be subject to confirmation at the time of actual adoption of the ABP&B.

Expected Rates Revenue

	Total expected revenue			No. of rateable properties		Average per rateable property		
	2021/22	2022/23	Change	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	Change
Land Use (General Rates - GROSS)								
Residential	\$29,256,840	\$31,332,333	7%	13,530	13,653	\$2,162	\$2,295	(p) \$133
Commercial - Shop	\$535,274	\$568,376	6%	257	272	\$2,083	\$2,090	(p) \$7
Commercial - Office	\$95,766	\$93,091	-3%	61	58	\$1,570	\$1,605	(p) \$35
Commercial - Other	\$659,108	\$689,249	5%	300	303	\$2,197	\$2,275	(p) \$78
Industry - Light	\$49,831	\$49,958	0%	33	33	\$1,510	\$1,514	(p) \$4
Industry - Other	\$143,568	\$145,257	1%	45	46	\$3,190	\$3,158	(p) -\$33
Primary Production	\$7,113,465	\$7,273,563	2%	3,030	3,009	\$2,348	\$2,417	(p) \$70
Vacant Land	\$865,374	\$917,027	6%	627	640	\$1,380	\$1,433	(p) \$53
Other	\$402,219	\$409,146	2%	178	182	\$2,260	\$2,248	(p) -\$12
Total Land Use	\$39,121,445	\$41,478,000	6.0%	18,061	18,196	\$2,166	\$2,280	(p) \$113
GRAND TOTAL (GROSS)	\$39,121,445	\$41,478,000	6.0%	18,061	18,196	\$2,166	\$2,280	(p) \$113
Variance Check (adopted = final rates generated)	\$0	\$0		0	0			

Council uses a differential rating system, using Land Use Codes as the factor to apply such differential rates.

In applying differential general rates, council has considered and is satisfied that the rating system addresses the issue of consistency and comparability across all council areas, particularly as it relates to the various sectors of the business and wider community.

Fixed Charge

	Total expected revenue			Charge		
	2021/22	2022/23	Change	2021/22	2022/23	Change
Fixed Charge	\$12,363,912	\$13,084,046	5.8%	\$699	\$733	(q) \$34

A fixed charge ensures all rateable properties pay a base amount towards the cost of administering council activities and maintaining the services and infrastructure that supports each property.

Rates based on capital values are then applied in addition to the fixed charge.

Council cannot raise more than 50% of its general rate revenue from the fixed charge component.

In 2022/23 council proposes to raise 32% of its general rate revenue by way of the fixed charge.

This revenue amount is **included** in the General Rates GROSS figure at (c).

Adopted valuation method

Capital Value

Council has the option of adopting one of three valuation methodologies to assess the properties in its area for rating purposes:

Capital Value – the value of the land and all improvements on the land;

Site Value – the value of the land and any improvements which predominantly affect the amenity of use of the land, such as drainage works, but excluding the value of buildings and other improvements (Note: Site Value will cease to be an option from 1 Sept 2023); or

Annual Value – a valuation of the rental potential of the property.

Council continues to use Capital Value as the basis for valuing land within the council area. Council considers that this method of valuing land provides the fairest method of distributing the rate burden across all ratepayers on the following basis:

- The equity principle of taxation requires that taxpayers of greater wealth pay more tax than those of lesser wealth.

- Property value is a relatively good indicator of wealth and capital value, which closely approximates the market value of a property and provides the best indicator of overall property value.

Notes

(p) Average per rateable property calculated as General Rates for category, including any fixed charge but excluding any separate rates, *divided* by number of rateable properties within that category in the relevant financial year.

(q) A fixed charge can be levied against the whole of an allotment (including land under a separate lease or licence) and only one fixed charge can be levied against two or more pieces of adjoining land (whether intercepted by a road or not) if they are owned by the same owner and occupied by the same occupier.

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.



Annexure C: Corporate Performance Indicators

ID	Corporate Performance Indicator	Target	Strategic Objective	Reporting Frequency
Goal 1: A functional Built Environment				
CPI-B01	Inspections of footpaths in high priority zones	100%	B1	Annually
CPI-B02	Delivery of capital works program	90%	B1	Quarterly
CPI-B03	Compliance inspections after development completion notification, completed within 10 business days.	100%	B2	Quarterly
CPI-B04	Compliance inspections completed within 5 business days of notification of alleged unlawful development	80%	B2	Biannually
CPI-B05	Comparison of Council's Energy Usage (Kwh) against previous financial year	Less than previous financial year	B3	Annually
CPI-B06	Tonnes of recycled plastic content in products purchased by Council	25	B3	Annually
CPI-B07	Operational tasks completed within the Civil Zone Maintenance Program	80%	B4	Quarterly
Goal 2: Community Wellbeing				
CPI-C01	Positive ageing wellbeing score	7 Average	C2	Quarterly
CPI-C02	Community Centre participants who feel better connected to others or community	85%	C2	Bi-annual
CPI-C03	Community centre participants who would use the knowledge/skills gained in the future	80%	C3	Bi-annual
CPI-C04	Number of volunteer hours contributed to AHC programs each year	4800	C3	Quarterly
CPI-C05	Library visits per capita compared with Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Standards	exceed the enhanced ALIA target	C3	Annually
CPI-C06	Library loans per capita compared with Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Standards	exceed the enhanced ALIA target	C3	Annually
CPI-C07	Attendance at programs, events and workshops at Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub	8,000	C6	Annually
CPI-C08	Percent of available studio spaces occupied	50	C6	Annually
CPI-C09	Number of events and programs celebrating cultural diversity	8	C6	Annually

