



CITY OF VINCENT

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

21 JUNE 2016

Notice of Meeting and Agenda

Notice is hereby given that a Special Council Meeting of the City of Vincent will be held in the Council Chambers at the Administration and Civic Centre, at 244 Vincent Street (corner Loftus Street), Leederville, on **Tuesday, 21 June 2016** at 6.00pm followed by the Council Briefing Session rescheduled to 6.30pm.

The purpose of the meeting is to consider the following items:

- 5.1 Endorsement for Advertising of Differential and Minimum Rates

Len Kosova
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ENHANCING AND CELEBRATING OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY

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PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

The City of Vincent Local Law Relating to Standing Orders prescribes the procedure for persons to ask questions or make public statements relating to a matter affecting the City, either verbally or in writing, at a Council meeting.

Questions or statements made at a Special Meeting of the Council must only relate to the purpose for which the meeting has been called.

1. Shortly after the commencement of the meeting, the Presiding Member will ask members of the public to come forward to address the Council and to give their name, address and Agenda Item number (if known).
2. Public speaking time will be strictly limited to three (3) minutes per member of the public.
3. Members of the public are encouraged to keep their questions/statements brief to enable everyone who desires to ask a question or make a statement to have the opportunity to do so.
4. Public speaking time is declared closed when there are no further members of the public who wish to speak.
5. Questions/statements are to be directed to the Presiding Member and are to be made politely in good faith and are not to be framed in such a way as to reflect adversely or be defamatory on a Council Member or City Employee.
6. Where the Presiding Member is of the opinion that a member of the public is making a statement at a Council meeting, that does not affect the City, he may ask the person speaking to promptly cease.
7. Questions/statements and any responses will be summarised and included in the Minutes of the Council meeting.
8. Where practicable, responses to questions will be provided at the meeting. Where the information is not available or the question cannot be answered, it will be *"taken on notice"* and a written response will be sent by the Chief Executive Officer to the person asking the question. A copy of the reply will be included in the Agenda of the next Ordinary meeting of the Council.
9. It is not intended that public speaking time should be used as a means to obtain information that would not be made available if it was sought from the City's records under Section 5.94 of the Local Government Act 1995 or the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 1992. The CEO will advise the member of the public that the information may be sought in accordance with the FOI Act 1992.

RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

- ◆ All Ordinary and Special Council Meetings are electronically recorded (both visual and audio), except when the Council resolves to go behind closed doors;
- ◆ All recordings are retained as part of the City's records in accordance with the General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records produced by the Public Records Office;
- ◆ A copy of the recorded proceedings and/or a transcript of a particular section or all of a Council meeting is available in accordance with Policy No. 4.2.4 – Council Meetings – Recording and Access to Recorded Information.

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. (a) Declaration of Opening

(b) Acknowledgement of Country Statement

“Today we meet on the lands of the Nyoongar people and we honour them as the traditional custodians of this land”.

2. Apologies/Members on Approved Leave of Absence

3. Public Question Time and Receiving of Public Statements

Under Section 7(4)(b) of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, Council at a Special Meeting is not required to answer a question that does not relate to the purpose of the meeting.

4. Declaration of Interests

5. Reports

5.1 Endorsement for Advertising of Differential and Minimum Rates

6. Closure

5.1 Endorsement for Advertising of Differential and Minimum Rates

Ward:	Both	Date:	16 June 2016
Precinct:	All	File Ref:	SC245
Attachments:	1 – Rate Setting Statement 2 – Rate Model Comparison 3 – Rating Policy Differential Rates (s.6.33) – Department of Local Government and Communities		
Tabled Items:	-		
Reporting Officer:	J Paton, Director Corporate Services		
Responsible Officer:	J Paton, Director Corporate Services		

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- AGREES** to introduce a separate Waste Services Charge for Residential properties in 2016/17 and for non-residential properties in 2017/18;
- ADVERTISES** by local public notice, in accordance with Section 6.36(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* for a period of 21 days its intention to levy the following Differential Rates and Minimum Rates in 2016/17 and invites submissions on the proposal from electors and ratepayers:

Rating Category	2016/17	
	Rate-in-\$	Minimum
Residential	0.05116	\$752*
Commercial Vacant	0.11925	\$1,414
Other	0.06469	\$1,007

* Excluding separate Waste Services Charge.

