

Classification:	Legislative
Last Reviewed:	June 2026 (Res. 425/2026)
Next Review Date:	June 2030
Responsible Officer:	Director Corporate Services
Approved by:	Council Resolution
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011 Water Industry Act 2012 South Australian Public Health Act 2011
Related Policies, Procedures and Standards:	ESCOSA Price Determinations; National Water Initiative Pricing Principles; LGA CWMS Accounting Principles (2025); LGA Property Unit Code; Customer Charter - Sewerage Services; CWMS Customer Enquiry, Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process; Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) and Non-Drinking Water Services Pricing Policy Statement; Hardship Policy for Residential Customers or Minor and Intermediate Water Retailers; Fees and Charges Schedule; Asset Management Plans; Long Term Financial Plan.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a clear framework for the management, operation, maintenance, funding and long-term sustainability of the District Council of Robe's Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS).

This Policy provides the governance framework for CWMS services and complements Council's Customer Charter - Sewerage Services, Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) and Non-Drinking Water Services Pricing Policy Statement, Hardship Policy for Residential Customers or Minor and Intermediate Water Retailers, Fees and Charges Schedule, Asset Management Plans and Long Term Financial Plan.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all CWMS infrastructure owned, operated or managed by Council, all properties connected to the CWMS, properties where CWMS services have been made available, developers seeking access to the network, and future CWMS schemes established by Council.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to providing wastewater services that protect public health, support environmental outcomes, provide equitable and transparent charging arrangements and ensure the sustainable management of CWMS assets for current and future generations.

Council's approach to the management, funding and operation of its Community Wastewater Management System is guided by the following principles:

Public Health and Environmental Protection

CWMS services will be managed to protect public health, support environmental sustainability and comply with all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.

Financial Sustainability

Council will manage CWMS infrastructure in a manner that supports its long-term sustainability, ensuring assets are appropriately maintained, renewed and replaced to meet current and future service needs.

Cost Recovery

CWMS charges will be determined in accordance with recognised industry principles and will seek to recover the efficient costs of providing CWMS services, including operation, maintenance, renewal, replacement and future infrastructure requirements.

Equity and Consistency

Charges will be applied fairly, consistently and equitably, having regard to the level of service provided, service availability and the relative demand placed on the CWMS network by different property types and land uses.

Transparency and Accountability

Council will maintain transparent and documented methodologies for the calculation and application of CWMS charges and will make relevant information available to customers and the community.

Intergenerational Equity

The costs of providing and maintaining CWMS infrastructure should be shared appropriately between current and future beneficiaries to avoid placing an unreasonable financial burden on future generations.

Compliance and Best Practice

Council will administer its CWMS in accordance with applicable legislation, ESCOSA requirements, the LGA Accounting Principles for the Costing and Pricing of Community Wastewater Management Systems, and the LGA Code for Establishing and Applying Property Units as a Factor for the Imposition of Annual Service Charges for Community Wastewater Management Systems.

4. DEFINITIONS

Augmentation Fee means a contribution towards growth-related infrastructure required as a result of development.

Connection Fee means a fee payable for connection to Council's CWMS.

Connection Point means the point at which a property connects to Council's CWMS Infrastructure.

Council means the District Council of Robe.

Customer means the owner or occupier of a property receiving, connected to, or able to receive a CWMS service.

CWMS means Community Wastewater Management System.

CWMS Infrastructure means all infrastructure owned or managed by Council for the collection, conveyance, treatment, disposal or reuse of wastewater, including collection tanks, pump stations, pipelines, treatment facilities and associated assets.

CWMS Service Charge means an annual service charge imposed by Council pursuant to Section 155 of the Local Government Act 1999 in respect of the provision or availability of a CWMS service.

Development has the same meaning as defined under the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016.

Land Division has the same meaning as defined under the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016.

LGA Property Units Code means The Local Government Association of South Australia Code for Establishing and Applying Property Units as a Factor for the Imposition of Annual Service Charges for Community Wastewater Management Systems.

New Connection means a new connection to Council's CWMS, including a connection resulting from a land division, additional dwelling, development or change in land use.

Property Unit means the unit allocation applied for the purpose of determining annual service charges.

Property Owner means the registered proprietor of land.

STEDS means Septic Tank Effluent Disposal Scheme.

Service Availability means circumstances where CWMS infrastructure has been provided and is capable of servicing a property.

Recycled Water means treated wastewater that has been processed for reuse in accordance with applicable legislative, environmental and public health requirements.

Vacant Allotment means land capable of receiving a CWMS service but not currently developed with a dwelling.

5. CWMS SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Council owns, operates and manages the CWMS servicing the township of Robe.

Council is responsible for the operation, maintenance, renewal and replacement of CWMS infrastructure including collection, conveyance, treatment and disposal facilities. Council will manage CWMS assets in accordance with its Asset Management Plans and Long Term Financial Plan to support the sustainable provision of wastewater services.

Council may require easements or other legal arrangements where CWMS infrastructure is located on private land.

Property owners remain responsible for private plumbing and infrastructure located on private property unless otherwise determined by Council.

Property owners and customers must use the CWMS in accordance with Council requirements and must not discharge substances that may adversely affect the operation of the system.

6. SERVICE STANDARDS AND CUSTOMER RIGHTS

Customer service standards, customer rights and responsibilities, complaints handling, billing arrangements and service commitments are detailed within Council's Customer Charter – Sewerage Services and CWMS Customer Enquiry, Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process. These documents are the primary customer-facing documents for CWMS services and should be read in conjunction with this Policy.