ID	Corporate Performance Indicator	Target	Strategic Objective	Reporting Frequency
Goal 3: A prosperous Economy				
CPI-E01	Net Easy Score of respondents who rated ease of getting assistance from Council as Easy or Very Easy v Difficult or Very Difficult	>0	E1	Every 2 Years
CPI-E02	Visitor numbers (visitor domestic day trips)	1.2mil	E1	Annually
CPI-E03	Average number of days for Building Consents	20 business days	E2	Quarterly
CPI-E04	Percentage of new development application decisions upheld in Council/CAPs favour under appeal	85%	E2	Quarterly
CPI-E05	Percentage of Planning Consents completed within statutory timeframes	85%	E2	Quarterly
CPI-E06	Number of local jobs in AHC area compared to previous financial year	Maintain 2019-20 Financial Year = 11200	E3	Annually
Goal 4: A valued Natural Environment				
CPI-N01	Number of biodiversity sites monitored using the BushRAT methodology (actual versus planned)	60 NVMS sites (14% of total) per annum and 5 reserves	N2	Annually
CPI-N02	Weed Control in biodiversity sites - no. of sites complete (actual versus planned)	31 sites per annum	N2	Annually
CPI-N03	Percent of nuisance and litter queries resolved	90%	N2	Quarterly
CPI-N04	Percent of private properties inspected prior to bushfire season that comply with fuel load management requirements	At least 90%	N2	Annually
CPI-N05	Tonnes of green organics collected on Green organic days	150	N4	Quarterly
CPI-N06	Percentage change in tonnes of waste disposed to landfill compared to previous financial year	Reduction in waste percentage	N5	Annual
CPI-N07	Number of community education actions delivered (Waste Management Strategy 2016-2021) – Actioned vs Planned	6	N5	Quarterly

ID	Corporate Performance Indicator	Target	Strategic Objective	Reporting Frequency
Goal 5: A progressive Organisation				
CPI-001	Number of Lost time injuries	0	O1	Quarterly
CPI-002	Customer Net Ease Score (NES)	50	O2	Bi-annual
CPI-003	Overall customer satisfaction	75%	O2	Bi-annual
CPI-004	Operating Surplus Ratio	1-5%	O3	Annually
CPI-005	Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	25-75%	O3	Annually
CPI-006	Asset Sustainability Ratio	95-105%	O3	Annually
CPI-007	Decisions (Council resolutions) considered in open Ordinary & Special Council meetings during the reporting period	90%	O4	Quarterly
CPI-008	Council member attendance at Ordinary & Special meetings	90%	O4	Quarterly
CPI-009	Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received, in progress and completed within the legislated timeframe	100%	O6	Quarterly
CPI-010	FOI External reviews upholding Council's decisions	100%	O6	Quarterly
CPI-011	Employee Turnover	7-15%	O1	Quarterly



Annexure D: Rating Policy

COUNCIL POLICY

 <p>Adelaide Hills COUNCIL</p>	<h3 style="margin: 0;">RATING</h3>
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Policy Number:	FIN-02
Responsible Department(s):	Financial Services
Other Relevant Policies:	None
Relevant Procedure(s):	None
Relevant Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1999</i> <i>Valuation of Land Act 1971</i> <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> <i>Aged Care Act 1997 (Commonwealth)</i> <i>Community Housing Providers (National Law) (South Australia) Act 2013</i> <i>Community Titles Act 1996</i> <i>Education and Childrens Act 2019</i> <i>Health Care Act 2008</i>
Policies and Procedures Superseded by this policy on its Adoption:	Version 7.0 Rating Policy 28 June 2022, Item 12.2 1.11, 152/22
Adoption Authority:	Council
Date of Adoption:	27 June 2023
Effective From:	1 July 2023
Minute Reference for Adoption:	Council Resolution 173/23, Item 12.3, 1.11
Next Review:	June 2024

Version Control

Version No.	Date of Effect	Description of Change(s)	Approval
1.0	01/07/16	Update to Rating Policy, minor changes only	Council Res 122/16 28 June 2016 Item 14.9, 1.11
2.0	01/07/17	Update to Rating Policy, minor changes only	Council Res 130/17 27 June 2017 Item 14.3, 1.11
3.0	01/07/18	Update to Rating Policy, minor changes only	Council Res 138/18 26 June 2018 Item 12.3, 1.11
4.0	01/07/19	Update to Rating Policy Section 4.5 Rebates of Rates Update of Discretionary Rate Rebate Position	Council Res 156/19 25 June 2019 Item 12.2, 1.11
4.1	25/02/2020	Amendments to clause 3.10 to provide consistency with changes to Council Petitions Policy	Council - Res 47/20 25 Feb 2020
5.0	01/07/2020	Update to Rating Policy Section 4.3 Components of Rates Update to reflect change from NRM Levy to Regional Landscape Levy Section 4.6 Rate Relief Updated to highlight Council options available to address financial hardship	Council Res 124/20 30 June 2020 Item 7.1, 1.11
6.0	01/07/2021	Update to Rating Policy Section 4.4 Rates Capping Not apply a rates cap under Section 153(3) principal place of residence and replace with discretionary rate rebate under Section 166 (1) (l) for all land uses Section 4.5 Rebate of Rates Implement a Revaluation Relief Rebate Special Discretionary Rebate under Section 166 (1) (l) Section 6 Delegations Updated for discretionary rate rebate delegations	Council Res 123/21 22 June 2021 Item 12.6, 1.11
7.0	01/07/2022	Update to Rating Policy, minor changes Included renumbering of Sections	Council Res 152/22 28 June 2022 Item 12.2, 1.11
8.0	01/07/2023	Update to Rating Policy including: Section 9 Components of Rates Change in Rating Structure for Differential Rating Section 11 Rate Rebates Special Discretionary Rebate Section 166 (1)(l) changed to residential and primary production only Changes to Rate Rebates CWMS for Community Halls offering public toilet facilities Section 12 Rate Relief Minor changes to Senior Postponement Postponement of Rates on a long term basis section added	Council Res 173/23 27 June 2023 Item 12.3, 1.11

RATING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Delivering services and facilities relies on the rates collected from ratepayers within a council's boundaries. Council rates are a form of property taxation, and as the main source of funding for councils, rates are essential in enabling council to deliver all the services and facilities that the community relies on.

Rates are administered by each council in line with the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) which allows council some flexibility to make decisions that suit its local community.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council's approach towards rating its community in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999* (SA) (the Act).

Section 123 of the Act requires Council to have a rating policy that must be prepared and adopted as part of the Annual Business Plan each financial year in conjunction with the declaration of rates.

3. DEFINITIONS

Act refers to the *Local Government Act 1999* (SA).

CADR refers to the cash advance debenture rate for that financial year.

Capital value refers to the value of the land including improvements.

Community need refers to those services and activities that are aligned to the achievement of one or more of Council's strategies resulting in a direct benefit to the residents of Adelaide Hills Council and a significant proportion of users are Adelaide Hills residents.

Council refers to the elected Council body.