- NOTES** any public submissions received in response to 2 above will be presented to Council for consideration.

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To obtain Council's agreement to introduce a separate Waste Services Charge for residential properties in 2016/17 and approval to advertise the Differential Rates and Minimum Rates proposed for inclusion in the 2016/17 Annual Budget.

BACKGROUND:

Between 1 June and 31 August each year, local governments are required to prepare and adopt a budget for the financial year. A key part of the budget development is identifying the 'budget deficiency' to be made up from levying of Council Rates. Once an estimate of that budget deficiency is known, local governments are required to give local public notice of any intention to levy Differential Rates and Minimum Rates.

The budget deficiency is determined only after all other financial elements are taken into account including:

- opening balance
- operating income
- operating expenditure
- non-operating income (grants, sale of assets etc)
- debt servicing
- capital expenditure
- transfers to and from Reserves

In preparing the Draft Budget, Administration has compiled relevant information and held a number of budget workshops with Council Members and invited community submissions aligned to Council's adopted working priorities for 2016/17. Whilst work is ongoing to refine the Draft Budget, it has progressed to a point where an estimate can be determined of the amount required to be raised from Rates.

Whilst this report will primarily deal with the Rating strategy, with the Draft Budget to be presented to a subsequent Council Meeting, it is appropriate to provide budgetary context as follows.

Operating Result:

INCOME STATEMENT BY NATURE OR TYPE						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16	2016/17
	Audited Actual	Audited Actual	Audited Actual	Revised Budget	Forecast Actual	Draft Budget
REVENUE						
Rates	23,825,952	25,362,390	27,478,028	29,596,786	29,601,380	31,102,138
Operating Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	1,567,459	1,435,384	2,138,565	1,029,740	1,090,900	1,643,565
Fees and Charges	15,304,231	19,187,447	19,654,668	20,271,607	18,825,522	19,856,090
Interest Earnings	1,243,366	897,486	907,919	920,645	1,041,694	864,460
Other Revenue	3,590,513	1,099,417	1,418,990	1,393,944	1,393,451	1,493,420
	45,531,521	47,982,124	51,598,170	53,212,722	51,952,947	54,959,673
EXPENDITURE						
Employee Costs	(20,737,967)	(22,996,728)	(23,287,895)	(24,584,527)	(24,232,642)	(25,199,500)
Materials and Contracts	(14,495,855)	(14,385,556)	(14,237,564)	(15,883,111)	(15,144,753)	(16,451,930)
Utility Charges	(1,983,195)	(2,176,874)	(1,913,034)	(2,012,555)	(1,917,525)	(1,947,070)
Depreciation on Non-Current Assets	(8,906,059)	(11,760,170)	(11,214,551)	(10,103,230)	(10,086,054)	(10,087,180)
Interest Expenses	(1,199,652)	(1,145,812)	(1,163,983)	(1,096,280)	(1,096,280)	(1,048,240)
Insurance Expenses	(794,498)	(878,414)	(1,137,988)	(921,380)	(921,380)	(909,800)
Other Expenditure	1,204,412	(449,720)	(173,107)	82,810	(181,071)	(351,295)
	(46,912,814)	(53,793,274)	(53,128,122)	(54,518,273)	(53,579,705)	(55,995,015)
UNDERLYING OPERATING RESULT	(1,381,293)	(5,811,150)	(1,529,952)	(1,305,551)	(1,626,758)	(1,035,342)
Non-Operating Grants & Contributions	2,163,779	1,903,855	1,000,136	1,531,854	1,531,854	1,501,561
Profit/Loss on Asset Disposal	673,018	2,296,451	6,694,802	3,716,718	3,466,718	977,326
Revaluation			(814,891)			
NET RESULT	1,455,504	(1,610,844)	5,350,095	3,943,021	3,371,814	1,443,545

Capital Works:

The Draft Capital Works program, still under review, lists the following category of projects:

Category	Total	Renewal	Upgrade	New
Land & Buildings	1,218,860	728,000	265,860	225,000
Infrastructure Assets	5,384,143	2,378,843	1,263,800	1,741,500
Plant and Equipment	2,525,500	2,305,000	127,000	93,500
Furniture and Equipment	500,495	49,000	100,000	351,495
	9,628,998	5,460,843	1,756,660	2,411,495

