

RATING STRATEGY REFERENCE GROUP

Table of Contents

Information Kit.....	2
What will the Reference Group Do?.....	2
How will the Reference Group be appointed?.....	3
Who will be in the Reference Group?	3
Key Selection Criteria.....	3
How can I apply?	3
Proposed Terms of Reference.....	5
1. PURPOSE	5
2. DEFINITIONS	5
3. OBJECTIVES (RESPONSIBILITY).....	5
4. COMPOSITION	6
4.1. Membership	6
4.2. Office Bearers	7
4.3. Terms of Nomination	7
4.4. Method of Nomination	7
5. OPERATING PROCEDURES.....	8
5.1. Quorum	8
5.2. Member Code of Conduct	8
5.3. Public Statements	8
5.4. Revocation of Membership	8
6. Evaluation and Review	8
Rating Strategy Reference Group Nomination Form	9



RATING STRATEGY REFERENCE GROUP

Information Kit

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 a reference group which will assist in developing a new rating strategy for consideration for adoption in 2014/2015.

The role of group members will be to:

- Identify and recommend to the Council the principles that the Council should consider when striking rates, particularly with regard to the creation and maintenance of any differential rates
- Make recommendations to the Council regarding the equitable sharing of the rates burden between various categories of ratepayers-e.g. Residential, Rural, Commercial, and Industrial
- Recommend to the Council any changes to the structure of current charges and their relationship to general rates, e.g. Municipal Charges and Waste Management Charges
- Identify any other special rates, charges or levies it believes the Council should consider
- Identify improvements to the ways in which Council engages across the Melton community on Rating issues
- Act in accordance with the "Member Code of Conduct" as detailed in the terms of Reference

The following matters are outside the scope of the group:

- The amount of total rates and charges revenue to be collected;
- Strategies and policies of the Council in general, except to the extent they relate directly to rating strategies;
- Cost effectiveness and efficiency of providing Council services;
- The merit or otherwise of the range of services and facilities provided by the Council;
and

- The Council's Capital Works Program.

How will the Reference Group be appointed?

Appointments will be made based on the key selection criteria (see below) and the skills the applicants will bring to the group.

Who will be in the Reference Group?

The reference group shall comprise 10 members appointed by resolution of the Council as follows:

- One (1) Independent Chair (Non-voting role)
- One (1) representative from Commercial land owners
- One (1) representative from Industrial land owners
- One (1) representative from Urban Growth Zone land owners
- One (1) representative from Retirement Village home owners
- One (1) representative from Rural land owners
- One (4) representatives from Residential home owners

Council staff and external independent chair will provide technical input and administrative support to the group. The Finance Manager will determine the level of support required to service the group which may vary from time to time.

All persons nominated to serve on the Reference Group shall be subject to the initial and ongoing approval of the Council. All Reference Group members remain in office until the completion of the review. All applicants must be residents, or ratepayers of Melton City.

Key Selection Criteria

If more than required nominations are received for each category of representation, the selection will be based on the following selection criteria;

- Previous experience in representing Council Committees/ working group
- Past or present representation as office bearer with community organisation/group
- Representation of geographical area, especially in case of representatives for residential home owners.
- If less nominations are received then the number of vacancies for any category, Council may make additional appointments from any other category to fill such vacancies.

How can I apply?

Please fill in the nomination form attached and ensure that it is received at the Council Offices, marked "Melton City Rating Strategy Reference Group" and clearly advising which category you are representing by 5pm xxxxxxxx, xxxxx 2013. To obtain more information, please contact Shan Thurairajah, Finance Manager on 9747 7200. Nominations forms can also be emailed to rates@melton.vic.gov.au

Time Commitment expected from the Reference Group members;

It is Council's expectation the members will commit to meet at least 5 times during the period between October and December 2013 to debate and determine their recommendation to Council.



Proposed Terms of Reference

Name: Rating Strategy Reference Group

Approved by: Council <date>

Last reviewed: New

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to set out the terms of reference, composition and operating arrangements of the Rating Strategy Reference Group.

2. DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Rating Strategy Reference Group (Reference Group)	Will advise the Council with regards to reviewing the Council's current rating strategy and offer suggestions for improvement
Reference Group	the persons who are appointed to the Special Reference Group in the manner hereafter provided

3. OBJECTIVES (RESPONSIBILITY)

The Objective of the **Rating Strategy Reference Group** ("the Reference Group") shall be to act as an advisory body to Council for the development of a new Rating Strategy and in particular to:

- Identify and recommend to the Council the principles that the Council should consider when striking general rates, particularly with regard to the creation and maintenance of any differential rates.
- Make recommendations to the Council regarding the equitable sharing of the rates burden between various categories of ratepayers-e.g. Residential, Rural, Commercial, Industrial and Development land.
- Recommend to the Council any changes to the structure of current charges and their relationship to general rates, e.g. Municipal Charges and Waste Management Charges.
- Identify any other special rates, charges or levies it believes the Council should consider.

- Identify improvements to the ways in which Council can better engage with a diverse range of the Melton community on Rating issues.
- Possibly advocate campaigns at the State Government level in relation to rating implications of the Urban Growth Zone.

The group will not be asked to consider or have input upon;

- The amount of total rates and charges revenue to be collected;
- Strategies and policies of the Council in general, except to the extent they relate directly to the rating strategies;
- Cost effectiveness and efficiency of providing Council services;
- The merit or otherwise of the range of services and facilities provided by Council; and
- The Council's capital Works Program.

