

MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK HELPS SHAPE MID MURRAY RATES REVIEW PROCESS

Community feedback is helping the Mid Murray Council in its effort to simplify its current rating system and make it fairer for all ratepayers.

A total of 58 submissions were received by the Council during its recent community consultation period (from 18 February to 25 March) as the first step in its Rates Review process. A further 68 people attended four public meetings to learn more about the proposed changes, which aim to streamline the existing complex system.

The Council is considering options to improve the existing rating system to ensure it is equitable. At present, some ratepayers are paying more than others, while some are paying for services that are unable to be accessed - such as roadside waste collection.

The main changes proposed to the community were:

- Increasing the Minimum Rate from \$731 to \$800 a year;
- Simplifying the existing rating system (currently a combination of 'land use' and 'locality') to remove 'locality' and use 'land use' as a differential;
- Introducing a Waste Collection Charge for those who receive general waste collection (and reducing the total general rates required by Council proportionally); and
- Making the changes over a six-year period to lessen the impact on the community.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the community had provided valuable feedback on the proposals.

"Rating systems can be complex and it's encouraging to see our community getting involved to have their say on what options for change they would like Council to consider," Mayor Burgess says.

"The measures we're considering will simplify our rate collection methods, and ensure our system is efficient and fair.

"At present we have ratepayers who are contributing to services they can't access, such as waste collection, and others who are unfairly paying a higher amount based on where they live or how their property is used.

"These proposed changes won't raise any additional rate revenue, but they will bring a better balance to our district to ensure all ratepayers are paying a fairer share of the costs needed to maintain, support and grow things like our much-loved recreation and public facilities, essential infrastructure including roads and our community services."

The community's feedback was presented to Council at its meeting on 13 April, and will be considered by Elected Members and staff, ahead of the final rates review report being prepared with recommendations for the improvement of the future rates system. That report will be presented to Council for its consideration on 11 May 2021.

– ENDS –

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