Funding for the program is being sourced from:

Grant	\$1,501,561
Reserves	\$449,128
Municipal	\$7,678,309
TOTAL	\$9,628,998

Based on the current estimates being presented through the drafting process for the new budget, a draft Rate Setting Statement has been compiled (**Attachment 1**) which identifies that the budget deficiency for 2016/17 is in the order of \$31.10 million. This represents an increase of approximately 5% on the City's rate revenue of \$29.6 million in 2015/16.

DETAILS:

During the budget workshops with Council Members, the introduction of a separate Waste Charge has been promoted. In order to consider the implications for this type of initiative, in the first instance, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the base under the current (combined) system. In view of that, Rates modelling has been undertaken consistent with the existing rating structure and categories.

In developing an equitable rating model, it is useful to undertake a comparison with other metropolitan local governments. The following table details how the rate in the dollar and waste collection charges (where they are applied separately) levied in 2015/16 impact on the rate levied on an individual residential property at a nominated Gross Rental Value (GRV) of \$21,000.

Council	Rate in \$	Minimum	GRV Min Threshold	Waste Charge	Security	Total Minimum	Rates on 21,000 GRV
Vincent	0.05951	\$907.00	\$15,241	\$0.00		\$907.00	\$1,249.71
Perth	0.04411	\$685.00	\$15,530	\$272.00		\$957.00	\$1,198.25
East Fremantle	0.06229	\$1,000.00	\$16,055	\$0.00		\$1,000.00	\$1,308.01
Cottesloe	0.05395	\$1,033.00	\$19,149	\$0.00		\$1,033.00	\$1,132.87
Belmont	0.04560	\$790.00	\$17,323	\$293.30		\$1,083.30	\$1,250.98
Canning	0.04051	\$683.00	\$16,860	\$356.00	\$54.90	\$1,093.90	\$1,206.71
Victoria Park	0.07410	\$1,112.00	\$15,007	\$0.00		\$1,112.00	\$1,556.10
Bayswater	0.04955	\$795.00	\$16,044	\$318.39		\$1,113.39	\$1,358.94
Stirling	0.04563	\$805.00	\$17,642	\$315.98	\$29.50	\$1,150.48	\$1,274.21
Mosman Park	0.05583	\$841.00	\$15,063	\$313.00		\$1,154.00	\$1,485.51
South Perth	0.06310	\$910.00	\$14,422	\$262.00		\$1,172.00	\$1,587.06
Joondalup	0.05185	\$828.00	\$15,969	\$346.00		\$1,174.00	\$1,434.83
Gosnells	0.05845	\$900.00	\$15,398	\$275.00		\$1,175.00	\$1,502.45
Mundaring	0.07560	\$760.00	\$10,053	\$460.00		\$1,220.00	\$2,047.60
Fremantle	0.06374	\$1,222.00	\$19,170	\$0.00		\$1,222.00	\$1,338.62
Peppermint Grove	0.06946	\$1,225.00	\$17,636	\$0.00		\$1,225.00	\$1,458.66
Claremont	0.05693	\$1,240.00	\$21,781	\$0.00		\$1,240.00	\$1,240.00
Kwinana	0.07090	\$916.00	\$12,920	\$340.00		\$1,256.00	\$1,828.90
Melville	0.06106	\$1,204.00	\$19,718	\$0.00	\$53.00	\$1,257.00	\$1,282.26
Wanneroo	0.07496	\$1,261.00	\$16,823	\$0.00		\$1,261.00	\$1,574.12
Subiaco	0.05250	\$780.00	\$14,856	\$505.00		\$1,285.00	\$1,607.59
Kalamunda	0.05524	\$840.00	\$15,208	\$487.00		\$1,327.00	\$1,646.94
Swan	0.06562	\$845.00	\$12,878	\$358.00	\$150.00	\$1,353.00	\$1,735.98
Bassendean	0.06360	\$1,026.00	\$16,132	\$335.00		\$1,361.00	\$1,670.60
Armadale	0.08024	\$1,084.00	\$13,509	\$338.00		\$1,422.00	\$2,023.04
Rockingham	0.06520	\$1,043.00	\$15,997	\$345.00	\$34.25	\$1,422.25	\$1,714.20
Cambridge	0.05861	\$937.00	\$15,988	\$500.00		\$1,437.00	\$1,730.74
Nedlands	0.04606	\$1,333.00	\$28,941	\$293.00		\$1,626.00	\$1,626.00
Cockburn	0.07074	\$1,250.00	\$17,670	\$450.00	\$67.00	\$1,767.00	\$1,935.54