CWMS refers to the Community Wastewater Management System within the Council area.

Disadvantaged persons refers to persons who are disadvantaged by reason of poverty, illness, frailty, or mental, intellectual or physical disability.

Differential rate refers to a rate that may be applied to a category of land that is different to the rate applied to other land categories.

Disadvantaged persons refers to persons who are disadvantaged by reason of poverty, illness, frailty, or mental, intellectual or physical disability.

Exemption refers to free from an obligation or liability to which others are subject to.

Fixed charge refers to a charge that must apply equally to each separate piece of rateable land in the area under Section 152(1) of the Act.

General rate refers to a rate that applies to rateable land.

Prescribed percentage (P) is calculated as $P = \frac{\text{CADR} + 3\%}{12}$

Rebate refers to an amount paid by way of reduction, return or refund on what has already been paid or contributed.

Separate rate refers to a charge levied on ratepayers in addition to general rates and used to fund specific activities.

4. **POLICY STATEMENT**

Council's powers to raise rates are found in Chapter 10 of the Act which provides the framework within which the Council must operate, but also leaves room for the Council to make a range of policy choices.

At all times, the rating policy should be fair and equitable, recognising that all ratepayers have access to core goods and services and should contribute towards the costs.

This Council's policy directions are guided by the theme "A brighter future" and is central to achieving our vision for:

- A prosperous economy
- A functional built environment
- A valued natural environment
- Community wellbeing
- A progressive organisation

5. **PRINCIPLES OF TAXATION**

Rates are not fees for services. They constitute a system of taxation on the community for Local Government purposes.

This Policy represents the Council's commitment to balancing the five main principles of taxation with the need to raise revenue for the purpose of providing the goods and services the community requires.

Benefits received – ratepayers who receive more benefits (services provided, or resources consumed) should pay a higher share of tax.

Capacity to Pay – a ratepayer who has less capacity to pay should pay less, and ratepayers of similar means should pay similar amounts.

Administrative simplicity – minimal costs are involved in applying and collecting the tax and the tax is difficult to avoid.

Economic efficiency – whether or not the tax distorts economic behaviour.

Policy consistency – the tax should be internally consistent, and based on transparent, predictable rules that are easily understood and accepted by ratepayers.

In applying these principles, any decision with respect to rating should consider:

- the financial effects of the decisions made today on the future generations of tomorrow.
- the achievement of Council's policy outcomes as referenced in Council's adopted policies.

A Council's operating deficit implies that today's ratepayers are paying less than the cost of the services they are consuming, and this is inequitable to the ratepayers of the future.

6. VALUATION OF LAND

Council is permitted to adopt one of three valuation methodologies to value the properties in its area (Section 151 of the Act):

- **Capital Value** – the value of land, buildings and other improvements.
- **Site Value** – the value of the land excluding structural improvements.
- **Annual Value** – the value of the rental potential of the property.

The Council has adopted the use of capital value as the basis for valuing land. Council considers that this method provides the fairest way to distribute the rates burden across all ratepayers on the following basis:

- the 'capacity to pay' 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;
- the 'property value' is a relatively good indicator of wealth (when lifetime incomes, including incomes from capital gains, are taken into account). Capital value approximates the market value of a property and provides the best indicator of overall property value.

Council does not determine property valuations but chooses to exercise the right under Section 167 of the Act to adopt the capital valuations as assessed by the Valuer-General through the State Valuation Office.

7. OBJECTIONS TO VALUATION

Ratepayers who wish to dispute the valuation of their property may lodge an objection in writing to the Valuer-General within 60 days after the date of service of the first rates notice.

The Valuer-General may extend the 60 day objection period where it can be shown there is reasonable cause to do so by the person making the objection.

Council plays no role in the objection process. It is important to note that the lodgement of an objection to the valuation does not change the due date for the payment of rates.

8. EXEMPTIONS

Council's practice is to identify and value all land in the council area. Once identified, each separate piece of land is assessed for rateability. Section 147 of the Act specifies those types of property which will be exempt from council rates.

- Crown Land – public properties used or held by the Crown for a public purpose,
- University Land – properties occupied by a University,
- Recreation Grounds – properties satisfying the criteria set out in the *Recreation Grounds Rates and Taxes Exemption Act 1981*,
- Council Land – public properties occupied or held by the Council,
- Emergency Services – properties satisfying the criteria set out in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*,
- Another Act – properties specifically exempt from council rates by virtue of another Act (either Commonwealth or State).

Council is mindful that wherever properties become exempt from paying council rates, or where a rebate is applied, those rates foregone must be contributed by the rest of the ratepayer community.

The principles of equity dictate that Council remains diligent in only awarding exemptions where they are warranted.

It is Council's practice to adopt valuations for all exempt properties. Where an exempt property becomes rateable part way through the financial year, rates will be calculated and recovered.

9. COMPONENTS OF RATES

Fixed Charge or Minimum Rate

Council has discretion to apply either (but not both):

- a fixed charge (applying equally to all rateable properties); or
- a minimum rate (to lower-value properties)

Adelaide Hills Council will apply a fixed charge this financial year as in previous years.

Council considers a fixed charge to be the most fair and equitable means of ensuring that all ratepayers contribute equally to the administration of council's services and the development and maintenance of the community's infrastructure.

In addition, the fixed charge provides a mechanism to adjust the rates contributions across high and low valued properties. This redresses the balance and equity of the rates system.

Council is unable to raise more than 50% of total rate revenue by the imposition of a fixed charge component of general rates as per Section 151(10) of the Act.

Differential Rating

The largest component of rates levied is calculated by reference to the value of property. Property values reflect, among other things, the relative availability of, and access to council services. This applies to all types of land use, and to land in all locations.

The Act allows Council to 'differentiate' rates based on the use of the land, locality of the land, the use and locality of the land or on some other basis determined by Council.

The Council is proposing that differential rates be applied to all rateable properties based on their predominant land use. This is a change in rating structure from previous years where Council had a separate higher differential rate for Commercial and Industrial that was based on the differential rate for Residential, Primary Production, Vacant Land and Other land uses. This change to differentially rate each land use separately will allow Council to ensure that the proposed average rate increase for existing ratepayers is consistent across all land uses before other factors relating to the cost of services for individual land uses are considered.

