

4.8 MAROONDAH COUNCIL MAV MOTIONS – HARDSHIP SUPPORT

Responsible Director: Jarrod Doake

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- *resolves to support Maroondah Council’s MAV State Council Motions as follows:*
 - *Requests the Essential Services Commission reviews service charges for gas, electricity and water to reflect the usage amounts.*
 - *That the Victorian Government considers a one-off payment for our older community to off-set these higher service charges*
- *notes Council officers will contact Maroondah Council by 29 March 2023 to advise them of this support.*

INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) will be holding its State Council Meeting on Friday 19 May 2023. Member councils are invited to put forward motions for consideration at the State Council Meeting in accordance with the criteria set by the MAV.

Maroondah Council is seeking support for motions they are planning to submit to the MAV State Council Meeting.

BACKGROUND

Through the Eastern Region Group of Councils, Maroondah Council circulated the following background and motions for Council’s consideration and potential support:

“Background

The past few years have seen increasing pressure on our community to pay for staple items including food, heating and rent. This has led to 2 and 3 fold increases in emergency food relief and support services for many in our community. Older community members are particularly affected with restricted pension income.

Older people understand what it is to be frugal to stretch their dollar and Manningham Councillors have heard of first-hand accounts of members of our older community restricting themselves to one or 2 meals a day, or going to bed at 5pm, to save heating costs. Unfortunately, when it comes to utility bills older people are limited in their power to reduce their total bills given the service charges attached to each bill.

In one example a resident shared their electricity bill for the month of December 2022:

- *usage kwh \$68.57 plus Service fee \$38.15 - **50% of usage fee!***
- *Water rates: Water volume cost \$20.06, Water Service charge \$33.77 plus Sewerage Service charge \$146.09.*

A person can reduce their usage to save money but the service fee is beyond their control.

The State Government, via the Essential Services Commission must review utility service charges in support of the cost-of-living pressures across our community.

Motions

- *Requests the Essential Services Commission reviews service charges for gas, electricity and water to reflect the usage amounts.*
- *That the Victorian government considers a one-off payment for our older community to off-set these higher service charges."*

Should Council decide to support these motions, Council officers will advise Maroondah Council by 29 March 2023.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No policy implications have been identified.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No Social implications have been identified.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

No Human rights implications have been identified.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No Human rights implications have been identified.

CONCLUSION

Council acknowledges and supports Maroondah Council's MAV State Council motions. Council officers will advise Maroondah Council of this support by 29 March 2023.