




Property Rate Debt Management Policy

Addendum F (Policy Extension and Options)

<p>Context</p>	<p>This Addendum replaces previous Addendum's which were implemented as pandemic rate payment support and should be read in conjunction with the overarching Property Rate Debt Management Policy.</p>								
<p>Support Initiatives</p> 	<p><u>Overarching Policy Extension</u> Extend overarching Property Rate Debt Management Policy through until 30 June 2024 or until such time that Council formally adopts updated Policy in accordance with updated legislation and associated Minister Guidelines.</p> <p><u>Payment Plans</u> Ongoing options to provide financial support for ratepayers who commit to and comply with a payment plan that are experiencing changed financial circumstances.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="376 779 1469 1070"> <thead> <tr> <th>Initiative</th> <th>Support</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Payment Plan*</td> <td>Where a payment plan is entered into and complied with terms, interest hold will apply until 30 June 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No capacity to pay</td> <td>Financial Hardship in accordance with overarching Policy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No engagement</td> <td>Interest will apply, referral to Debt Collection Agency where rate arrears</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* Payment plans can be entered into by contacting Council's Revenue Services Team or by completing an online application.</p> <p><u>Legislative Compliance</u> Council acknowledges the newly implemented legislation regarding rate collections and will act in accordance with the new legislative framework and pending guidelines.</p>	Initiative	Support	Payment Plan*	Where a payment plan is entered into and complied with terms, interest hold will apply until 30 June 2024	No capacity to pay	Financial Hardship in accordance with overarching Policy	No engagement	Interest will apply, referral to Debt Collection Agency where rate arrears
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<p>Purpose</p> 	<p>This Addendum has been developed to be applied in conjunction with Council's existing Property Rate Debt Management policy and retains a focus of ensuring financially responsible principles continue to apply to rate debt. It also recognises that some of our community will be experiencing changed financial circumstances due to cost of living pressures and aims to support those ratepayers who commit to entering into and maintain a payment plan to reduce their rate debt whilst complying with new Legislation (Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022) and pending Minister Guidelines which will further align with this legislation.</p>								
<p>Scope</p> 	<p>This addendum seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend existing Property Rate Debt Management Policy through until 30 June 2024; • Provide interest holds where a property owner and/or ratepayer enter into a payment plan and maintain the payment through until 30 June 2024; and • Ensure the escalation of property rate debt to external agency is in accordance with new Legislation and associated Ministerial Guidelines. <p>Longer term financial challenges which impact a ratepayers capacity to reduce their municipal rate debt will be supported through existing financial hardship provisions within the Property Rate Debt Management Policy.</p>								

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	<p>Rate arrears where no engagement or payment plan has been entered into will have penalty interest applied in accordance with the legislative framework and overarching Property Rate Debt Management Policy.</p> <p>The referral of rate accounts, where the ratepayer has not engaged with Council and entered into a payment plan, or progressed with a formal Financial Hardship process, may be escalated to Council's Debt Collection provider.</p>								
<p>Requirements</p> 	<p>This addendum will be guided by the principles of transparency, efficiency, capacity to pay and equity by treating all account holders and ratepayers consistently and in a fair manner, whilst remaining flexible in our approach and responding to the rapidly changing environment.</p> <p>The Council's objective is to provide assistance to account holders and ratepayers who are experiencing changed financial circumstances whilst applying responsible financial management principles of not allowing debts to grow beyond manageable levels.</p>								
<p>Definitions</p> 	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>MSC or Council</td> <td>Moorabool Shire Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LGA</td> <td>Local Government Act 1989 and/or Local Government Act 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Account Holder</td> <td>Refers to a customer who has received a Sundry Debtor Account, Animal Registration renewal or penalty infringement.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ratepayer</td> <td>Is the owner and/or occupier of any rateable property who is liable to pay the rates and charges.</td> </tr> </table>	MSC or Council	Moorabool Shire Council	LGA	Local Government Act 1989 and/or Local Government Act 2020	Account Holder	Refers to a customer who has received a Sundry Debtor Account, Animal Registration renewal or penalty infringement.	Ratepayer	Is the owner and/or occupier of any rateable property who is liable to pay the rates and charges.
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<p>Reference Documents</p> 	<p>Online payment plan application https://moorabool.vic.gov.au/rates</p> <p>Property Rate Debt Management Policy and associated https://moorabool.vic.gov.au/rates</p>								
<p>Approval</p> 	 <p>Derek Madden Chief Executive Officer</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date: 11 July 2023</p>								