



PO Box 175,
CEDUNA SA 5690
Telephone 08 8625 3407
Facsimile 08 8625 3435
Email council@ceduna.sa.gov.au
www.ceduna.net
10.85.01.15 3380
5237

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Shane Sody
Principal Policy Officer, Legislation
Office of Local Government
PO Box 8021
Station Arcade
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Shane

RECOMMENDATIONS ON DIFFERENTIAL RATES

With regards to the Recommendations on Differential Rates Paper provided by your office, Council has some concern with the content and recommendations contained within the Paper.

Council currently utilises differential rating by locality (township areas), but also utilises Development Zones as a differentiating factor. The flexibility already provided for under legislation allows Council to assess rates whilst having regard to large variances in valuation levels across the entire district, capacity to pay, services provided, and other local factors that Council is aware of on, an annual basis.

Any amendments or restrictions on Council's ability to apply flexible rating systems across its area will more than likely have a detrimental affect on our ability to deliver equitable and fair rating. Council will be undertaking a review of its Rating Strategy in 2007 and with probable major land developments in our district due to be undertaken, the retention of a reasonable range of differential rating options will remain critical in providing fair rating outcomes.

Council was disappointed with the standard of the Recommendations Paper in that it appeared to provide a critical view on existing legislative provisions, but did not provide Councils with any real future options or choices on differential rating as would be expected from your Office.

Although your right to provide such a Recommendations Paper is respected, to provide a Paper that did not have the support of the Working Party or the LGA would not appear to be in the spirit of a cooperative approach in improving legislative rating provisions.

Yours faithfully

Trevor Smart
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

cc: Local Government Association of SA