

MAGARENGLOCAL MUNICIPALITY



Magareng local municipality

PROPERTY RATES POLICY

POLICY

MUNICIPAL PROPERTY RATES POLICY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: MUNICIPAL PROPERTY RATES ACT, 2004

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1. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the wording or any other expression has the same meaning as contained in the policy, except where clearly indicated otherwise:

Agricultural use: means a farm or a smallholding used for the production of goods or products through farming or forestry activities;

Audited Financial Statements: means an annual report issued by an independent registered auditor or a person certified by a registered body or a certified bookkeeper expressing an opinion on the company's financial statements.

This includes a statement of financial position; a statement of financial performance; a cash-flow statement; other statements that may be prescribed; and any notes to these statements.

Cemeteries: means properties used for the burial of human bodies and storage of cinerary urns

Council: means the municipal council of the Magareng Local Municipality.

Customer: means any occupier of any property to which the municipality has agreed to supply services or already supplies services to, or failing such an occupier, then the owner of the property.

General Valuation: means the periodic revaluing of all properties in the municipal area in terms of Section 30 of the MPRA.

Gross monthly household income: means the gross monthly household income of both the owner and spouse or partner including any party in a co-habitation relationship from all sources,

including but not limited to salaries, wages, dividends, pensions, grants, rentals, board and lodging, interest received, and any investment income. This income definition is specific to the Rates Policy and does not relate to any other external definitions of income.

Guest House / Bed and Breakfast: means a property where **40%** or more of the bedrooms are used or available to be used for providing accommodation for temporary visitors at a fee;

MFMA: means the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 56 of 2003;

MPRA: means the Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act, 6 of 2004 as amended from time to time as well as regulations published in terms of the MPRA, which is referred to as the "Property Rates Act" in the by-law but for the purposes of brevity, shall be referred to as the "MPRA" in this Policy;

MPRA Rate Ratio Regulations: means the Municipal Property Rates Regulations on the Rate Ratio between Residential and Non-Residential Properties promulgated in terms of the MPRA published under Government Notice R195, Government Gazette 33016, on 12 March 2010; with specific reference to "public benefit organisation property means property owned by public benefit organisations and used for any specified public benefit activity listed in item 1 (welfare and humanitarian), item 2 (health care), and item 4 (education and development) of part 1 of the Ninth Schedule to the Income Tax Act."

Multiple Purposes Property: means a use of a property for more than one purpose, subject to section 9 of MPRA.

Non-Residential Property: means all properties categorised in the Valuation Roll as “Non-Rebated Properties” and represents all properties other than those defined as residential but including all vacant land. Such non-residential properties are rated at the ratio of 1:2 to the rate levied on residential properties. The cent-in-the-land for all properties other than residential is therefore twice that of the residential cent-in-the-land. In the Tariff Policy this category could be further refined in terms of Commercial and Industrial properties as in the Tariff Policy it becomes necessary to differentiate between these users.

Primary Residence: means a residence –

- a) in which a natural person or a trust holds an interest; and
- b) which that person or a beneficiary of that trust or a spouse of that person or beneficiary –
 - i. ordinarily resides or resided in as his or her main residence; and
 - ii. uses or used mainly for domestic purposes.

Ratepayer: means a person or entity that is liable, in terms of the MPRA, for the payment of rates on property levied by the municipality.

Rates By-law: means the Magareng Local Municipality: Rates By-law;

Rebated property: means any residential property as determined in this policy.

Non-rebated property: means any property other than residential property.

Residential Property: means improved property, categorised on the Valuation Roll as "Rebated Property", that is:

- used predominantly (60% or more) for residential purposes, and includes any adjoining/adjacent developed property registered in the name of the same owner and used together with such residential property as if it were one property. The physical configuration of the two properties must be such that the two properties cannot be dealt with as separate viable economic units and can only function as if they are one entity. (Any such grouping shall be regarded as one residential property for rate rebate or valuation rebate purposes and for clearance application purposes); or
- a unit registered in terms of the Sectional Titles Act, 95 of 1986, used predominantly (60% or more) for residential purposes, and includes any unit in the same sectional title scheme registered in the name of the same owner which is used together with the residential unit as if it were one property, for example a garage or domestic worker's quarters. (Any such grouping shall be regarded as one residential property for rate rebate or valuation reduction purposes and for clearance application purposes); or
- owned by a share block company and used predominantly (60% or more) for residential purposes; or
- a retirement scheme or life right scheme used predominantly (60% or more) for residential purposes; or
- a hostel used predominantly (60% or more) for residential purposes; or

- an old age home used predominantly (60% or more) for residential purposes; or
- a block of flats used predominantly (60% or more) for residential purposes; or
- a residence used for residential purposes situated on property used for or related to educational purposes.

For the sake of clarity, the following properties are specifically excluded from the definition: guest house / bed and breakfast and any vacant land irrespective of its zoning or intended usage.

Residential purposes: in relation to the use of the property means improved properties where people reside as their primary place of residence.

Supplemental Valuation: means the updating of the valuation roll whenever necessary as per Section 78 of the MPRA.

Systems Act: means the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000;

Unproductive vacant land: This is land with no development potential and which is likely to attract no more than a nominal value. It includes properties that are lanes, stairs, slivers of land and small irregularly shaped pieces of land that cannot be developed. It can also sometimes include strips of land bordering rivers, as well as road reserves (excluding roads). These parcels of land will be treated as part of the adjoining/adjacent developed property for rating purposes if the unproductive vacant land is registered in the name of the same owner of the adjoining/adjacent developed property.

Valuation Roll: means a valuation roll made in terms of Section 30 of the MPRA or a supplementary valuation roll made in terms of Section 78 of the MPRA;

Vacant Land: means a property without any buildings or structures that could be used for residential or other purposes as per the occupation certificate issued by the Municipality, as determined by the Director: Valuations. Properties used as cemeteries as per Sections 5.12.11 and 5.16 will not be treated as vacant land.

Vulnerable Groups: means *bona fide* NPOs operating subsistence survival gardens supporting certain categories of poor and who have applied for and been registered by Council on an annual basis to qualify for special tariffs.

2. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT

- a) In terms of Section 229 of the Constitution, a municipality may impose rates on property.
- b) In terms of Section 4(1) (c) of the Systems Act, a municipality has the right to finance the affairs of the municipality by imposing, inter alia, rates on property.
- c) In terms of Section 2(1) of the MPRA, a metropolitan or local municipality may levy a rate on property in its area in accordance with the other provisions of the MPRA.
- d) This Policy must be read together with, and is subject to the provisions of the MPRA and the Rates By-Law.
- e) In terms of Section 8 (1) of the MPRA, the municipality levies rates on the use of the property.

- f) In terms of Section 8 (2) of the MPRA, the Municipality levies different rates on different categories of properties in relation to the usage as reflected in this policy.
- g) In terms of the MPRA, the Municipality levies different rates based on the ownership of properties as reflected in this policy.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

The objectives of the policy are to:

- a) ensure that all owners of rateable property are informed about their liability to pay assessment rates;
- b) specify relief measures for ratepayers who may qualify for relief or partial relief in respect of the payment of rates through exemptions, reductions and rebates contemplated in this policy;
- c) set out the criteria to be applied by the Council if it increases rates and levies differential rates on different categories of property;
- d) recognise the state, organs of state and owners of public service infrastructure as property owners;
- e) to promote development and endeavour to attract investment for job creation ensure that all persons liable for rates are treated equitably as required by the Act
- f) ensure that exemptions, rebates, and reductions are granted as provided for in the Rates Policy;
- g) to ensure the promotion of efficient, economic and effective use of resources.

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

a) The municipality's Rates Policy is based on the following guiding principles:

- equity;
- affordability;
- poverty alleviation;
- social and economic development;
- financial sustainability; and
- cost efficiency.

b) Rates are levied in accordance with the MPRA as a cent-in-the-rand based on the property value contained in the municipality's General Valuation Roll (GV) of **2019** and Supplementary Valuations (SVs).

c) As provided for in the MPRA, the municipality has chosen to differentiate between various categories of property and owners of property. As per Section 8(2) of the MPRA, A municipality must determine the following categories of rateable property in terms of subsection (1): Provide such property exists within the municipal jurisdiction:

- a. Residential properties;
- b. Industrial properties;
- c. Business and commercial properties;
- d. Agricultural properties;
- e. Mining properties;
- f. Properties owned by an organ of state and used for public service purposes;

- g. Public service infrastructure properties;
- h. Properties owned by public benefit organisations and used for specified public benefit activities;
- i. Properties used for multiple purposes, subject to section 9; or
- j. Any other category of property as may be determined by the Minister, with concurrence of the Minister of Finance, by notice in the Gazette,

Some categories of property and categories of owners are granted relief from rates. However, the municipality does not grant relief in respect of payments for rates to any category of owners or properties, or to owners of properties on an individual basis, other than by way of an exemption, rebate or reduction provided for in this Policy.

- d) The rate charged as a cent-in-the-rand for Residential Properties as per the definitions (above) is the base rate and the rates charged in respect of all other categories of properties are reflected as ratios to the residential rate.
- e) Specify relief measures for ratepayers who may qualify for relief or partial relief in respect of the payment of rates through exemptions, reductions and rebates.
- f) Recognise the state, organs of state and owners of public service infrastructure as property owners;
- g) Not discourage the development of property;
- h) Ensure that all persons liable for rates are treated equitably as required by the Act.

5. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

5.1 Residential Property

- a) The municipality will not levy a rate on the first value up to **R15 000** of the market value as per the Valuation Roll of Residential Properties, as follows:
 - i. on the first R15 000 on the basis set out in Section 17(1)(h) of theMPRA; and
 - ii. on the balance of the market value up to **R15 000**in respect of residential properties, as an important part of the municipality's indigent relief measures aimed primarily at alleviating poverty amongst those persons owning low-value properties.
- b) The maximum reduction of up to **R15 000**will be granted to every individually valued Residential Property.
- c) The municipality may grant a residential rebate on rates levied on the balance of the market value of Residential Properties, if any, as determined by Council during the municipality's budget process.

5.2 State-owned Properties

- a) State-owned properties no longer qualify for any rates rebate by virtue of ownership. However, the exemptions, rebates and reductions relating to the usage of properties as specified in this Policy apply to state-owned properties.

5.3 Public Service Infrastructure

- a) Public service infrastructure (as defined in the MPRA) may not be rated on the first 30% of its market value in terms of Section 17(1) (a) of the MPRA.
- b) The levying of rates on certain PSI properties are being phased out over five financial years as from 1 July 2016 in terms of Section 93A of the MPRA.

5.4 Land Restitution

- a) Properties owned by land reform beneficiaries will not be rated for the first ten years of ownership in terms of Section 17(1) (g) of the MPRA and thereafter the normal rates would be phased in over three financial years in terms of Section 21(1) (b) of the Act.

5.5 Agricultural Use

- a) A farm is an area of land, including various structures thereon, devoted primarily to the practice of producing and managing food (produce, grains or livestock) or forestry products. The farming activity must be intense, must not be a mere hobby and must contribute to the local economy.
- b) Farms may be owned and/or operated by a single individual, family, community or corporate entity. In the event that the farmer is an individual, the farmer must be dependent on the income from the farm to support his or her family. A farm can be a holding of any size.
- c) In terms of the MPRA, the definition of agricultural purpose excludes the use of a property for the purpose of eco-tourism or for the trading in or hunting of game.

