







<p>Essentials</p>  <p>Read me first</p>	<p>The purpose of this COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy is to provide Council with a policy framework to provide financial relief to individuals and business who need assistance from the impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The policy aims to provide ratepayers with a clear and transparent understanding of options and assistance available if currently experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic.</p>
<p>Principles</p> 	<p>Financial hardship is a circumstance of experiencing a lack of financial means, which may be either ongoing or temporary. This policy is to address temporary financial hardship due to impacts of COVID-19.</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Payment Plan;-Councils aim is to provide assistance without creating additional financial stress. 2. Rates deferral and interest waived:- Interest may be waived and rates deferred in line with Council resolution. 3. Debt recovery:-Through the life of this policy Council will hold off legal action through legal action to the impacted ratepayers
<p>Context</p> 	<p>The policy aligns with Ballarat City Councils Rating Strategy.</p>
<p>Purpose</p> 	<p>To provide direction to Council's Officers when collecting and providing for debts owed to Council and to ensure Council takes into consideration the financial hardship of debtors caused by COVID- 19.</p>
<p>Requirements</p> 	<p>Council will provide assistance to those in financial hardship in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, while ensuring it does not jeopardise the funding of its operations.</p> <p>The policy will be guided by the principles of transparency, efficiency, capacity to pay and equity by treating all debtors consistently and in a fair manner.</p>
<p>Accountability</p> 	<p>The Director of Corporate Services acknowledge the responsibility and accountability for the implementation of this policy to the benefit of impacted ratepayers whilst ensuring Council has sufficient cashflows to continue to operate.</p>