



## SHIRE OF WESTONIA 2016/2017 DIFFERENTIAL RATE MODEL STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

### Objects and Reasons for implementing a Differential Rate

In accordance with Section 6.36 of the Local Government Act 1995 and the Council's "Notice of Intention to impose Differential Rates", the following information details the objectives and reasons for those proposals.

### What are Rates?

The raising of rates is the primary source of revenue for all Councils throughout Australia. The purpose of levying rates is to meet Council's proposed budget requirements each year in a manner that is fair and equitable to the ratepayers of the community.

In Western Australia land is valued by Landgate Valuation Services (Valuer General's Office - a state government agency) and those values are forwarded to each Local Government.

Two types of values are calculated:

- Gross Rental Value (GRV) for urban areas; and
- Unimproved Value (UV) for rural land.

To calculate the rate account, councils multiply a rate in the dollar by the supplied value. The rate in the dollar is determined by the level of revenue the council wishes to raise and is dependent on their proposed budget.

Apart from the need to ensure sufficient revenue to meet its expenditure needs Council must be mindful of the impact and affordability of rates to the community.

The following are estimated Differential Rates and Minimum Payments for the Shire of Westonia for the 2016/2017 financial year.

	<i>Rate in the Dollar (Cents)</i>	<i>Minimum \$</i>
GRV – General	5.4284	\$355.00
GRV - Mining	14.5284	\$355.00

### Differential Rating

Local Governments, under section 6.33 of the Local Government Act, have the power to implement differential rating in order to take into account certain characteristics of the rateable land. These characteristics include:

- ◆ The purpose for which the land is zoned under the town planning scheme in force;
- ◆ The predominant use for which the land is held or used as determined by the local government; and

Differential rates may be applied according to any, or a combination of the above characteristics. However, local governments are constrained in the range of differential rates that they may impose. That is, a local government may not impose a differential rate which is more than twice the lowest differential rate applied by that local government unless approval from the Minister is sought.

The Shire of Westonia proposes to differentially rate all Unimproved Valued land and apply Gross Rental Value differential rates to the Gold Mine as the land has an improved classification. The minimum payments proposed for all rate categories have been set at \$355, which are considered to be the maximum for the long term, with the exception of UV Mining which is set at \$200.00.

### **GRV – Residential**

The object of the GRV rates and minimum payments is to ensure a fair contribution to the revenue requirements of the Shire, while not imposing additional financial pressure on town residents.

### **GRV – Mining**

The object of the GRV rates associated with the Gold Mine is to ensure the mine contributes to the maintenance of the Shire's assets and services to the extent that the mining operators and their connections use them. The population of the 160 man mining camp situated in the Westonia townsite almost triples that of the general population of the town and creates a massive burden on the Council's resources.

### **UV – Rural**

The object of the UV Rural rate is to permit the imposition of rates on Rural Properties that is reasonably proportional to the financial resources of those who will bear the burden of the rates and striking a reasonable balance between the capacity to pay and the fairness of the requirement.

### **UV – Mining**

Similar objects and reasons to the GRV – Mining apply. The object of the UV Mining rates is to ensure that mining contributes to the maintenance of the Shire's assets and services to the extent that the mining operators and their connections use them. While every effort is made to establish rates and minimum payments at the fairest possible levels, it is considered that the mining sector has the capacity to pay the proposed rates at the levels estimated.

Submissions are invited from any Elector or Ratepayer with respect to the proposed differential rate within 21 days of the date of the notice of intent.

All submissions in writing should be forwarded to the Shire of Westonia no later than 12.00pm on Thursday 16th June 2016.

## **UV Differential Rate - Mining**

The Local Government Act provides for rural use properties used for mining, exploration or prospecting purposes are assigned an Unimproved Value supplied and reviewed by the Valuer General. It refers to all land for which a mining tenement has been issued by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP), and valued as such by the Valuer General's Office.

The valuation determined by the Valuer General for mining tenements is calculated by multiplying the following factors.

- Rental cost of the tenement type (mining lease, prospecting lease, exploration license, petroleum producing licence etc);
- UV basis as determined by the DMP, and
- Tenement/license area

The valuation of mining tenements is not reviewed each year, as occurs with other UV properties and only changes when the tenement rental is amended.

### **Objects and Reasons for UV Mining Differential Rate**

Land used for Mining is rated higher than the UV-Rural differential rate to improve fairness and equity outcomes by:

- Ensuring mining rates payable are no less than the average rates payable, per property, in

Policy Area C (General Farming), in part to;

- compensate for the different method and comparatively lower valuation level;
  - to recognise the often short term tenure of mining projects in the region; and
  - to maintain comparability with other commercial operations in the rural sector.
- Applying a percentage premium above the average rates payable, per property, in Policy

Area C (General Farming), at a level determined by the Council, to reflect the following:

- the impacts of higher road infrastructure maintenance costs to Council as a result of frequent very heavy vehicle use over extensive lengths of roads throughout the year;
- additional emergency service arrangements that have to be put in place;
- the monitoring of environmental impacts of clearing, noise, dust and smell;
- planning, building and health assessment cost; and
- additional costs of amenities and services provided to cater for the employees of the mining operations, such as recreation, parking and law, order and public safety.

### **Minimum Payments**

The setting of general minimum payment level within all rating categories is an important method of ensuring all properties contribute an equitable rate amount to non-exclusive services.

Jamie Criddle  
Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Westonia