

Community Reference Panel – Rating Principles Discussion

Workshop 4

9th April 2026

1. **Simplicity + Equality:** *All properties should be treated equally.*

Yes – 1

No – 5

“I just want everybody in the same category to be treated the same as everybody else in that one category. I agree with the State that there should only be Farmland, Residential, Mining and Business. You need a good reason to have any other subcategories.”

This option considers that land valuations are the best tool that Councils can use to account for differentials in different areas with different distances to Council infrastructure and services. The panel considered how NSW Valuer General determines land values and whether unimproved land values are reflective of levels of service and access to infrastructure in different areas.

2. **Service Benefit – Equity:** *There should be subcategories for communities with different public infrastructure and access to services.*

Yes – 5

No – 1

The panel have looked at the rating structures of similar NSW Regional Councils with large Rural and Urban populations – to understand options for how to deal with the principle of equity for large, diverse populations.

3. **Simplicity + Clarity:** *Rate structure should be clear and able to be explained.*

Yes - 6

“Anyone new to the area should be able to easily look on Council's website to find clear information about how we calculate their rates.”

“We should use clear graphs and easy to understand information and it should be provided to ratepayers with their notices.”

4. **Capacity to pay – Equity:** *The base factor should be used to ease capacity to pay.*

Residential

Higher	0
Lower	4
No Change	1

Farmland

Higher	3
Lower	0
No Change	0

Business

Higher	2
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Lower	1
No Change	1

5. **Consistency – Equity**: *The rates structure should stay the same each year.*

Yes – 2 (mostly/should only change occasionally)

No – 4

“Our LGA is changing rapidly and the rates structure should be reviewed regularly.”

6. **Service Benefit – Equity**: Rural residential ratepayers should pay less than they do in the current structure.

Yes – 1

No – 7

The panel also had a discussion about whether rural residential ratepayers should pay more than they do in the current structure. Ultimately, they have not made this recommendation.

7. **Equality**: *Business rates should be reduced.*

Yes – 2

No – 3

Unsure – 1

8. **Simplicity + Equality**: *Googong and Queanbeyan residential ratepayers should be treated equally.*

Yes – 2

No – 3

Unsure – 1

Other Issues and Recommendations

- Council should focus on expenditure savings through good procurement and good management of expenses and providing services that ratepayers need and are willing to pay rates for.
- The rates structure could be reviewed every 3-4 years to capture updated information about capacity to pay with census updates and for implementation of any changes in the first year after new land revaluation changes have taken effect.