In formulating the rating structure, Council has considered issues of consistency and comparability of other Councils and across council areas in the imposition of rates on various sectors of the business and wider community. Currently Council's average residential rate is high by comparison to other Councils whereas the average commercial, industrial and vacant rate is low. As a result Council proposes phasing in higher differential rates in relation to Commercial, Industrial and Vacant Land land use categories across a three year period.

The percentage of total rate revenue required from each land use category will be used to determine the rate in the dollar (differential rate) for each category.

Definitions of the use of the land are prescribed by regulation and are categorised as:

- Residential
- Commercial – Shop
- Commercial – Office
- Commercial - Other
- Industrial – Light
- Industrial - Other
- Primary Production
- Vacant Land
- Other

In accordance with Section 148 of the Act, Council assesses any piece or section of land subject to separate ownership or separate occupation.

If a ratepayer believes that a particular property has been wrongly classified as to its land use, then an objection may be made with Council.

Commercial and Industrial Light Differential Rate

It is proposed that those properties categorised as commercial or industrial light will pay a higher differential rate in the dollar than residential with the increase of 35% relative to the current differential rate to be phased in over three years.

Council has considered the higher amount payable by the commercial and industrial light sectors with reference to the commercial and industrial light differential rates of other councils, costs of the economic development function as well as the services and activities that the sector does not regularly use.

Industrial Other Differential Rate

It is proposed that those properties categorised as Industrial Other will pay a higher differential rate in the dollar than residential with an increase of 60% relative to the current differential rate to be phased in equally over three years.

Council has considered the higher amount payable by the Industrial Other land use with reference to the industrial differential rates of other councils, costs of the economic development function, increased environmental impact as well as the higher impact on Council infrastructure.

Vacant Land (within townships) Differential Rate

It is proposed that those properties categorised as Vacant Land within township zones as defined by Council will pay a higher differential rate in the dollar than residential with an increase of 30% relative to the current differential rate to be phased in equally over three years.

Council has considered the higher amount payable by Vacant Land within township zones with reference to the vacant land differential rates of other councils and discouraging ratepayers from long-term speculating (seeking future commercial gains) rather than developing the land for the benefit of the whole community.

Separate Rate

Under Section 154 of the Act, a Council may declare a separate rate on rateable land within a part of the area of the council for the purpose of planning, carrying out, making available, supporting, maintaining or improving an activity that is, or is intended to be, of particular benefit to the land, or the occupiers of the land, within that part of the area, or to visitors to that part of the area.

Council has determined that the use of the separate rate provisions of the Act will be limited to the use of a separate rate for:

- Marketing and promoting the Stirling Business Area
- Sealing of Verrall Road, Upper Hermitage
- Recovery of the funding requirements of the Hills Fleurieu Regional Landscape Board

Stirling Business Separate Rate

A separate rate for businesses in Stirling will be applied to carry out the activity of promoting and enhancing business viability, profitability, trade and commerce within the zone.

This rate is levied on all properties within the precinct known as the Stirling Suburban Mainstreet Zone, as defined, excluding land attributed a land use category (residential) and government owned land.

Council also sets a maximum amount ('top') and a minimum amount ('tail') per property each financial year for this separate rate with the top and tail adjusted each year with reference to the Consumer Price Index.

The amount raised is distributed to the Stirling Business Association to promote Stirling as a destination, the 'Gateway to the Hills'.

Verrall Road Separate Rate

A separate rate for Verrall Road, Upper Hermitage at a value of \$858 will be applied for a period of 10 years to 2023-24. As such, this is the last year that the Verrall Separate Rate will be levied.

This rate provides for the sealing of the northern end of the road in 2014-15 and is levied on all properties that use that section of road.

Regional Landscape Levy

On 1 July 2020, the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* came into effect replacing the former *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*. Natural Resource Management (NRM) levies have been replaced with Regional Landscape (RL) levies.

The levy helps to fund the operations of regional landscape boards that have responsibility for the management of the State's natural resources. These responsibilities include regional landscape planning, water allocation planning, community capacity building, education and compliance activities.

The Regional Landscape (RL) Levy is a state tax paid by all ratepayers and is collected on behalf of the Hills and Fleurieu Regional Landscape Board by the Department for Environment and Water who will invoice council quarterly for the respective share of the levy.

The levy applies to all rateable land in the council area and is fixed and calculated to raise exactly the same amount as the council's share to be contributed.

Community Wastewater Management System

Council provides Community Wastewater Management Systems (CWMS) to some areas within the council district. Under Section 155 of the Act, the treatment or provision of water, is a prescribed service.

To fund the provision of this service Council imposes a service charge to recover the cost to the council of establishing, operating, maintaining, improving and replacing the infrastructure in its area (including future capital works and depreciation of any assets).

Annually, an independent consultant is engaged to provide a review of:

- Council's compliance with the Essential Services Commission' (ESCOSA) Minor to Intermediate Retailers Price Determination and the National Water Initiative (NWI) Pricing Principles,
- The pricing model for future CWMS price setting.

This review includes the annual service charge for both occupied and vacant properties.

10. MAXIMUM INCREASE IN GENERAL RATES CHARGES

Council's valuations used for rating purposes are undertaken by the Office of the Valuer-General.

In terms of legislation, Section 153(3) of the Act requires a council to decide each year whether to apply a maximum rate increase to a ratepayer's principal place of residence.

As Council considers that rate relief is required across some land uses and therefore more than a ratepayer's principal place of residence, Council will not apply a maximum under Section 153(3) but rather maintain a discretionary rate rebate under Section 166 (1) (l) as referenced below.

11. RATE REBATES

The Act provides for ratepayers to apply for a mandatory and/or discretionary rebate on council rates as follows:

Mandatory rebates

A rebate of rates will be granted to ratepayers who satisfy the eligibility criteria for a mandatory rebate under Section 159 to Section 165 of the Act.

A 100% rebate must be applied to land used for:

- Health services
- Religious purposes
- Public cemeteries
- The Royal Zoological Society.

A 75% rebate must be applied to land used by:

- Community services
- Educational purposes.

Where a "community services organisation" is eligible for the mandatory rebate, and Council has declared a distinct residential rate, then the residential rate must be applied to the land to which the rebate applies in accordance with Section 161(2) of the Act.

Where the Council is satisfied from its own records, or from other sources, that a person or body meets the necessary criteria for a mandatory rate rebate, the Council will grant the rebate accordingly.