- d) As a result of, and taking into account, limited rate-funded services supplied to such properties in general, the contribution of agriculture to the local economy, the extent to which agriculture assists in meeting the service delivery and development obligations of the municipality, and the contribution of agriculture to the social and economic welfare of farm workers, the municipal bills a reduced rate (as set out below) in respect of properties subject to agricultural use. This rate rebate is 80% (inclusive of the 75% in terms of the MPRA Rate Ratio Regulations) of the rate levied on Residential Properties, which rate on properties subject to agricultural use does not exceed the maximum ratio to the rate on Residential Property prescribed in the MPRA Rate Ratio Regulations.
- e) Unless the usage of a property has changed, owners of qualifying agricultural properties must apply for the rebate in the year when a new (General Valuation) GV or (Supplementary Valuation) SV or change of ownership, as the case may be, and which affects the property, is implemented. Applications made when a new GV is implemented must be received by the municipality by 31 August of the financial year when the GV will be implemented. Applications made when a SV is implemented or the ownership has changed must be received by the municipality by the last day of the third month following the effective date of the SV or within three months from the date of registration of the change of ownership of the property in the Deeds Office, failing which no such rebate may be granted for that financial year.
- f) Owners of properties where a change of use qualifies the property for an agricultural rebate must apply for the rebate

after such change of use and the rebate will be granted from the date the application is received by the municipality.

- g) Approved applications will remain valid until the next GV, SV or changes of ownership affecting those properties are implemented. An owner is required to immediately inform Council should the agricultural activities be terminated. Section 6 (b) of this Policy will apply should an owner fail to do so.
- h) The municipality reserves the right to inspect such properties before or after granting such rebates and to revoke or amend any decision made prior to such inspection.
- i) No other rebates will be granted to properties that qualify for the agricultural rebate. For the avoidance of doubt, properties that qualify for the agricultural rebate will not be entitled to the residential rate rebate as set out in sub-section 5.1 above.
- j) The registered owner or the tenant of the property has to apply for the agricultural rebate and provide the municipality with information specified by the municipality in an affidavit by the due dates set out above and declare in an affidavit that no contraventions of the zoning scheme are taking place on the property. Qualifying requirements are that the owner or tenant should be taxed by SARS as a farmer and the most recent tax assessment must be provided as proof, or where the owner or tenant is not taxed as a farmer, proof is required that income from farming activities exceeds 40% of the household income. Proof in the form of the last tax return must be submitted.

- k) Owners or tenants of farms and smallholdings with a residential component and with no or limited agricultural activities may apply to be rated at the residential rate and to receive the valuation reduction (i.e. such properties which do not qualify for the agricultural rebate). The owner must apply to the municipality by the due dates set out above and declare in an affidavit that no contraventions of the zoning scheme are taking place on the property. Should they meet the relevant criteria, the owners of these properties, are not precluded from applying for a senior citizens and disabled person's rate rebate, in terms of the municipality's indigent relief measures.
- l) If 40% or more of the extent of farms and smallholdings is being used for commercial or industrial purposes (such as truck depots, construction yards or factories), these properties do not qualify for the residential rate or any rebates. Farms and smallholdings used in contravention of the zoning scheme will be reported to the Planning Department and will not qualify for any rebate.
- m) If less than 40% of the extent of farms and smallholdings is being used for commercial or industrial purposes and where the municipal valuer considers it reasonable to apply the category of multiple-use properties, the apportionment of value for each distinct use of the property will be calculated by the municipal valuer and used for billing at the applicable rate. This also caters for wind and solar energy plants.

5.6 Multiple-Use Properties

- a) Properties used for multiple purposes which do not fall within the definition of Residential Properties and, accordingly, do not qualify for the residential rate, may be included into the category of multiple-use properties, for which an apportionment of value for each distinct use of the property will be calculated by the municipal valuer and used for billing at the appropriate and applicable rate, in cases where the municipal valuer considers it reasonable to apply this category.

5.7 Municipal Properties

- a) Only municipal properties used by any one of the four trading undertakings i.e. electricity, water, sanitation and solid waste, will be rated.
- b) Council properties leased to third parties will also be rated, except for the Council public-rented stock (primarily state-subsidised rental houses). Subject to the terms of any existing agreements with lessees, the municipality shall impose a liability to pay rates on lessees when amending or renewing existing lease agreements in respect of Council-owned properties.
- c) A buyer, in the case of a property that was sold by a municipality and of which possession was given to the buyer pending registration of ownership in the name of the buyer at a later date, will be deemed to be the owner and will be liable for the payment of rates.

5.8 Senior Citizens Rate Rebate

- a) Registered owners of Residential Properties who are senior citizens qualify for special rebates according to gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property. To qualify for the rebate a property owner must be a natural person and the property must satisfy the requirements of the definition of Residential Property, and must on 1 July of the financial year:
- i. occupy the property as his/her Primary Residence, provided that where the owner is unable to occupy the property due to no fault of his/her own, the spouse or partner or children (including minor children) may satisfy the occupancy requirement.
 - ii. be at least 60 years of age and above.
 - iii. be in receipt of a gross monthly household income as defined in section 1 above not exceeding **R10 000** as proven by the submission of the applicant's most recent income tax return and the minimum of three months bank statements from all financial institutions or, if the person does not have a bank account, such proof as the municipality may require to substantiate the person's level of gross monthly household income.
 - iv. The applicant and/or spouse and/or life partner should not be the owner of more than one property nationally (with the exception of any unproductive vacant land) or internationally, subject to paragraph 'K' below
- b) An executor or administrator of a deceased estate will be regarded as an owner. The applicant must produce a letter or an Affidavit from the Master of the Court or suitably

endorsed Title Deed or addendum to the Title Deed to substantiate the appointment.

- c) The criteria of a natural person may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow for a property owned by a trust where at least one beneficiary meets all of the other requirements of section 5.8 of this Policy; provided that the gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property be added to the gross monthly household income of all beneficiaries, which income may, collectively, not exceed **R10 000**.
- d) The criteria of a natural person may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow for a property owned by a Close Corporation (CC) where the total number of members meets all of the other requirements of sub-section 5.8 of this Policy; provided that the gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property be added to the gross monthly household income of all members, which income may, collectively, not exceed **R10 000**.
- e) The criteria of a natural person may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow for a property owned by multiple owners where at least one co-owner meets all of the other requirements of sub-section 5.8 of this Policy; provided that the gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property be added to the gross monthly household income of the co-owners of that property, which income may, collectively, not exceed **R10 000**.