In a Residential rating context, the above table clearly demonstrates, that when the Waste Collection charge is factored in, the City of Vincent in 2015/16:

1. has the lowest Minimum Rate in the metropolitan area; and
2. has the fifth lowest combined Rates/Waste Charge of the 29 local governments listed for a residential property with a GRV of \$21,000.

The balance between the rate in the dollar and level of Minimum rate is important in establishing equity and ensuring an optimum level of revenue from a nominated rating level.

The Minimum Rate in Vincent was \$707 in 2014/15, which was recognised as being out of proportion to all other metropolitan local governments, with the average minimum rate paid for residential properties across the metropolitan area in 2014/15 being \$1,143 (Minimum Rate plus Waste Collection charge). The Residential Minimum was increased in 2015/16, but remains proportionately low, with the 2015/16 metropolitan average being \$1,235.

The Budget Deficiency presented on the Rate Setting statement is \$31,102,138. As properties are developed throughout the year, the City is provided updated valuation data, which is then utilised to issue interim rates. In 2016/17, it is anticipated this growth will provide approximately \$350,000, therefore the balance of the Budget Deficiency will need to be derived from the levying of the Annual Rates, to generate \$30,752,138.

To achieve this, an increase of 3% is required across all rating categories, with the Minimum for Residential and Other rating categories proposed to increase to \$1,007 as detailed below:

Rating Category	2014/15		2015/16		Draft 2016/17	
	Rate-in-\$	Minimum	Rate-in-\$	Minimum	Rate-in-\$	Minimum
General	0.05789	\$707				
Commercial Vacant	0.11578	\$1,414	0.11578	\$1,414	0.11925	\$1,414
Residential	As for General		0.05951	\$907	0.0613	\$1,007
Other	As for General		0.06281	\$907	0.06469	\$1,007

Separate Waste Charge

In evaluating the potential to introduce a separate Waste Collection Charge, it was identified that the level of service provided to commercial properties varies greatly depending on the size of the property and nature of business. It was also recognised that further data is required and consultation with commercial customers to determine their needs, noting that the number of bins issued does not always correlate with the number collected on a regular basis.

Residential properties however are more consistent and it is a relatively simple process to introduce an appropriate charge. In view of this, it is proposed to phase in the implementation of a separate Waste Services Charge, with the charge implemented in 2016/17 for Residential properties and 2017/18 for non-residential properties.

As the cost of the City's waste operation is not currently charged separately, it is effectively funded from Rates. In order to introduce a separate Waste Services Charge for residential properties, it is first necessary to reduce the rate in the dollar for that category by a corresponding amount.

The following table shows the relevant distribution of the cost of the City's waste operation, based on the total Gross Rental Value.

Category	GRV	%	Waste Service
Residential	355,376,931	73.6%	\$3,876,487
Other	124,717,775	25.8%	\$1,360,434
Vacant Commercial	3,056,850	0.6%	\$33,344
	483,151,556	100.0%	\$5,270,265

In order to reduce the rates generated from Residential properties, the rate in the dollar and Minimum Rate have been proposed to be reduced as shown in the following table.

Rating Category	2014/15		2015/16		Draft 2016/17	
	Rate-in-\$	Minimum	Rate-in-\$	Minimum	Rate-in-\$	Minimum
General	0.05789	\$707				
Commercial Vacant	0.11578	\$1,414	0.11578	\$1,414	0.11925	\$1,414
Residential	As for General		0.05951	\$907	0.05116	\$752
Other	As for General		0.06281	\$907	0.06469	\$1,007

Under this rates modelling, the actual reduction for Residential properties is \$3,890,460 due to the influence of Minimums.

