

Financial Policy 4 – FINANCE – SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING

Objective

To provide a mechanism to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act and Regulations within SOCI's Accounting Section.

Policy

The significant accounting policies which have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report are:

(a) Basis of Preparation

The financial report is a general purpose financial statement which has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (as they apply to local governments and not-for-profit entities), Australian Accounting Interpretations, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the local Government Act 1995 and accompanying regulations.

The report has also been prepared on the accrual basis and is based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of the selected non-current assets, financial assets and liabilities.

Critical Accounting Estimates

The preparation of a financial report in conformity with Australian Accounting Standards requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that effect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses.

The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances; the results of which form the basis of making the judgements about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

(b) The Local Government Reporting Entity

All Funds through which the Council controls resources to carry on its functions have been included in the financial statements forming part of this financial report.

In the process of reporting on the local government as a single unit, all transactions and balances between those funds (for example, loans and transfers between Funds) have been eliminated.

All monies held in the Trust Fund are excluded from the financial statements, but a separate statement of those monies appears as a separate note to these financial statements.

(c) Goods and Services Tax

Goods and Services Tax is not applicable to Christmas Island.

(d) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, cash at bank and other short term deposits with original maturities of three months or less.

(e) Restricted Financial Assets

Restricted financial assets balances are not available for general use by the local government due to externally imposed restrictions. Restrictions are specified in an agreement, contract or legislation. This applies to reserve, unspent grants, subsidies and contributions and unspent loans that have not been fully expended in the manner specified by the contributor, legislation or loan agreement and formal liability has been recognised.

(f) Trade and Other Receivables

Collectability of trade and other receivables is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Debts that are known to be uncollectible are written off when identified. An allowance for doubtful debts is raised when there is objective evidence that they will not be collectible.

(g) Inventories

General

Inventories are measured at the lower cost and net realisable value.

(h) Fixed Assets

Each class of fixed assets is carried at cost or fair value as indicated less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation or impairment losses.

Initial Recognition

All assets are initially recognised at cost. Cost is determined as the fair value of the assets given as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition. For assets acquired at no cost or for nominal consideration, cost is determined as fair value at the date of acquisition. The cost of non-current assets constructed by the Council includes the cost of all materials used in construction, direct labour on the project and an appropriate proportion of variable and fixed overhead.

Revaluation

Infrastructure and other asset classes where no active market exists, fair values is determined to be the current replacement cost of an asset less, where applicable, accumulated depreciation calculated on the basis of such cost to reflect the already consumed or expired future economic benefits or the assets.

Increases in the carrying amount arising on revaluation of assets are credited to a revaluation surplus in equity. Decreases that offset previous increases in the same asset are charged against fair value reserves directly in equity; all other decreases are charged to the statement of comprehensive income.

Any accumulated depreciation at the date of revaluation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount is restated to the revalued amount of the asset.

Land under Roads

In Western Australia, all land under roads is Crown Land, the responsibility for managing which, is vested in the local government.

Effective as at 1 July 2008, Council elected not to recognise any value for land under roads acquired on or before 30 June 2008. This accords with the treatment available in Australian Accounting Standard AASB1051 - Land Under Roads and the fact Local Government (Financial Management) Regulation 16(a)(i) prohibits local governments from recognising such land as an asset.

In respect of land under roads acquired on or after 1 July 2008, as detailed above, Local Government (Financial Management) Regulation 16(a)(i) prohibits local governments from recognising such land as an asset.

Whilst such treatment is inconsistent with the requirements of AASB 1051, Local Government (Financial Management) Regulation 4(2) provides, in the event of such an inconsistency, the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations prevail.

Consequently, any land under roads acquired on or after 1 July 2008 is not included as an asset of the Council.

Depreciation of Non-Current Assets

All non-current assets having a limited useful life are depreciated over their useful lives in a manner which reflects the consumption of the future economic benefits embodied in those assets.

Assets are depreciated from the date of acquisition or, in respect of internally constructed assets, from the time the asset is completed and held ready for use.

Depreciation is recognised on a straight-line basis, using rates which are reviewed each reporting period. Major depreciation periods are:

Building - Non - specialised	20 to 50 years
Furniture and Equipment	1 to 10 years
Plant and Equipment	1 to 15 years
Sealed Roads and Streets	
Formation	Not Depreciated
Pavement	20 to 50 years
Seal	
Bituminous Seals	20 to 50 years
Asphalt Surface	20 to 50 years
Gravel Roads	
Pavement	20 to 50 years

Gravel Sheet	12 years
Formed Roads	
Other Infrastructure	20 to 50 years
Water Supply Piping and Drainage System	20 to 50 years

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the statement of comprehensive income. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation surplus relating to that asset are transferred to retained earnings.