- f) The criteria of registered owner (per the Deeds Office) may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow the holder of a share or the holder of a life right and who occupies that property which that person has the right to occupy and such person is responsible for the payment of the rates in terms of their right to occupy, to allow that owner and occupant to apply for this rebate (subject to all the other applicable requirements of sub-section 5.8).
- g) Owners must apply for the rebate in the year when a new GV or SV, as the case may be, are implemented. Applications made when a new GV is implemented must be received by the municipality by **31 August** of the financial year when the GV will be implemented. Applications made when a SV is implemented, must be received by the municipality by the last day of the third month following the implementation date of the SV, failing which no such rebate may be granted for those financial years.
- h) Owners of properties where a change of gross household income qualifies the property for a rebate or a different percentage rebate must apply for the rebate within three months of when the change occurred, failing which no such rebate may be granted for that financial year.
- i) Approved rebate applications will remain valid until the next GV, SV or changes of gross household income affecting those properties are implemented. An owner is required to immediately inform Council should the gross monthly household income change, sub-section 6 (a) of this Policy will apply should an owner fail to do so.

- j) Any owner who, meets all the other criteria may apply to receive the rebate from the date of receipt by the municipality of the application for the remainder of the validity of that GV, where after all the criteria set out above will apply to applications for rebates in subsequent financial years.
- k) In exceptional circumstances the CFO may, in his/her sole discretion, approve the granting of this rebate even though the applicant and/or spouse and/or life partner owns additional properties for which a market-related rental is included in the gross monthly household income.
- l) Where a Senior Citizen's gross monthly household income changes substantially as a result of the spouse/partner passing away the surviving spouse/partner may apply for the rebate to be adjusted from the date of death.
- m) Where a couple qualifies for a rebate in terms of section 5.8 and one passes away and the surviving spouse/partner does not qualify in terms of age, the rebate be retained for a period of 12 months from the date of death subject to meeting the other criteria of sub-section 5.8.
- n) Where a ratepayer qualifies for a rebate in terms of section 4.8 and passes away, leaving only a child headed household where the child does not qualify in terms of age, the rebate be retained for a period of 12 months from the date of death subject to meeting the other criteria of sub-section 5.8.

- o) The percentage rebate granted to different gross monthly household income levels will be determined according to the schedule below.

Gross Monthly Household Income		% Rebate	Gross Monthly Household Income		% Rebate
2023/24			2024/25		
0	3 500	75%	0	3 500	75%
3 500	4 000	70%	3 500	4 000	70%
4 000	4 500	65%	4 000	4 500	65%
4 500	5 000	60%	4 500	5 000	60%
5 000	5 500	55%	5 000	5 500	55%
5 500	6 000	50%	5 500	6 000	50%
6 000	6 500	45%	6 000	6 500	45%
6 500	10 000	40%	6 500	10 000	40%

5.9 Disabled Persons Rate Rebate

- a) Registered owners of Residential Properties who are disabled persons qualify for special rebates according to gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property. To qualify for the rebate a property owner must be a natural person and the property must satisfy the requirements of the definition of Residential Property, and must on 1 July of the financial year:
- i. occupy the property as his/her Primary Residence, provided that where the owner is unable to occupy the property due to no fault of his/her own, the spouse or

partner or children (including minor children) may satisfy the occupancy requirement.

- ii. be in receipt of a disability pension.
 - iii. be in receipt of a gross monthly household income as defined in section 3 above not exceeding **R10 000** as proven by the submission of the applicant's most recent income tax return and the minimum of three months bank statements from all financial institutions or, if the person does not have a bank account, such proof as the municipality may require to substantiate the person's level of gross monthly household income.
 - iv. The applicant and/or spouse and/or life partner should not be the owner of more than one property nationally (with the exception of any unproductive vacant land) or internationally, subject to paragraph "k"
- b) An executor or administrator of a deceased estate will be regarded as an owner. The applicant must produce a letter or an Affidavit from the Master of the Court or suitably endorsed Title Deed or addendum to the Title Deed to substantiate the appointment.
- c) The criteria of a natural person may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow for a property owned by a trust where at least one beneficiary meets all of the other requirements of sub-section 5.9 of this Policy; provided that the gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property be added to the gross monthly

household income of all beneficiaries, which income may, collectively, not exceed **R10 000**.

- d) The criteria of a natural person may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow for a property owned by a Close Corporation (CC) where the total number of members meets all of the other requirements of sub-section 5.9 of this Policy; provided that the gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property be added to the gross monthly household income of all members, which income may, collectively, not exceed **R10 000**.
- e) The criteria of a natural person may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow for a property owned by multiple owners where at least one co-owner meets all of the other requirements of sub-section 5.9 of this Policy; provided that the gross monthly household income of the persons normally residing on that property be added to the gross monthly household income of the co-owners of that property, which income may, collectively, not exceed **R10 000**.
- f) The criteria of registered owner (per the Deeds Office) may be waived at the sole discretion of the CFO to allow the holder of a share or the holder of a life right and who occupies that property which that person has the right to occupy and such person is responsible for the payment of the rates in terms of their right to occupy, to allow that owner and occupant to apply for this rebate (subject to all the other applicable requirements of sub-section 5.9).
- g) Owners must apply for the rebate in the year when a new GV or SV, as the case may be, are implemented. Applications

made when a new GV is implemented must be received by the municipality by **31 August** of the financial year when the GV will be implemented. Applications made when a SV is implemented, must be received by the municipality by the last day of the third month following the implementation date of the SV, failing which no such rebate may be granted for those financial years.

- h) Owners of properties where a change of gross household income qualifies the property for a rebate or a different percentage rebate must apply for the rebate within three months of when the change occurred, failing which no such rebate may be granted for that financial year.
- i) Approved rebate applications will remain valid until the next GV, SV or changes of gross household income affecting those properties are implemented. An owner is required to immediately inform Council should the gross monthly household income change. Sub-section 6 (a) of this Policy will apply should an owner fail to do so.
- j) Any owner who, meets all the other criteria may apply to receive the rebate from the date of receipt by the municipality of the application for the remainder of the validity of that GV, where after all the criteria set out above will apply to applications for rebates in subsequent financial years.
- k) In exceptional circumstances the CFO may, in his/her sole discretion, approve the granting of this rebate even though the applicant and/or spouse and/or life partner owns additional properties for which a market-related rental is included in the gross monthly household income.