There are currently 15,801 developed residential properties, however the number of dwellings that are provided a waste service actually equates to 16,572. Whilst the number of lifts can vary given the number of bins able to be accommodated on site and on the kerbside and frequency of collection, the service that can be deemed 'standard' would equate to 33,144 lifts. Recent surveys undertaken at the time of collection have identified that the number of lifts for commercial properties is in the order of 8,274.

Based on the total number of 'lifts' associated with the waste operation and working on a cost recovery basis, it is estimated that an average unit cost for a combined rubbish and recycling service is currently \$255 per service per annum.

Category	Lifts/Bins	%	Waste Service by %	Charge @ \$255
Residential	33,144	80%	\$4,217,434	\$4,225,860
Other	8,274	20%	\$1,052,831	\$1,054,935
Vacant Commercial	0	0%	\$0	\$0
	41,418	100%	\$5,270,265	\$5,280,795

By transitioning from a GRV based cost recovery to a per service recovery model, there will be varying impacts for each ratepayer, depending on the total valuation of their property (see **Attachment 2**). In addition, this will also be the case between rating categories, which is demonstrated by the above table that apportions the cost based on service/lifts.

The current Minimum Rate for Residential properties is \$907 and the comparative rate for 2016/17 is proposed to be based on \$1,007. Reducing the proposed Minimum Rate by the value of the Waste Services Charge will neutralise the impact of the introduction of the separate charge on the 1,593 developed residential properties with a GRV under \$14,700. It is of note that whilst there are approximately 1,535 Pensioners and a further 688 ratepayers eligible for a Seniors' Rebate, only 64 and 23 respectively are on the Minimum Rate.

Therefore, by phasing in the separate Waste Services Charge, initially to Residential properties at a cost of \$255 per service, the City is likely to receive in the order of an additional \$335,400 (\$4,225,860 - \$3,890,460). This is a once off impact and it is considered that the additional income should be transferred to the City's Strategic Waste Management Reserve to facilitate the investigation and implementation of waste reduction strategies.

LEGAL/POLICY:

The following clauses from the *Local Government Act 1995* are relevant to the levying of Differential Rates, Minimum Rates and the requirement to publish a Local Notice.

6.33. Differential general rates

- (1) *A local government may impose differential general rates according to any, or a combination, of the following characteristics –*
 - (a) *the purpose for which the land is zoned, whether or not under a local planning scheme or improvement scheme in force under the Planning and Development Act 2005; or*
 - (b) *a purpose for which the land is held or used as determined by the local government; or*
 - (c) *whether or not the land is vacant land; or*
 - (d) *any other characteristic or combination of characteristics prescribed.*

6.35. Minimum payment

- (1) *Subject to this section, a local government may impose on any rateable land in its district a minimum payment which is greater than the general rate which would otherwise be payable on that land.*
- (2) *A minimum payment is to be a general minimum but, subject to subsection (3), a lesser minimum may be imposed in respect of any portion of the district.*
- (3) *In applying subsection (2) the local government is to ensure the general minimum is imposed on not less than –*
 - (a) *50% of the total number of separately rated properties in the district;*
or
 - (b) *50% of the number of properties in each category referred to in subsection (6),*
on which a minimum payment is imposed.

6.36. Local government to give notice of certain rates

- (1) *Before imposing any differential general rates or a minimum payment applying to a differential rate category under section 6.35(6)(c) a local government is to give local public notice of its intention to do so.*
 - (2) *A local government is required to ensure that a notice referred to in subsection (1) is published in sufficient time to allow compliance with the requirements specified in this section and section 6.2(1).*
 - (3) *A notice referred to in subsection (1) –*
 - (a) *may be published within the period of 2 months preceding the commencement of the financial year to which the proposed rates are to apply on the basis of the local government's estimate of the budget deficiency; and*
-

- (b) *is to contain –*
- (i) *details of each rate or minimum payment the local government intends to impose; and*
 - (ii) *an invitation for submissions to be made by an elector or a ratepayer in respect of the proposed rate or minimum payment and any related matters within 21 days (or such longer period as is specified in the notice) of the notice; and*
 - (iii) *any further information in relation to the matters specified in subparagraphs (i) and (ii) which may be prescribed; and*
- (c) *is to advise electors and ratepayers of the time and place where a document describing the objects of, and reasons for, each proposed rate and minimum payment may be inspected.*
- (4) *The local government is required to consider any submissions received before imposing the proposed rate or minimum payment with or without modification.*
- (5) *Where a local government –*
- (a) *in an emergency, proposes to impose a supplementary general rate or specified area rate under section 6.32(3)(a); or*
 - (b) *proposes to modify the proposed rates or minimum payments after considering any submissions under subsection (4),*

it is not required to give local public notice of that proposed supplementary general rate, specified area rate, modified rate or minimum payment.