Where the Council is not satisfied based upon the information in its possession or otherwise does not hold relevant information it will require the person or body to lodge an application form with such information as stipulated and any other information that the Council may reasonably require.

Applicants who satisfy the criteria for a mandatory rebate will be granted the rebate at any time provided the application is lodged prior to 30 June of the rating year and entitlement to the rebate existed at 1 July of the rating year.

Council will confirm the continuation of a person or body's eligibility for a mandatory rebate on a regular basis (at least biennially) to ensure that rebates are only granted where they are warranted.

This will require the relevant person or body to lodge another application form with such information as stipulated and any other information that the Council may reasonably require to confirm the continuation of eligibility.

Where applications do not meet the eligibility criteria for a mandatory rebate, an applicant may apply for a rebate of rates under the discretionary rebate criteria.

Discretionary rebates

As identified in Section 166 of the Act, Council may grant a discretionary rebate of rates up to and including 100% of the relevant rates under a number of criteria and for a period not exceeding the timeframes.

Having considered this, Council is of the view that except in very specific circumstances outlined below, the maximum discretionary rebate should be 75% to ensure ratepayers contribute an amount towards basic service provision.

Section 166 covers a large number of different rebate categories, referred to as cases in the Act. Council in determining its rates structure has considered the following cases are relevant in setting its policy position.

Assisting or supporting a business in its area.

Council has determined pursuant to Section 166(1)(b) that those primary production properties genuinely in the business of primary production but not benefitting from a notional capital value for their property can apply for a 10% rebate on the differential rate.

Council considers this primary production rebate as part of its Annual Business Plan and Budget process.

As this rebate was implemented in 2008-09 to address the removal of a primary production differential rate, it is considered that this rebate should continue to be made to those ratepayers in the business of primary production who do not have a notional capital value assessment of their property and who have applied for and been granted this rebate in the previous year.

Community Service or Need or Disadvantaged Persons

Section 166(1) identifies a number of discretionary rebates of rates made under Section 166(1)(d) to (j) covering activities linked to community services, need or assistance or relief to disadvantaged persons.

Council has determined that applications in relation to those rebates identified under Section 166(1) should be brought to Council for decision and also that Council would receive a listing of these discretionary rate rebates for the next rating period annually.

Council in accordance with Section 166(1) will take the following matters into account in deciding whether to grant a discretionary rebate for land uses covered by Section 166 (1) (d to j):

- (a) the nature and extent of Council services provided in respect of the land for which the rebate is sought in comparison to similar services provided elsewhere in the Council's area; and
- (b) the community need that is being met by activities carried out on the land for which the rebate is sought; and
- (c) the extent to which activities carried out on the land for which the rebate is sought provides assistance or relief to disadvantaged persons and
- (d) specific policy positions considered relevant by Council.

Council's specific policy positions to meet discretionary rate rebates eligibility are as follows:

- An organisation needs to meet one of the criteria listed under Section 166 d) to j).
- An organisation needs to be not-for-profit.
- A rebate of 100% will only be granted where a community organisation seeking a rebate provides a service that would be required to be provided by Council if not undertaken by the organisation.
- A rebate of 75% will be granted if the organisation provides a community service that supports the disadvantaged or sections of the community that require assistance, as defined,
- Where an organisation does not meet the above criteria, it is still eligible for a 75% rebate where it meets all of the following criteria:
 - limited capacity to raise funds;
 - meets a "community need", as defined; and
 - undertakes services and activities that are not primarily the responsibility of Federal or State Government.

Special Discretionary Rebate

Council can use a discretionary rate rebate to address properties with substantial valuation increases under Section 166 (1)(l) of the Act where the rebate is considered by the Council to be appropriate to provide relief against what would otherwise amount to a substantial change in rates payable by a ratepayer due to:

- (i) a redistribution of the rates burden within the community arising from a change to the basis or structure of the council's rates; or
- (ii) a change to the basis on which land is valued for the purpose of rating, rapid changes in valuations, or anomalies in valuations.

Council has determined that a rebate will be applied to cap any increase in the general rates payable at 15% subject to specific criteria:

- The rebate applies to only residential and primary production land use categories.
- The rebate will be automatically applied to eligible assessments in order to minimise the administrative effort required.
- Adjusting the exclusion of change of ownership properties (excluding family transfers) to those properties sold after 30 June 2022.

The rebate will not apply where the increase in rates payable is the result of:

- An increase in valuation relating to new development, alteration or improvement made to the property since the 2022-23 valuation being those properties with a valuation change as a result of a Revisit Growth, Creation or Cancellation as defined by the Valuer-General (regardless of when the development was undertaken), unless the ratepayer is located within the Cudlee Creek bushfire scar or the January 2021 Cherry Gardens Bushfire scar as determined by Council or,
- Where there has been a change in land use of the property or,
- A change in ownership or licence to occupy during the previous financial year.

A capital improvement includes any addition, alteration or new development on the property.

As per the Act, a rebate may be granted for a period exceeding one year, but not exceeding three years. After three years, the rebate will be removed and the rates payable will reset to levels that would ordinarily apply in the absence of the rebate.

All Discretionary Rate Rebates

Persons who, or bodies which, seek a discretionary rebate will be required to submit an application form to the Council and provide the necessary supporting documentation.

All persons who or bodies which wish to apply to the council for a discretionary rebate of rates must do so on or before 30 April prior to the rating year unless the application is a result of a change in eligibility for a mandatory rebate or rate exemption.

In those circumstances where an application relates to a change in rebate/rate exemption in a relevant rating year, then the application will be applied for the full rating year if received within 2 months of the change in rebate/exemption being advised. The Council reserves the right to refuse to consider applications received after the specified date.

Persons or bodies who previously received a discretionary rebate greater than 75% may apply for a phasing in period (up to 2 years) in circumstances where the above change impacts significantly on the persons or bodies' financial capacity. In these circumstances, an application will be considered if received within 2 months of the change in rebate being advised. The Council reserves the right to refuse to consider applications received after the specified date.

Where there is no maximum timeframe specified for a rebate provided under Section 166, Council will grant a discretionary rebate to the last rating period commencing within a Council term to allow for a regular review of discretionary rate rebates.

A summary of all discretionary rebates applied for under Section 166 (1) (d) to (j), including whether they have been successful or not and the associated reasons will be reported to Council on an annual basis.