- l) Where a Disabled Person’s gross monthly household income changes substantially as a result of the spouse/partner passing away the surviving spouse/partner may apply for the rebate to be adjusted from the date of death.

- m) Where a couple qualifies for a rebate in terms of sub-section 5.9 and one passes away and the surviving spouse/partner does not qualify in terms of disability, the rebate be retained for a period of 12 months from the date of death subject to meeting the other criteria of sub-section 5.9.

- n) Where a ratepayer qualifies for a rebate in terms of paragraph 5.9 and passes away, leaving only a child headed household where the child does not qualify in terms of disability, the rebate be retained for a period of 12 months from the date of death subject to meeting the other criteria of sub-section 5.9.

- o) The percentage rebate granted to different gross monthly household income levels will be determined according to the schedule below:

Gross Monthly Household Income			% Rebate	Gross Monthly Household Income			% Rebate
2023/24				2024/25			
0	3 500		75%	0	3 500		75%
3 500	4 000		70%	3 500	4 000		70%
4 000	4 500		65%	4 000	4 500		65%
4 500	5 000		60%	4 500	5 000		60%
5 000	5 500		55%	5 000	5 500		55%

5 500	6 000	50%	5 500	6 000	50%
6 000	6 500	45%	6 000	6 500	45%
6 500	10 000	40%	6 500	10 000	40%

- 5.10** Nature Reserves, Special Nature Reserves and National Parks
- a) Section 17(1)(e) of the MPRA *precludes Council from levying rates on those parts of a special nature reserve, national park or nature reserve within the meaning of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003) (**Protected Areas Act**), or of a national botanical garden within the meaning of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 10 of 2004, which are not developed or used for commercial, business, farming or residential purposes.*
- b) The apportioned value of any portion of such properties utilised for any purpose other than such conservation purposes will be rated accordingly. Landowners, who acquire conservation worthy properties with the intent for proclaiming them under the Protected Areas Act, can apply for a rates rebate from the date of transfer. If the property is not gazetted within three years, then the land owner would be rated accordingly and rates would be backdated from date of transfer. If a valid reason exists for not gazetted within three years, then the land owner can submit a motivation to the municipality's Community Services Department for an extension of the rates rebate.
- c) Private property exhibiting sensitive ecological areas/features, identified by the municipality's Community Services Department as such, may be granted a 100% rates

rebate for that portion of land exhibiting these sensitive features, provided that the land is either leased to the municipality for nature conservation purposes or there is a written agreement, approved by the municipality (subject to paragraph 5.10 (d) below), for the conservation management of the relevant portion of land.

- d) Any rate rebate will only be applicable to conservation agreements where the land is conserved in perpetuity. This would require a voluntary title deed restriction.
- e) Owners of properties with formal in perpetuity conservation agreements of over 10 hectares, may apply for a rebate on that portion of the land used for residential and/or conservation management purposes. This rebate will be equal to the percentage of the land included in the conservation agreement to the total area of the property with a maximum rebate of 90%.
- f) The municipality's Environmental Management Resources Department will annually inspect every property receiving a rebate in terms of this paragraph of the Policy and certify that the conservation agreement is being honoured.
- g) These rebates are as a result of the perpetuity nature of these conservation agreements and the fact that the costs incurred for sound conservation management will always exceed the rebates granted. The land subject to such perpetuity agreements is of immense ecological importance and the securing of these areas is of paramount importance. Private land owners who conserve land through voluntary

conservation stewardship ease the burden on the municipality and other conservation organisations as the land is added to the overall conservation parks but it need not be purchased. In addition, the costly ecological management of these sites, in particular alien and fire management are conducted by the landowner as per an approved Environmental Management Plan.

- h) Should privately-owned property receiving the Conservation Land rebate be utilised in a manner that is detrimental to conservation purposes, all rebates granted in terms of paragraphs 5.10.(a) to 5.10.(g) above during the current and previous GVs will become repayable as provided for in Section 17(2)(a) to (c) of the MPRA.

5.11 Religious Organisations

- a) In terms of Section 17(1)(i) of the MPRA, the municipality may not levy a rate on property registered in the name of and used primarily as a place of public worship by a religious community, including an official residence registered in the name of that community which is occupied by an office bearer of that community who officiates at services at that place of worship. This will also apply to properties leased from Council and properties being transferred from Council to the Religious Organisation.
- b) Property used primarily as an office of a religious organisation or property used as parking facilities, halls used for religious purposes, accommodation for missionaries, camping sites not operated for gain and cemeteries for that

religious community will also receive a **100%** rebate for rates. Such rebates are subject to an annual application.

- c) A property registered in the name of a trust, society or institution established for the sole benefit of a religious community and used for the purpose of congregation, excluding a structure used for educational instruction in which secular or religious education is the primary instructive medium, despite the existence of an element of religious instruction will also receive a **100%** rebate for rates.
- d) In exceptional circumstances the CFO may accept that a property registered in a name other than that of the religious organisation be regarded as the property of a religious community if it can be proven that the registration is merely to facilitate transfer of the property into the name of the religious community.
- e) With the implementation of any GV or at the request of the CFO, religious organisations will be required to provide proof to the municipal valuer that their properties are still being used for religious purposes.

5.12 NPOs / PBOs

- a) The municipality may grant a **100%** rates rebate for the categories of NPOs or public benefit organisations (PBOs) listed below, subject to sub-section 5.12.(p). These categories of properties and/or owners of properties are deemed to contribute services or benefits to the community. An annual rebate will only be granted after an official

application made by an owner or a user of a property (on behalf of an owner) has been approved. Owners or such users who fail to apply for the rebate by **31 August** will not be entitled to the rebate for that financial year.