The Department of Local Government and Communities (the Department) has released a Rating Policy – Differential Rates (s.6.33) see **Attachment 3**.

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007

An Act to —

- *provide for waste avoidance and resource recovery; and*
- *establish the Waste Authority; and*
- *provide for waste services by local governments; and*
- *provide for levies on waste; and*
- *repeal the Environmental Protection (Landfill) Levy Act 1998; and*
- *provide for related and consequential matters.*

This Act requires local governments to provide a waste service to residential properties within its district. Charges can be imposed for the service either through this Act or the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Waste Management Policy No. 2.2.11

The City provides a waste collection service to all residential properties and those commercial properties requiring the service in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

Council's budget process is in accordance with Council's Strategic Community Plan 2013-2023 and Corporate Business Plan 2013-2017, Objective "4. Leadership, Governance and Management":

"4.1.2 Manage the organisation in a responsible, efficient and accountable manner"

"4.1.4 Plan effectively for the future":

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

Whilst the City receives the benefit of capital proceeds from its share in the Tamala Park Regional Council, true sustainability is achieved through balanced operations. This requires a long term focus and consistent results.

Achieving an effective rating strategy is an important part of the City's overall pricing policy, which will progressively enable the City to meet all its operational obligations, including asset renewal to ensure the current standard of service can be maintained for future generations.

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

The advertising of the proposed Differential Rating System is critical in the finalisation process of the annual budget. The level of rates generation is linked to the delivery of service and level of funding for capital works, debt servicing and consolidation of Reserve funds.

COMMENTS:

The cost for the provision of a waste service to residential and commercial properties within the City of Vincent has in the past been funded through the Rates, whereas the majority of metropolitan councils levy a separate Waste Charge. Arguments for levying a separate waste charge include:

- Equity – the cost of providing the service to individual properties has little to do with the value of the property, which is the basis for the City's rating system.
- Transparency – cost increases such as the Government's Landfill Levy can have a disproportionate impact on the cost of the service compared to other Council services. These increases can be isolated without disproportionately impacting on the percentage increase for Council Rates.
- Flexibility – pricing structures can be established to recognise service variations, commercial aspects and incentives.

One of the main reasons for combining the cost of the waste service into Council Rates, particularly in a residential context is to provide the opportunity for eligible Pensioners to receive the full benefit of the State Government's Pensioners and Seniors Rebate Scheme. This scheme provides a rebate for local government rates charges, the emergency services levy, underground electricity charges (if applicable) and water service charges, however it does not cover a separate Waste/Rubbish Charge.

It is of note, that the rebate available to Pensioners has traditionally been 50%, however from 1 July 2016, the rebate on local government rates will be subject to a maximum (capped) amount of \$750, with the 25% Seniors' rebate capped at \$288.

It is recognised the introduction of a separate Waste Services Charge will impact on the amount Pensioners and to a lesser extent, eligible Seniors will be able to receive as a rebate off their rates. However, it is considered important to separate the charge so that the City is in a position over time to introduce incentives, linked to waste reduction strategies. To offset or reduce this impact, Council may wish to consider introducing its own Pensioner and Seniors Rebate for any new Waste Services Charge implemented in 2016/17. This would occur through Council's adoption of the 2016/17 Fees and Charges Schedule in the new budget.

The Rate Setting Statement indicates a budget deficiency of \$31.1 million which is approximately 5% more than the previous year. The rating strategy for 2016/17 has factored in natural growth of approximately 1.8% to the overall GRV, therefore requiring an additional 3% from the generation of Rates or under the alternative model, \$26,861,676 in Rates and the balance from the Waste Services Charge (see table below).