Capitalisation Threshold

Expenditure on items of Assets under \$5,000 is not capitalised. Rather, they are recorded on an asset inventory listing.

(i) Investments and Financial Assets

Receivables and held-to-maturity investments are carried at cost using the effective interest method.

(i) Receivables

Receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market.

Receivables are included in current assets, except for those which are not expected to mature within 12 months after the end of the reporting period (classified as non-current assets).

(ii) Held-to-maturity investments

Held-to-maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets with fixed maturities and fixed or determinable payments and fixed maturities that the Council's management has the positive intention and ability to hold to maturity.

Impairment

At the end of each reporting period, the Council assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. In the case of available-for-sale financial instruments, a prolonged decline in the value of the instrument is considered to determine whether impairment has arisen. Impairment losses are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income.

Estimation of Fair Value

The fair value of financial assets and financial liabilities must be estimated for recognition and measurement or for disclosure purposes.

The fair value of financial instruments traded in active markets is based on quoted market prices at the reporting date.

(j) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Council prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid and arise when the Council becomes obliged to make future payments in respect of the purchase of these goods and services. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

(k) Contract Liabilities

Contract liabilities represent the Shire's obligation to transfer goods or services to a customer for which the Shire has received consideration from the customer.

Contract liabilities represent obligations which are not yet satisfied. Contract liabilities are recognized as revenue when the performance obligations in the contract are satisfied.

(l) Employee Benefits

The provisions for employee benefits relates to amounts expected to be paid for long service leave, annual leave, wages and salaries and are calculated as follows:

- (i) Wages, Salaries, Annual Leave and Long Service Leave (Short-term Benefits)

The provision for employees' benefits to wages, salaries, annual leave and long service leave expected to be settled within 12 months represents the amount the Council has a present obligation to pay resulting from employees services provided to reporting date. The provision has been calculated at nominal amounts based on remuneration rates the Council expects to pay and includes related on-costs.

- (ii) Long Service Leave (Long-term Benefits)

The liability for long service leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expect future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows. Where the Council does not have the unconditional right to defer settlement beyond 12 months, the liability is recognised as a current liability.

(m) Borrowing Costs

Council has no borrowing costs.

(n) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when:

- a) the Council has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events;
- b) for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result to settle the obligation; and
- c) that outflow can be reliably measured.

Provisions are measured using the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period. Provisions are not recognised for future operating losses.

(o) Leases

Council has no leases of fixed assets.

(p) Joint Venture

Council does not have any joint venture arrangements.

(q) Rates, Grants, Donations and Other Contributions

Rates, grants, donations and other contributions are recognised as revenues when the local government obtains control over the assets comprising the contributions. Control over assets acquired from rates is obtained at the commencement of the rating period or, where earlier, upon receipt of the rates.

Where contributions recognised as revenues during the reporting period were obtained on the condition that they be expended in a particular manner or used over a particular period, and those conditions were undischarged as at the reporting date, the nature of and amounts pertaining to those undischarged conditions are disclosed in Note 2(c). That note also discloses the amount of contributions recognised as revenues in a previous reporting period which were obtained in respect of the local government's operation for the current reporting period.

(r) Superannuation

Council contributes to a number of superannuation funds on behalf of employees.

(s) Current and Non-Current Classification

In the determination of whether an asset or liability is current or non-current, consideration is given to the time when each asset or liability is expected to be settled. The asset or liability is classified as current if it is expected to be settled within the next 12 months, being the Council's operational cycle. In the case of liabilities where the Council does not have the unconditional right to defer settlement beyond 12 months, such as vested long service leave, the liability is classified as current even if not expected to be settled within the next 12 months. Inventories held for trading are classified as current even if not expected to be realised in the next 12 months except for land held for resale where it is held as non-current based on Council's intentions to release for sale.

(t) Rounding Off Figures

All figures shown in this annual financial report, other than a rate in the dollar, are rounded to the nearest dollar.

(u) Comparative Figures

Where required, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with the changes in presentation for the current financial year. Budget Comparative Figures

Unless otherwise stated, the budget comparative figures shown in this annual financial report relate to the original budget estimate for the relevant item of disclosure.

Key Performance Indicators	The extent to which financial report is prepared
Keywords	Basic of Preparation, assets, employees Benefits, Superannuation
Related Policies	Purchasing policy
Related Procedures/ Documents	

Version	Approved, Amended, Rescinded	Date	Officer	Resolution number	Key changes/ notes	Next Review date	File Ref No.
1	Approved	30/6/2009	CEO	67/09			2.11.29
2	Approved	26/9/2017	GRPG	88/17		Sept 2019	2.11.29
3	Approved	27/7/2022	GRPG	87/22		Sept 2024	2.11.29
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