

Date: Tuesday 24 May 2022 at 2PM

Venue: Council Chambers, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford

To hear and consider submissions to the Draft Rates Remission Policy.

Present

The District Mayor N C Volzke, the Deputy Mayor A L Jamieson (Chair), Councillors G W Boyde, R W Coplestone, P S Dalziel, J M S Erwood, V R Jones, M McKay, W J Sandford and G M Webby.

Via audio visual link:
Councillor A K Harris

In attendance

The Chief Executive – Mr Sven Hanne, the Director Corporate Services – Mrs T Radich, the Director Assets – Mrs Victoria Araba and the Director Community Services – Ms Kate Whareaitu, the Administration & Communication Support Officer – Ms R Vanstone and one member of the media (Stratford Press).

Via audio visual link:
The Revenue Manager – Mrs J Erwood

1. Welcome

The opening karakia ‘Kia Uruuru Mai’ was led by Councillor Boyde.

The Deputy Mayor welcomed the Chief Executive, Councillors, staff, and the media.

The Deputy Mayor reiterated the health and safety message and emergency procedures.

2. Apologies

No apologies were received.

3. Announcements

There were no announcements.

4. Declarations of members interest

Elected members were asked to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda.

There were no declarations of interest relating to items on this agenda.

5. Attendance Schedule

Attendance schedule for Policy and Services Committee meetings, including Hearings.

6. Acknowledgement of Submissions

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Submissions – Page 9

Recommendations

1. THAT the submissions to the Rates Remission Policy be received.

BOYDE/JONES
Carried
P&S/22/66

2. THAT the submitters be advised of the outcome of their submission and notified that the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting, and subsequent meetings, are available on Council's website.

McKAY/ERWOOD
Carried
P&S/22/67

Recommended Reason

So that each submission is formally received and the submitter provided with information on decisions made.

7. Submitters To Be Heard

Huria Murray (submission #1) was given the opportunity to speak to her submission after noting in a follow-up email to council that she would consider to do so. Ms Murray did not however attend the hearing.

8. Decision Report – Rates Remission Policy – Deliberation and Adoption

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Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

McKAY/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/22/68

2. THAT the feedback received be incorporated into the Rates Remission Policy and presented to the next Ordinary meeting of Council for adoption.

BOYDE/VOLZKE
Carried
P&S/22/69

Recommended Reason

The changes to the current Rates Remission Policy expect to ensure a fair and efficient approach and application of Council rates.

The Director Corporate Services noted that no direct submissions were received on the Rates Remission Policy however submissions that related to rates remissions from the Annual Plan consultation have been treated as submissions to this policy and included in the agenda.

Driveway

- Mayor Volzke provided some context to this submission. The submitter contacted him in 2021 regarding the situation with her property. She was objecting to being charged the half rate for water and sewerage connection services running past her property for which she is not connected to. These charges were introduced last year. Initially Ms Murray considered that she had not been notified of the half rate nor been consulted on it. She was notified that the opportunity to object (LTP consultation) had passed, that the rate was being charged to her property was being applied properly

and that officers were charging consistently with the policy. A change to council's Rates Remission Policy was the only way to avoid the rate.

- The submitter lives on an urban property with a house on it. A private (subdivision) driveway separates the submitters property from a neighbouring paddock that she also owns. It is the paddock (about an acre) which is the subject of the objection. It is being used as part of the existing property but is a second title. The titles are not contiguous.
- It was clarified that there are no other properties in this district like this.
- It was clarified that the urban properties are not contiguous and therefore attract two sets of rates.
- Elected members agreed that there should be no change to the policy in respect of this property.

Targeted roading rate for forestry properties

- The Deputy Mayor expressed his disappointment that charging tonnage per kilometre was not achievable.
- Mrs Radich noted that council is not legally able to collect data of logs harvested as this is not a factor of the Local Government Rating Act 2002.
- Councillor Erwood was satisfied with the management response on this matter.
- Mayor Volzke noted that one of the submissions supported a levy being applied to members of the Forestry Owners Association however not all growers were members.
- Councillor Dalziel thought that data on how far timber travels across roads had to be recorded somewhere and was more sound than a targeted rate.
- Mr Hanne agreed in principle but noted that council has no legal instrument to collect such data or charge on it. Furthermore he noted that no other council is using such an instrument either. While a bylaw for a weight or permit system may be possible, it would be extremely difficult to resource such a mechanism.
- Mayor Volzke clarified that Waka Kotahi had not come up with a solution on the issue.
- Mrs Radich clarified that all forestry block owners are required to notify the district and regional councils of their forestry planting and harvesting activities. There are many that do not do this. District councils have no ability to enforce the requirement although TRC can.
- Councillor Boyde noted that new land conversion could be included in district plans, in the future.
- Mayor Volzke noted that each of the submitters on targeted roading rates raised quite different issues and that responses ought to be tailored to these.

Water consumption

- Mrs Radich clarified that previously anyone with a water meter could apply for an annual remission if they had a water leak. It is proposed that this be restricted to once in three years instead of annually and provision that the leak must be new/different. The Director Assets retains the ability to override this.
- The Deputy Mayor noted that the onus is on the property owner to repair the leak.

Rates Remission Policy changes

The changes will be incorporated into the Rates Remission Policy and brought back to full council in a separate report for adoption next month:

- Remission for Community, Sporting and Other Organisations: update the legislative reference to the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.
- Uniform Annual Charges on Non-Contiguous Rural Properties Owned by the Same Owner and Used for a Single Purpose: to apply to rural and commercial properties as agreed to at the last meeting.
- Roading Targeted Rate: remove section.
- 50% water of 50% waste water charges where the service does not go past their property but is within the distance requirements to be serviceable: remove reference to gates – property must not have services to the boundary.
- Remission on Rates Penalties: rewording required where ratepayer is physically or financially unable to attend payment (compassionate grounds).
- Make provision for ratepayers who have previously had their property wrongly classified.
- Remission for Property Made Uninhabitable due to Fire: add a two year limit to remittance timeframe.

9. Closing Karakia

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The closing karakia 'Kia Uruuru Mai' was led by Councillor Boyde.

The meeting closed at 2.40pm.

A L Jamieson
Chairman

Confirmed this 28th day of June 2022.

N C Volzke
District Mayor