Each rebate that is granted either reduces the Council's revenue and hence its capacity to provide services, or else it effectively increases the amount that must be collected from other ratepayers. The principles of equity dictate that Council remains diligent in only awarding rebates and exemptions where they are warranted.

If a ratepayer wishes to apply for a discretionary rate rebate, they may apply by contacting the Council's Rate Administrator.

CWMS Service Charges

Council's CWMS service charges are set to recover the cost to the council of establishing, operating, maintaining, improving and replacing infrastructure (taking into account depreciation of any assets and including future capital works). As such, no rebates are provided by Council except for the very limited circumstances where the CWMS service charge relates to toilets used by the general public for Community Halls. In these circumstances a 100% rebate will be granted upon application.

All rebates

If an entitlement to a rebate ceases or no longer applies during the course of a financial year, council will recover rates proportionate to the remaining part of the financial year.

If a person or body has the benefit of a rebate of rates and the grounds on which the rebate has been granted cease to exist, the person or body must immediately inform the Council of that fact and (whether or not the Council is so informed) the entitlement to a rebate ceases. If a person or body fails to do so that person or body is guilty of an offence.

The Council will, in writing, advise an applicant for the rebate of its determination of that application. The advice will state:

- if the application has been granted, the amount of the rebate; or
- if the application has not been granted, the reasons why.

Any person or body who is aggrieved by a determination of the delegated officer in respect of an application for a rebate may seek a review of that decision in accordance with Council's Internal Review of Council Decisions Policy.

Single Farming Enterprise

The Local Government Act 1999 provides that "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".

A Single Farm Enterprise is defined in the Local Government Act -

"A reference to a single farm enterprise is a reference to two or more pieces of rateable land

(a) which –

(i) are farm land; and
(ii) are farmed as a single enterprise; and
(iii) are occupied by the same person or persons,
whether or not the pieces of land are contiguous; or

(b) which –

(i) as to all the pieces except one, are farm land farmed as a single enterprise occupied by the same person or persons; and
(ii) as to one piece contiguous with at least one of the other pieces, is the principal place of residence of that person or one of those persons."

In effect, this means that land can be recognised as a "single farming enterprise" and not attract a fixed charge to each of the assessments, provided:

- that if the occupier of all the land concerned is the same person, (this means that if there is a house being occupied that is not the principal place of residence, it cannot be part of the single farm enterprise)
- all of the land is used to carry on the business of primary production, and
- managed as a single unit for that purpose,

Primary producers can apply to the Council for the 'single farming enterprise' provisions of the Local Government Act.

Ratepayers should also be aware that if the grounds on which they have applied for a single farm enterprise cease to exist, the person or body who have the benefit of the provisions must immediately inform the Council of the fact.

12. RATE RELIEF

Council applies rate remissions and postponement in accordance with the Act.

Senior Postponement

In accordance with Section 182A of the Act, eligible Seniors Card holders can apply to postpone any part or all of their annual council rates in excess of \$500 on a long-term basis. The deferred amount is subject to a monthly interest charge, with the accrued debt being payable on the transfer or sale of the property. In addition, and pursuant to Section 182A(3)(b) of the Act, Council may consider—where financial hardship provisions apply—an applicant's request to include a postponement of the payment of arrears rates if they are eligible for Seniors Postponement.

Postponement is similar to a reverse mortgage by relying on the equity in the property. A ratepayer who has a Seniors Card may apply for a postponement on the property they own if it is their principal place of residence and if no other person, other than their spouse/partner has an interest as owner of the property and there is sufficient equity available.

Where an application for postponement under Section 182A is granted, a presumption of on-going annual postponement will be assumed.

However, some, or all of the debt outstanding may be paid at any time at owner's discretion.

Financial Hardship

Ratepayers who are suffering financial hardship should contact Council's Rates Administrator to discuss the matter. All enquiries are treated confidentially and any application will be considered on its merits. Options to address financial hardship can include:

Flexible payment options

In addition to quarterly instalments, ratepayers can arrange with Council to pay their rates weekly, fortnightly or monthly to provide for a smaller, more regular payment option via BPAY, phone or internet.

Waiving of Fines and Interest

When a ratepayer has committed to a payment plan and adheres to a regular payment, Council may consider the waiving of fines and interest.

Discretionary Postponement of Rates for a Period

A ratepayer may apply to council to postpone the payment of rates in whole, or in part for a period of time. Any such application must be made in writing and outline the reasons why postponement is requested.

Postponement enables ratepayers to defer payment of rates until such time as the property is sold or their circumstances change. Discretionary postponements are only intended to provide temporary, flexible support to those experiencing hardship.

If a postponement is granted, council may consider the waiving of fines and interest for the same period.

As postponement may only delay financial hardship for a period of time, options involving a regular payment plan are more likely to be beneficial for ratepayers to assist in reducing rates balances outstanding over time.

Postponement of Rates on a long term basis

Under Section 182 of the Local Government Act a council may also consider the postponement of rates on a long-term basis with the accrued debt being payable on the transfer or sale of the property or any other conditions as determined by the council. Such a postponement may, if the council thinks fit, be granted on condition that the ratepayer pay interest on the amount affected by the postponement at a rate fixed by the council (but not exceeding the cash advance debenture rate).

As such Council will consider postponement of rates on a long term basis in the rare circumstances where a ratepayer has demonstrated serious and long term hardship and where there is no chance of improvement in the ratepayers' financial circumstances. Any such application must be made in writing and will require the ratepayer to undertake financial counselling as part of the application process. If granted, Council may require regular financial counselling to confirm that the ratepayers' financial circumstances has not changed.

Remission of rates

Council has the discretion to partially or wholly remit (i.e. waive) rates on the basis of hardship.

Council has a charge over the land under Section 177 of the Act and therefore is likely to be able to recover rates outstanding upon sale. The granting of a remission forgoes this right and therefore is only considered as an option in circumstances where the ratepayer has demonstrated serious and long term hardship and where there is no chance of improvement in the ratepayers' financial circumstances.

Consideration must also be given to the tax burden redistribution effect on other rate payers of any remission.

For these reasons, and given the importance of ensuring fairness to other ratepayers, remission will only be considered as a last resort and only where there is no chance of improvement in the ratepayer's financial circumstances. As such, it is likely that postponement of payment of rates due to hardship has been occurred for some period to confirm the permanency of the ratepayer's situation.