- b) Such NPO or PBO must have a constitution which does not preclude any resident of the municipality from being a member of the said body or organisation or from benefitting from such organisation; therefore they must be open to the general public.
- c) In order to be considered, the organisations listed below must either be registered as NPOs under the Non-Profit Organisations Act, 71 of 1997, or be PBOs that qualify for tax exemption as contemplated by Part 1 of Section 30 of the Ninth Schedule of the Income Tax Act. Such registration must be supplied annually upon application including the submission of a tax clearance certificate for NPOs and PBOs confirming that they are in good standing.

These rebates are intended to assist organisations with limited resources that are liable for the payment of the rates and not for those who have the ability to pay as determined from their Audited Financial Statements by the CFO or his/her nominee in terms of sub-section 5.12.(c).(i)

- i. Assessment to determine the ability to pay rates by:
 - analysing the audited annual financial statements in terms of income and overall resources;
 - examining the credibility of year-on-year expenditure;

- ensuring that profits or surpluses are calculated by excluding transfers to reserves and excessive writing off or depreciation of assets;
- comparing the total annual turnover to the rates billed to determine whether the rates exceed 5% of the total turnover;
- accumulated reserves for specific purposes would not be taken into account with this assessment;

Note: Funds raised from external sources (such as grants, subsidies and donations) must be excluded when determining the ability to pay.

- d) In exceptional circumstances the CFO may accept that a property registered in a name other than that of the organisation be regarded as the property of the organisation if it can be proven that the registration is merely to facilitate transfer of the property into the name of the organisation.
- e) Property used primarily as parking facilities in conjunction with a PBO / NPO activity may be regarded as contiguous property for the purposes of sub-section 5.12 and rated accordingly.
- f) These rebates are not applicable to any Vacant Land irrespective of its zoning or intended usage unless stated otherwise in this Policy.

5.13 Health and welfare institutions

Privately-owned properties used exclusively as a home catering for persons with disabilities, a hospital, clinic, mental institution, frail care centre, orphanage, non-profit retirement scheme, old age home or any benevolent

institution, including workshops, laundry or cafeteria facilities used by the beneficiaries, provided that any profits from the use of the property are used entirely for the benefit of the institution and/or for charitable purposes may qualify for the rebate.

5.14 Educational institutions

Property owned and/or used as well as declared or registered by law for educational purposes, including a residence registered in the name of the educational institution and used by full-time employees of the educational institution may qualify for the rebate. This includes any playgrounds, parking areas, sports grounds, halls or sport fields owned and/or used by such institution.

5.15 National/Provincial/Local Heritage Sites and Historical Monuments

Those properties that meet the definition of Residential Property will be dealt with in terms of sub-section 5.1.

Properties that do not meet the definition of Residential Property, and registered in the name of private persons or organisations or leased from the municipality and open to the public may qualify for the rebate. A Vacant site declared as a Heritage Site will still qualify.

5.16 Charitable institutions

Properties owned and/or used by NPOs or PBOs solely for the performance of charitable work may qualify for the rebate.

5.17 Cemeteries and crematoria

Properties used as cemeteries and/or crematoria and registered in the names of private persons or organisations may qualify for the rebate. The status of the applicant's activities will be reassessed upon annual application as confirmed by the municipality's Cemetery Co-ordinator, Community Services Directorate after inspection.

- 5.18** Museums, libraries, art galleries and botanical gardens
Properties registered in the name of private persons or organisations or leased from the municipality and open to the public may qualify for the rebate.
- 5.19** War veterans organisations
Properties registered in the name of a trustee or trustees of organisations defined in the Social Aid Act, 66 of 1989 or the Military Veterans Act 18 of 2011 or similar organisations maintained for the welfare of war veterans and their families may qualify for the rebate. Properties leased from the municipality may also qualify.
- 5.20** Youth development organisations
Properties owned or leased from the municipality by organisations such as the scouts, girl guides, or organisations the Council deems to be similar may qualify for the rebate.
- 5.21** Animal protection
Properties owned or leased from the Municipality and used by institutions or organisations whose exclusive aim is to

protect birds, reptiles and other animals may qualify for the rebate.

5.22 MPRA Rate Ratio Regulations

Any property that meets the PBO criteria as determined by the MPRA Rate Ratio Regulations, yet does not qualify for the **100%** rebate in terms of this policy, shall be rated at **25%** of the residential cent-in-the-rand.

5.23 Social Housing Institutions

- a) Property registered in the name of an institution accredited in terms of the Social Housing Act 16 of 2008 which provides or intends to provide rental or co-operative housing options for households with gross monthly household income less than the maximum housing subsidy income limit may qualify for the rebate.
- b) Properties where the gross monthly household income exceeds the aforementioned income limit or any other Non-Residential Properties of such institutions would not qualify in terms of this paragraph.

5.24 Police Forums

Properties used exclusively by police forums excluding any government properties may qualify for the rebate.

5.25 National Monuments

Upon application the Municipality may grant 100% rates rebate on properties declared as National Monuments under the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999) in the Government Gazette if the property is open to the

general public and not operated for gain. A Vacant site declared as a National Monument will still qualify.

5.26 Cemeteries / Graveyards (Special Exemption)

- a) Property registered in the name of a private individual/organisation and not actively being used as a cemetery/graveyard for the selling of burial plots, may be granted a 100% Rates Rebate. The status of the applicant's activities will be reassessed upon annual application as confirmed by the municipality's Cemetery Co-ordinator, Community Services Directorate after inspection.

- b) Properties where the Municipal Manager has identified a cemetery which is inactive and no longer being maintained by the owner, and the owner can no longer be traced and a prepayment electricity meter and a water management device or water prepayment meter have been installed (where applicable), may be granted a 100% rates rebate.

5.27 Sporting bodies

- a) The municipality may grant a **100%** rates rebate for amateur sporting bodies open to the general public subject to the requirements listed in 5.17.(a) to 5.17.(c) Such properties must be used predominantly by sporting bodies for the purpose of amateur sport and any social activities which are connected with such sport. These properties and/or owners of properties are deemed to contribute benefits to the community. An annual rebate will only be granted after an official application made by an owner or a

user of a property (on behalf of an owner) has been approved. Owners or such users who fail to apply for the rebate by **31 August** will not be entitled to the rebate for that financial year.

