

RATING REFERENCE

GROUP

INFORMATION KIT

September, 2009

WHAT WILL THE REFERENCE GROUP DO?

The group will review the council's current rating strategy and suggest ways to improve it.

It will be an advisory group which will assist in developing a new rating strategy, which will be presented at least two weeks prior to the ordinary council meeting in February, 2010.

Anyone interested in joining the group should read the full terms of reference. However, in summary, the role of group members will be:

- Identify and recommend principles that Wodonga Council should consider when setting general rates, particularly with regard to the creation and maintenance of any differential rates;
- Provide input regarding the equitable sharing of the rates burden between various categories of ratepayers – e.g.: residential, commercial, industrial and rural;
- Make suggestions regarding changes to the structure of current charges and their relationship to general rates, e.g.: garbage, environmental levies and municipal charges;
- Identify any other special rates or charges or levies the group believes the council should consider.

The group won't be asked to have input into:

- The amount of total rates revenue to be collected;
- Strategies and policies of Wodonga Council in general, except to the extent they relate directly to rating strategies;
- Cost effectiveness and efficiency of providing council services;
- The services and facilities provided by the council; and,
- The council's capital works program.

HOW WILL THE GROUP BE APPOINTED?

The council will review the applications based on the experience and skills the applicants will bring to the group.

The successful applicants will then be contacted by telephone. A decision will go before the October, 2009, council meeting, endorsing a recommendation to appoint the successful applications to the group.

WHO WILL BE IN THE GROUP?

The group will include two councillors with one acting as chairperson. The council also aims to have representatives from the key groups - residential home owners, commercial and industrial property owners and people who own vacant lots, land under development and rural land holders. Organisations such as the Wodonga Chamber of Commerce, the Wodonga Ratepayers' Association, tourism groups, community-based service providers, and environmental groups, may also be represented. Council staff will also attend to provide technical input and administrative support. All persons nominated to serve on the Reference Group shall be subject to the initial and continued approval of the council. All reference group members remain in office until completion of the review, or May, 2010, whichever is the earlier.

Applicants must live in, or be ratepayers of, the Wodonga municipality. Wodonga Council will determine the make-up of the group based on the number of applications received, the experience and skills the applicants would bring to the group and the appropriate representation across the various ratepayer categories.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Please fill in the application form following and drop it in to the council offices, marked to the attention of Trevor Ierino, by 5pm on Friday, October 2. To obtain more information, please ring Mr Ierino on (02) 6022 9300. Expressions of interest can also be emailed to tierino@wodonga.vic.gov.au