13. PAYMENT OF RATES

Rates are declared annually, and may be paid, at your discretion, either in one lump sum, or in quarterly instalments that fall due in September, December, March and June.

14. LATE PAYMENT OF RATES

Council has determined that penalties for late payments will be imposed in accordance with the provisions of S181(8) of the Act.

Fines and interest for late payment are levied in accordance with the provisions of S181(8) and S181(17) of the Act.

If an instalment of rates is not paid on or before the date on which it falls due:

- the instalment will be regarded as being in arrears
- a fine of 2% of the amount of the instalment is payable
- on the expiration of each full month from that date, interest of the prescribed percentage of the amount in arrears (including the amount of any previous unpaid fine and interest from any previous month) accrues.

Council may take legal action to recover any overdue amounts, fines and interest.

If an amount payable by way of rates in respect of land has been in arrears for three or more years, Council may sell the land in accordance with Section 184 of the Act.

When Council receives a payment in respect of overdue rates Council applies the money received in accordance with the Act as follows:

- First – to satisfy any costs awarded in connection with court proceedings;
- Second – to satisfy any interest costs;

- Third – in payment of any fines imposed;
- Fourth – in payment of rates, in chronological order (starting with the oldest account first).

15. NON- PAYMENT OF RATES

A separate Debt Recovery Policy has been adopted by Council and is available for review on the Adelaide Hills Council website.

It should be noted that under Section 184(1) of the Act, if an amount payable by way of rates has been in arrears for three years or more the council may sell the property.

16. CONTACTING COUNCIL'S RATES ADMINISTRATOR

If you believe that Council has failed to properly apply this policy, you should contact the Council's Rates Administrator to discuss the matter.

If you are still dissatisfied then you should write to the Council's Chief Executive Officer at PO Box 44, Woodside SA 5244.

For further information, queries, or to lodge an application for a rate rebate, rate postponement or remission please contact the Council's Rates Administrator on:

Phone: 8408 0400
E-mail: mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
Post: PO Box 44, Woodside SA 5244

17. DELEGATIONS

As highlighted in this policy, Council has determined a policy position in relation to discretionary rates pursuant to Section 166(1) (b) relating to a primary production rebate and a revaluation relief special discretionary rate rebate under Section 166 (1)(l) of the Act to reduce the impact of significant valuation changes for 2023-24.

These policy positions and the application of the relevant rebates will be actioned accordingly by the Administration under delegation as part of the rates generation process where Council considers that the ratepayer meets the eligibility criteria or upon receipt of an application from the ratepayer.

The delegation for discretionary rate rebates as identified in Section 166 (1a) covering a number of discretionary rebates of rates made under Section 166(1)(d) to (j) relating to activities linked to community services or community need or assistance or relief to disadvantaged persons has not been delegated by Council and as such these applications will be brought to Council for decision.

The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy; and
- Make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

18. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

This Policy will be available for inspection at the Council's Offices during ordinary business hours and via the Council's website www.ahc.sa.gov.au. Copies will also be provided to the public upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with the Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

Appendix 1

Fixed Charge

Under the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), Council has some mechanisms available to enable all ratepayers to contribute more equitably to the administration of Council's services and the development and maintenance of the community's infrastructure. Council considers a fixed charge (applying equally to all rateable properties) to be the most fair and equitable means of achieving this.

The Council is unable to raise more than 50% of total rate revenue by the imposition of a fixed charge component of general rates as per Section 151(10) of the Act.

Council has applied the following fixed charges across recent years as part of the total rate levied against an assessment:

Financial Year	Fixed Charge	Increase from Previous Year	% of General Rate Revenue
2023-24	\$784	6.90%	31.3%
2022-23	\$733	4.90%	31.5%
2021-22	\$699	2.50%	31.5%
2020-21	\$682	2.95%	31.9%
2019-20	\$662	2.8% + \$10	32.0%
2018-19	\$634	3.3%	31.8%
2017-18	\$613.50	2.25%	31.8%
2016-17	\$600		31.8%



Annexure E: ESCOSA Report And Council Response



ESCOSA Report And Council Response

The Essential Services Commission, South Australia's independent economic regulator and advisory body, has been given a role by the State Government to provide advice on material changes proposed by local councils in relation to elements of their strategic management plans and on the proposed revenue sources, including rates, which underpin those plans.








One of the main purposes of the Local Government Advice Scheme (advice or the scheme) is to support councils to make 'financially sustainable' decisions relating to their annual business plans and budgets in the context of their long-term financial plans (LTFPs) and infrastructure and asset management plans.

The first cycle of the scheme extends over four years from 2022-23 to 2025-26, and Council is obliged to publish the findings within each Annual Business Plan that the advice relates to.

The mandatory cost to Adelaide Hills Council to be part of the scheme is \$40,000 (\$10,000 per year of the cycle).

The following pages highlight the advice provided from the Commission and Council's response including planned actions over the next four financial years.

ESCOSA Recommendations and Council Response









Recommendation & Response	Implementation Activities	Implementation Timeline			
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Recommendation 1 - Continue to review its inflation forecasts in its budget each year					
Each year, a key part of the development of Council’s Long Term Financial Plan is to update all economic forecasts and assumptions including inflation forecasts. Council then uses these forecasts to help model future expense forecasts. This in turn enables Council to project future income needs to meet its financial sustainability targets.	Continue to use most recent and applicable inflation forecasts in Budget and Long Term Financial Plan modelling				
Recommendation 2 - Focus on constraining cost growth in its budgeting, where possible, particularly related to employee expenses					
As part of the Long Term Financial Plan and Budget processes, Council considers forecasts and calculations showing how expenses and income will change based on existing service levels and cost escalation assumptions. Council then considers how best to remain financially sustainable while balancing the community’s expectations against their willingness and ability to pay.	Continue to consider and adjust human resource levels in response to adopted service level requirements and in light of decisions to undertake new or changed activities and within Council’s financial sustainability targets.				
Employee numbers, and therefore employee costs, have increased in recent years due to:					
1. Decisions to embark on new or changed strategic priorities such as economic development, recreation and trails, disability planning and the development of an arts centre. These have all been considered in the context of the Council’s Long Term Financial Plan and financial sustainability indicator targets.	Negotiate new Enterprise Agreement in 2024-25 FY				
2. To undertake work in part or fully funded programs such as the Community (Disaster) Resilience Program. In these cases, additional grant income offsets the additional staff costs.	Continue to responsibly manage cost growth for maintaining service levels and meeting community expectations while minimising the financial impact to ratepayers.				
3. To insource activities previously outsourced as an efficiency initiative, such as tree management work.					
It is also noted that employee salaries are linked to Enterprise Agreements which are normally negotiated on a 3 yearly basis. The current agreement ends in June 2025.					