- b) These rebates are intended to assist sporting bodies with limited resources that are liable for the payment of the rates and not for those who have the ability to pay as determined from their Audited Financial Statements by the CFO or his/her nominee in terms of sub-section 5.12(c).(i).
- c) Although these rebates are not applicable to any Vacant Land irrespective of its zoning or intended usage, land used for sporting activities does not necessarily require improvements and may qualify for the rebate.

5.28 Homeless Peoples Shelters

- a) Homeless Peoples Shelters, assessment centres and second phase accommodation must first apply annually to relevant bodies for accreditation as they may also qualify for **100%** rates rebate and special tariffs on other municipal services. This also includes organisations accredited, who care for homeless children as stipulated in the Children's Act, 38 of 2005.
- b) These rebates and special tariffs are intended to assist organisations that would be liable for the payment of the rates and tariffs and that have limited resources and not for those who have the ability to pay as determined from their

audited financial statements by the CFO or his/her nominee in terms of sub-section 5.12(c).(i).

5.29 Early Childhood Development (ECD)

- a) ECD organisations must apply annually to the Social Development and Early Childhood Development Portfolio Committee for accreditation in terms of their set criteria to qualify for a **100%** rates rebate.
- b) These rebates are intended to assist organisations with limited resources that are liable for the payment of the rates and not for those who have the ability to pay as determined from their Audited Financial Statements by the CFO or his/her nominee in terms of sub-section 5.12(c).(i).

5.30 General Exemption

- a) To avoid fruitless and wasteful expenditure the municipality will not levy a rate on any private road or any other property where the market value of the property is equal to or less than **R50 000** or such other amount as determined by Council from time to time. This clause will not apply when other service charges (including availability charges) or an additional rate in respect of property situated in a special rating area (as contemplated in Section 22 of the MPRA and Policy) are billed to that property nor will it apply to any units in a sectional title scheme.

6. GENERAL

- a) Except for applications in respect of Agricultural Properties, Senior Citizen and Disabled Persons Rate Rebates which are made as per sub-section 5.5, 5.8 and 5.9 all applications for exemptions, rebates or reductions in terms of this Policy must be submitted to the municipality by **31 August** for the financial year in respect of which the rate is levied. If the rebate applied for is granted, the rebate will apply for the full financial year unless the reason for granting the rebate ceases to apply during the year.

- b) Persons who have submitted false information and/or false affidavits and/or failed to notify the CFO of any amended use of properties owned or used by them or changes to the gross monthly household income will have the exemptions, rebates or reductions withdrawn with effect from the date of the incident in question and interest raised as provided for in the municipality's Credit Control and Debt Collection **By-Law**. The Municipality may also take further appropriate action against them.

- c) All applications for exemptions, rebates or reductions will require the applicant's municipal accounts to have been paid up to date or the conclusion of a suitable arrangement with the municipality as provided for in the municipality's Credit Control and Debt Collection **By-Law** and Policy, which may include water and electricity saving measures. Should there be a default on the arrangements, all the rebates, exemptions or reductions granted will be reversed with effect from the date on which the relevant application(s) was granted.

- d) Whilst an indigent status is valid on the municipality's billing system no application for a Senior Citizen rebate will be considered.
- e) Any late applications or deviations from the ownership, occupancy, registration or usage requirements of this Policy must be motivated in writing to the CFO and will be dealt with in the sole discretion of the CFO, taking account of any factors which he/she deems to be relevant, including, but not limited to considerations of fairness and equity. The CFO or his/her nominee has the right to conduct a full credit check or financial analysis on any person, organization or institution applying for any benefit in terms of this policy.
- f) The CFO has the right to conduct a full credit check on any person, organization or institution who applies for a rebate in terms of this policy.
- g) Should a property owner/user not be satisfied with the outcome of an application for a rebate in terms of this policy, he/she may lodge an appeal in terms of Section 62 as read with Section 95(f) of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000.

7. SUPPLEMENTARY VALUATION (SV) EFFECTIVE DATE

- a) If the date of an SV is prior to the latest date of registration, the Deeds Office registration date will be used as an effective date.
- b) Although the MPRA sect. 78(4) determines the effective date of a supplementary valuation, a property transferred after the effective date of the supplementary valuation, will be billed for

rates as from the date of the most recent registration in the Deeds Office.

8. REGULAR REVIEW PROCESSES

- a) The Municipality's Rates Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it complies with the municipality's strategic objectives and with legislation.

9. LIABILITY FOR AND PAYMENT OF RATES

- a) Liability for and payment of rates is further governed by the MPRA and the municipality's Credit Control and Debt Collection **By-Law** and Policy.

10. IDENTIFICATION AND QUANTIFICATION OF COSTS AND BENEFITS

- a) The cost to the municipality and benefit to the local community of exemptions, rebates, reductions and exclusions referred to in Sections 17(1)(a),(e),(g)(h) and (i) of the MPRA and rates on properties that must be phased in terms of Section 21 of the MPRA are to be reflected in the municipality's budget.

11. DUE DATES

- a) The due date for payment of rates in terms of Sections 26(2)(a) and (b) and 78(4) of the MPRA means the date reflected on a municipal invoice as the final date on which payment is due and payable.

12. CLEARANCE CERTIFICATES

- a) All monies billed by the municipality including that in respect of Special Rating Areas (including municipality Improvement Districts) and any estimated amounts for the duration of the validation period of a certificate in terms of Section 118(1A) of the Systems Act or Section 89 of the Insolvency Act, 24 of 1936, are for the purpose of section 118, deemed to be due and must be paid in order to facilitate the transfer of immovable property:
- a. In terms of Section 118 (3) of the Systems Act, an amount due for municipal service fees, surcharges on fees, property rates and other municipal rates, levies and duties is a charge upon the property in connection with which the amount is owing and enjoys preference over any mortgage bond registered against the property.
 - b. All debt in terms of sub-section 11.1 is deemed to be collectable by the municipality despite a Clearance Certificate issued in terms of Section 118 (1) (b) and remains a charge against the property which the municipality will collect by attaching the property. The parties to the Section 118 (1) (b) application will be notified of the remaining debt and failing settlement, the municipality will proceed to attach the property in execution.
 - c. The processing and collecting of any amounts in terms of sub-section 11.1.1 will be in terms of the municipality's approved Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy that may be applicable based on the circumstances pertaining to the property and the debt involved.