Rating Category	2015/16		2016/17 - Combined				2016/17 - Separate			
	Valuation (GRV)	Properties	Valuation (GRV)	Properties	Rates Levied	Valuation (GRV)	Properties	Rates Levied		
Residential	322,219,510	13,744	312,104,882	12,984	\$ 0.06130	\$ 19,132,030	333,805,762	14,362	\$ 0.05116	\$ 17,077,505
Residential Minimum	25,956,236	2,052	43,272,049	3,136	\$ 1,007	\$ 3,157,952	21,571,169	1,758	\$ 752	\$ 1,322,016
Other	122,947,656	1,640	123,712,610	1,603	\$ 0.06469	\$ 8,002,969	123,712,610	1,603	\$ 0.06469	\$ 8,002,969
Other Minimum	656,110	70	1,005,165	94	\$ 1,007	\$ 94,658	1,005,165	94	\$ 1,007	\$ 94,658
Commercial Vacant	2,999,250	45	3,056,850	50	\$ 0.11925	\$ 364,529	3,056,850	50	\$ 0.11925	\$ 364,529
Commercial Vacant M	23,603	3	-	-	\$ 1,414	\$ -	-	-	\$ 1,414	\$ -
Total	474,802,365	17,554	483,151,556	17,867		\$30,752,137	483,151,556	17,867		\$26,861,676
										\$ 3,890,461

The Department’s Rating Policy (**Attachment 3**) includes a section on ‘Fairness and Equity’, which provides a requirement for local governments to review its expenditure and consider efficiency measures as part of its budget deliberations. This is to be reflected in the Council Minutes when adopting the “budget strategy” and endorsing the objects and reasons for each differential rating category.

In respect to efficiency measures, Council Members have participated in Budget Workshops that have provided the opportunity to identify and validate areas for efficiencies at an operational and capital expenditure level. The proposed increase in rates to the value of 3% is considered reasonable, while still providing for a contribution to Reserves, to meet future demand.

The Council has previously introduced three differential rating categories and it is not proposed that there will be any changes to the existing structure or equity between the rating categories. A flat 3% has been added to all categories to maintain parity, with an increase to the Minimum rates for the Residential and Other categories.

The following reflects the Objects and Reasons for each of the Differential Rating categories:

Residential and Other:

Given the Gross Rental Value (GRV) of properties is reviewed every three years, different use or zoning categories can be impacted to different degrees by applicable market forces. By rating residential properties at the same rate as commercial and industrial properties, significant variations in valuations can result in substantial shifts in the rate burden. To avoid this, a decision has been made to separate Residential properties from other categories of use such as Commercial and Industrial.

The applicable rate in the dollar has been set to align the value of rates from each category in general alignment to the percentage that they represent of the total GRV.

Vacant Commercial:

In 2014 the City introduced a higher rate in the dollar for the calculation of Council rates on properties classified as Vacant – Commercial. The object of the higher Vacant - Commercial land rate is to encourage the development of vacant land. The reason for this, is that vacant land is often unsightly and unkempt and it can be used for the illegal dumping of rubbish. The development of Vacant-Commercial land will increase the street appeal of suburbs and the vibrancy of town centres.

Minimum Rates:

Rates are calculated by multiplying a property’s assessed GRV by the adopted rate-in-the-dollar. However, councils can apply a minimum rate, which recognizes that all ratepayers have an equal opportunity to enjoy the facilities and services provided by Council, regardless of the value of their property. It is generally accepted that a property’s value bears little relation to the landowner’s use of Council facilities and services, therefore the application of a minimum rate is considered to be a fairer outcome.

The balance between the rate in the dollar and level of the Minimum Rate is important in establishing equity and ensuring an optimal level of revenue from a nominated rating level.

Local Notice

Local governments are required to give notice of an intention to levy Differential rates by publishing a notice in a newspaper circulating in the district. The notice is to include an invitation for submissions to be made by electors or ratepayers in respect to the proposed rates or minimums.

Council is to consider any submission before imposing the proposed differential rates and minimums. It should be noted however, that Council is not restricted to impose what was advertised, but can modify the rates as required.

The separate Waste Services Charge will be considered as part of the review of fees and charges with the budget Adoption.

6. CLOSURE