Legend:  = Complete  = Planned / In progress





ESCOSA Recommendations and Council Response

Recommendation & Response	Implementation Activities	Implementation Timeline			
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Recommendation 3 - Complete the asset management plan for building assets and consider potentially other assets not currently covered by a plan (such as sport and recreation facilities), with consideration of desired service levels, as appropriate.					
Council has completed a full condition audit of its Building Asset stock in March 2023 and is progressing this information as a basis of the Building Asset Management Plan	Continue to progress the Building Asset Management Plan	✓			
	Develop a Playgrounds Asset Management Plan	✓			
	Develop a Sport and Recreation Facilities Asset Management Plan		✓		
Recommendation 4 - Complete its planned Stormwater Asset Management Plan, with consideration of desired service levels, as appropriate.					
Council is currently completing a Stormwater Management Plan for the Aldgate Creek in conjunction with the Stormwater Management Authority and this document will be a key reference for the Council Stormwater Asset Management Plan that will include desired service levels.	Develop a draft plan and incorporate findings from the Stormwater Management Plan of the Aldgate Creek and other stormwater investigations including the Balhannah Drainage Study – Investigations and Proposed Upgrades	✓	✓		
Recommendation 5 - Finalise its Community Wastewater Management System Asset Management Plan and reflect related cost changes in the 2023-24 Long-term Financial Plan, to include input from the community, including desired service levels					
The Community Wastewater Management System Asset Management Plan was presented to Council and endorsed at its meeting of 14 March 2023. Operational costs are reflected in the Draft Long Term Financial Plan and final capital program timing changes will be included for consideration by Council in adopting the 2023/24 LTFP.	No further action – Asset Management Plan has been finalized in 2022-23FY and implemented into LTFP.	😊			

ESCOSA Recommendations and Council Response

Recommendation & Response	Implementation Activities	Implementation Timeline			
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Recommendation 6 - Report its actual and projected cost savings in its annual budget, to provide evidence of constraining cost growth and achieving efficiency across its operations and service delivery.					
<p>Council endeavours to provide transparency to the community to show where savings are being made and therefore the continued commitment to offset rising costs while minimising rate increases.</p> <p>Page 30 of the <i>2022-23 Annual Business Plan</i> details the saving strategies implemented in the 2022-23 budget with an estimated value of \$650,000 per year ongoing savings. The progress of actual savings realised against this target is reported in the Quarterly Council Performance Report, and published to Council's website.</p> <p>Page 29 of the <i>2023-24 Annual Business Plan</i> details the savings strategies implemented for the 2023-24 budget with an estimated value of \$830,000, and the results against this target will continue to be reported on in Councils Quarterly Performance reports.</p>	<p>Continue to include a savings strategy page within the Annual Business Plan</p> <p>Continue to report on the progress of actual savings achieved in the Quarterly Performance Reports</p>				
Recommendation 7 - Review the estimates of asset lives and valuations feeding into the forecast rate of asset consumption in its long-term financial plan and asset management plans.					
<p>Council undertakes a yearly review of asset lives as part of the revaluation and end of financial year capitalisation.</p>	<p>Continue to review the asset lives and valuations on an annual basis, and as part of standard asset revaluation as needed.</p>				

ESCOSA Recommendations and Council Response

Recommendation & Response	Implementation Activities	Implementation Timeline			
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
<p>Recommendation 8 - Review and consider limiting future increases above inflation on its residential rates to help reduce any emerging affordability risk in the community.</p>					
<p>Each year, Council updates all economic forecasts and assumptions including inflation forecasts as part of the development of the Long Term Financial Plan and Budget processes. Council then uses these forecasts to help extrapolate future expenses to assess Council’s overall financial position and future financial sustainability and determine appropriate income needs.</p> <p>Rate revenue accounts for approximately 80% of Council's operating income, and so Council carefully considers the average rate increase to balance the need to continue to deliver services, meet community expectation and maintain financial sustainability, while keeping the impact to ratepayers to an acceptable level.</p> <p>Page 34 of the <i>2023-24 Annual Business Plan</i> details the rate increases over the past financial years. In the past, the rate revenue target was built with “CPI plus 1%” in order to fund increased capital renewal, maintain financial sustainability, and provide a modest Operating surplus ratio which would help Council’s ability to absorb the expenditure impacts from unexpected events such as bushfires, floods, or pandemics.</p> <p>This financial year, the rate increase has been set at 0.5% below the estimated 12-month Local Government Price Index (LGPI) increase to ensure that the increase is below forecast CPI increases.</p>	<p>Continue to responsibly manage cost growth for maintaining service levels and meeting community expectations while minimising the financial impact to ratepayers.</p>				

ESCOSA Recommendations and Council Response

Recommendation & Response	Implementation Activities	Implementation Timeline				
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	
<p>Recommendation 9 - Review the rationale for the quantum of any maximum rate increase (or cap) it seeks to impose (currently at 15 percent) in its next annual business plan, with consideration of the community's capacity to pay for higher increases.</p>						
<p>Council reviews its rating policy annually as part of the Long Term Financial Plan and Budget process, which includes the consideration of the rating cap and its impact both positive and negative on its ratepayers.</p> <p>This requires a careful assessment as a cap means that the majority of ratepayers will pay more than they would be required in order to subsidise those who are entitled to receive the rate cap.</p> <p>A ratepayer's capacity to pay for their rates is something Council is not easily able to assess. To assist those who don't have the capacity to pay, Council has alternative arrangements that are tailored to the individual's financial situation as covered in Council's <i>Rating Policy</i> (Annexure D of <i>2023-24 Annual Business Plan</i>)</p>	<p>Continue to review the rating cap and Council's rating policy when considering the annual rate increase in the Long Term Financial Plan and Budget process</p>	