- b) All amounts that are due must be paid in full prior to the issuing of any clearance certificate in terms of Section 118, of the Systems Act.
- c) No interest shall be paid by the municipality to the registered seller in respect of these payments which are deemed to be due.
- d) All payments will be allocated to the registered seller's municipal accounts and all refunds will be made to the conveyancer or the seller.

An unregistered improved property of which there is an approved Surveyor General's general plan or diagram of subdivision in the ownership of a municipality may be reflected separately on the valuation roll.

Two or more adjacent properties under the same ownership which in the opinion of the municipal valuer form one economic entity may be treated as one property on the valuation roll.

13.EFFECTS OF OBJECTIONS AND APPEALS ON LIABILITY FOR PAYMENT

- a) In terms of the MPRA:
 - a. the lodging of an objection or an appeal in terms of Sections 50 and 54 of the MPRA does not defer liability for the payment of rates beyond the dates determined for payment in terms of this Policy;
 - b. the review of the municipal valuer's decision in terms of Section 52 of the MPRA does not defer liability for the payment of rates beyond the dates determined for payment in terms of this Policy.

14.INDIGENT

- a) In terms of Section 3(3) (f) and Section 15 of the MPRA all indigents, for rating purposes, will qualify in respect of their Residential Properties for the benefits as set out in sub-section 5.1 of this Policy and Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy and may also qualify for the **100%** rebate in terms of sub-section 5.8 and 5.9 of this Policy. All the other criteria included in sub-section 5.8 and 5.9 will remain applicable.

15.INTEREST

15.1 Overdue Accounts

- a) Interest shall be raised on overdue accounts as determined in the Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy.

15.2 Overpayments caused due to successful valuation or category objections

- a) If an adjustment in the valuation of a property in terms of Section 51(c), 52(3) or 69 of the MPRA affects the amounts due for rates payable on that property, then Section 55 will apply.
- b) Interest payable by the municipality or consumer will be calculated at a rate as determined in the Regulations in terms of the MPRA Section 55 from the date the now overpayment occurred until the due date of the first invoice reflecting the credit owing to the customer.

16.ADJUSTMENT OF RATES PRIOR TO SV

- a) In circumstances where a valuation has been carried out by the municipal valuer in pursuance of a SV in terms of Section 78(1)(d) or 78(1)(f) of the MPRA as a result, for example, of a demolition having taken place on a property or a fire having destroyed buildings on a property, but the Municipality has not yet included such valuation of the relevant property in a SV, such valuation shall be submitted to the CFO for approval to levy rates on the property in accordance with such valuation, with effect from the date of the occurrence of the event which caused a SV to be required.

- b) If the owner of a property which has been subdivided or consolidated after the last general valuation wishes to sell the consolidated erf, or one or more of the erven which have been subdivided off the parent erf, as the case may be, applies to the municipality for a clearance certificate in terms of Section 118 of the Systems Act and if the municipality has not yet included such valuation of the relevant property(ies) in a SV:
 - a. the municipal valuer shall conduct a valuation of the relevant property(ies) for purposes of an SV; and

 - b. the valuation shall be submitted to the CFO for approval of the levying of rates on such property(ies) in accordance with such valuation, with effect from the date on which the relevant subdivision or consolidation (as the case may be) was registered in the Deeds Office.

c) Any valuations performed in terms of paragraph 16 shall be included in the next SV prepared by the municipality without any amendments to the valuation and any objections to such valuation may only be lodged once such SV is made public in terms of Section 49 of the MPRA.

d) **Multiple ownership**

i. The municipality will not split a municipal account as a result of multiple ownerships and will hold the owners jointly and severally liable for payment.

17. HANGING AND HOLDING PROPERTIES

17.1 For the purposes of creating a single account for properties forming one economic entity, specific contiguous properties may be treated as one property on the valuation roll, i.e., one valuation for a number of contiguous properties. The holding property as well as the hanging properties will be reflected on the roll but the valuation will only be reflected against the holding property.

17.2 Properties may be created as one economic entity in terms of the following rules:

- a) Properties must be in the same ownership;
- b) A building(s) forming an economic entity must straddle all the contiguous erven as if they were consolidated;
- c) All municipal services must be linked to the property reflecting the total municipal valuation of the erven treated as being consolidated;
- d) A contiguous property with no development potential and which is likely to attract no more than a nominal

value, e.g., irregularly shaped or small pieces of land that cannot be optimally developed, for example, small garden extensions or land used for swimming pools, lanes, stairs, slivers of land bordering rivers, as well as road reserves may be treated as hanging properties even though the requirements of sub-sections 17.2.(b) are not met; and

- e) Contiguous pieces of agricultural land which are being farmed as one economic entity will also qualify should the other requirements of Section 17.2 (excluding 17.2 (b)) be met.

17.3 The municipal valuer will, in his/her sole discretion, decide which properties should be treated as one economic entity in terms of paragraph 17.2.

18. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Municipal Manager will report on the application of the policy on a quarterly basis to Council. The report will include all rebates application and approval, supplementary valuation done, etc.

19. REGULAR REVIEW PROCESSES

The Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it complies with the legislation.

The following stakeholders were present during the draft and review of the indigent support policy:

1. Mayor, Speaker and Councilors
2. Municipal Manager
3. Community members
4. Municipal Officials

DATE OF ADOPTION: 24 MAY 2024.....

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION: 24 MAY 2024.....

SIGNATURE OF ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER:.....

DATE: 24 MAY 2024.....