4. COMPOSITION

4.1. Membership

The reference group shall comprise 10 members appointed by resolution of the Council as follows:

- One (1) Independent (Non-voting)
- One (1) representative from Commercial land owners
- One (1) representative from Industrial land owners
- One (1) representative from Urban Growth Zone land owners
- One (1) representative from Retirement Village home owners
- One (1) representative from Rural land owners
- One (4) representatives from Residential home owners

Council staff and external independent Chair will provide technical input and administrative support to the group. The Finance Manager will determine the level of support required to service the group which may vary from time to time.

4.1.1 All persons nominated to serve on the Reference Group shall be subject to the initial and ongoing approval of the council for the term set out 4.1.2.

4.1.2 Subject to clause 4.1.1, all Reference Group members remain in office until the completion of the review, or 30 June 2014, whichever is the earlier.

- 4.1.3 On the resignation of, or in the case of a representative being incapable of acting as a representative body, the Council may, on the advice of the Reference Group, advertise for a replacement Reference Group member. The terms of the office of persons appointed to fill such a vacancy shall expire on the date at which the previous member would have gone out of office. Council may also consider leaving such position vacant if it deems the remaining tenure of the Reference Group insufficient to warrant a replacement being appointed.
- 4.1.4 Council is empowered to declare a Reference Group member's office vacant if he/she fails to attend two consecutive meetings without leave of the Reference Group by resolution duly passed or on the recommendation of the Reference Group.

4.2 Office Bearers

- 4.2.1 The Chairperson of the Reference Group shall be an independent representative appointed by the Council. The Chairperson shall delegate responsibilities to other Reference Group members as deemed necessary from time to time.
- 4.2.2 The Secretary of the Reference Group shall be a Council Officer nominated by the Finance Manager.
- 4.2.3 The Secretary, will undertake the administrative duties such as preparing agenda's, receiving and responding to correspondence, and reports, liaison with other Council Officers and external bodies and any other Reference Group administrative matters that may arise from time to time.
- 4.2.4 A member of the Reference Group may also be appointed to assist the Secretary in any of the Secretary's tasks.

4.3 Terms of Nomination

- 4.3.1 Members of the Reference Group are appointed for a term ending once the review is completed for presentation to Council or on 30 June 2014 whichever is earlier.
- 4.3.2 Members may renominate for selection should the group continue.
- 4.3.3 The Reference Group may invite suitably skilled persons to join the Reference Group in an advisory capacity, for a specified purpose and for a specified period of time. These members are not entitled to vote.
- 4.3.4 Should a vacancy of membership occur during a term, the Reference Group together with the Council Officer will recommend whether it should be filled.
- 4.3.5 The recommendations on the appointment of Reference Group members will be presented to Council for resolution and adoption.

4.4 Method of Nomination

- 4.4.1 Nominations for all voting memberships of the Reference Group will be called for following Councils determination to endorse the Terms of Reference.

- 4.4.2 Nominations will be advertised as a minimum in local newspapers and on Council's website.
- 4.4.3 Suitable persons of eligible experience for membership may be directly contacted by Council and invited to submit a nomination.
- 4.4.4 The Council is responsible for reviewing nominations and appointing members of the committee.
- 4.4.5 The Council will exercise discretion in the selection of members based on their determination of the qualities of the nominee.

5. OPERATING PROCEDURES

5.1.1 Quorum

- 5.1.2 A quorum of the Reference Group will include a minimum of six voting members..

5.2 Member Code of Conduct

Members are required to:

- Declare any conflict of interest with any matter to be discussed by the Reference Group
- Be informed of the relevant legislative responsibilities in the application of Rates and Charges.
- Have an understanding of and/or experience in the application of rates and charges to properties.
- Prepare for and actively participate in meetings.
- Act in a courteous manner, respecting views and opinions of others.
- Respect the decision of the consensus view as adjudicated by the Chair.
- Treat information with sensitivity and confidentiality as appropriate. A confidentiality agreement will need to be signed prior to commencement of the first meeting as information used in developing any Strategy may be considered sensitive information.

5.3 Public Statements

Members of the Reference Group cannot make public statements on behalf of Council as an independent group without prior approval of the Council.

5.4 Revocation of Membership

- 5.4.1 Membership of the Reference Group may be revoked in relation to, but not limited to behaviour contrary to the expectations outlined in section 5.2.

5.4.2 The decision to revoke membership is at the discretion of Council.

6. Evaluation and Review

6.1 The Council may choose to alter these Terms of Reference at any time.

6.2 Council reserves the right to review the operations or need for the Reference Group at any time.



Rating Strategy Reference Group Nomination Form

Please provide your details below	
Name:	
Address:	
Contact Number:	
Email:	
What rating category would you be representing (you can only select one)?	

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> Residential |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Village |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Growth Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Land |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Please outline below any skills and experience that you could contribute to the Rating Strategy Reference Group

Please outline what has prompted you to apply for a position on the Rating Strategy Reference Group.

I have read the Terms of References of the Reference group. I would like to be considered for participation on the Rating Strategy Reference Group.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to: Melton City Council,
Marked "Melton City Rating Strategy Review"

In person: 232 High Street, Melton
By mail: P.O.Box 21, Melton 3337
By email: Rates@melton.vic.gov.au
Not later than 5PM,xxxxxx,xxxxx,2013

Privacy Statement

The personal information contained in this form is collected to provide information pertaining to the appointment of community positions to the Rating Strategy Reference Group. This information may be disclosed to other areas of Council, third parties and the general public for the purposes of the group in accordance of with the Information Privacy Act 2000.