7. COST RECOVERY AND PRICING PRINCIPLES

Council adopts a full cost recovery approach consistent with its Pricing Policy Statement and the National Water Initiative Pricing Principles.

In determining annual CWMS charges, Council may consider:

- Operating and maintenance costs;
- Electricity and utility costs;
- Administration and overheads;
- Regulatory compliance costs;
- Depreciation;
- Asset renewal funding requirements;
- Capital replacement requirements;
- Cost of capital;
- Cost of risk.

Council's objective is to achieve full cost recovery of CWMS services over the long term while maintaining equitable and transparent pricing arrangements.

Council will periodically review the methodology used to determine CWMS charges to ensure transparency, equity and financial sustainability.

8. ANNUAL SERVICE CHARGES

Council may impose annual service charges pursuant to the Local Government Act 1999.

Service charges may apply to:

- Occupied properties connected to the CWMS;
- Unoccupied properties where the service has been made available;
- Other properties as permitted by legislation.

Council currently applies differential charges to occupied and unoccupied properties. Charges are reviewed annually through the budget process and adopted within Council's Fees and Charges Schedule and Pricing Policy Statement.

9. PROPERTY UNIT METHODOLOGY

Council will apply property units in accordance with the LGA Property Units Code.

Property unit allocations are intended to reflect the relative demand placed upon the CWMS network and may vary between land uses.

Property unit methodologies may be applied to:

- Residential dwellings;
- Multiple dwellings;
- Caravan parks;
- Motels;
- Tourist accommodation;
- Commercial premises;
- Community facilities;
- Industrial uses.

Property unit allocations will be determined having regard to the LGA Property Unit Code and Council's adopted methodology. Property unit allocations may be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain fair, equitable and reflective of wastewater loading characteristics.

Council may review property unit allocations where development intensity changes, land use changes occur or an error is identified.

Council may maintain a separate Property Unit Methodology or Schedule to support the implementation of this Policy.

10. CONNECTION FEES

Council may impose connection fees to recover costs associated with approving and facilitating new CWMS connections.

Connection fees may apply to:

- New allotments;
- Additional dwellings;
- New developments;
- Boundary realignments;
- Other circumstances requiring connection to the CWMS.

Applicable fees will be adopted annually through Council's Fees and Charges Schedule.

11. CWMS AUGMENTATION FEES

Council may impose augmentation fees where development creates additional demand on the CWMS network.

The purpose of augmentation fees is to ensure growth contributes fairly towards growth-related infrastructure costs.

The augmentation fee may apply to:

- New allotments created through land division;
- Additional dwellings;
- Multiple dwelling developments;
- Intensification of land use;
- Boundary realignments creating additional servicing demand.

Augmentation fees will be adopted annually through Council's Fees and Charges Schedule. Council may review augmentation fees periodically to ensure fees remain reflective of the cost of

providing additional CWMS capacity and growth-related infrastructure.

Revenue generated from augmentation fees may be transferred to a dedicated CWMS reserve and used to fund future capacity upgrades, network extensions and growth-related infrastructure.

Augmentation fees are intended to contribute towards growth-related infrastructure and do not replace any other fees, charges or developer contributions that may be payable.

12. NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Developers may be required to contribute towards the cost of infrastructure necessary to service development.

Council may require:

- Infrastructure agreements;
- Engineering assessments;
- Network extensions;
- Capacity upgrades;
- Pump stations;
- Treatment infrastructure.

Developer contribution requirements will be determined having regard to the impact of the development on Council's CWMS network and the principles of equity, cost recovery and financial sustainability.

13. VACANT ALLOTMENTS AND SERVICE AVAILABILITY

Where Council has provided CWMS infrastructure capable of servicing a property, Council may impose a service charge regardless of whether the property is physically connected to the system.

Council recognises that the availability of a CWMS service provides a benefit through the reservation of network capacity and the ability for the property to connect to the service.

The imposition of a service charge is based on the provision or availability of the service and is not dependent on the volume of wastewater discharged to the system.

Vacant allotment charges will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain equitable, financially sustainable and consistent with legislative requirements.

14. RECYCLED WATER

Council supplies recycled wastewater to certain Council and community assets including reserves, sporting facilities, parks and gardens. This supply supports community wellbeing and public open space outcomes.

Consistent with Council's Pricing Policy Statement, recycled wastewater is currently supplied at no direct charge and is funded as a community service through Council's general revenue.

15. CWMS RESERVES

Council may establish and maintain reserves to support:

- Asset renewal;
- Asset replacement;
- Capacity upgrades;
- Growth-related infrastructure;
- Future capital works.

CWMS reserves are intended to support the long-term sustainability of the service and provide funding for future infrastructure requirements.

Reserve balances will be reviewed through Council's annual budget and long term financial planning processes.

16. SEPTIC TANKS AND DESLUDGING

- 16.1** The District Council of Robe operates a Septic Tank Effluent Drainage Scheme (STEDS), whereby wastewater is initially treated within privately owned septic tanks before effluent is discharged to Council's CWMS network for collection, treatment and disposal.
- 16.2** To support the efficient operation of the STEDS network and protect Council infrastructure, septic tanks connected to the CWMS must be maintained in accordance with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.
- 16.3** All septic tanks connected to the CWMS within the Township of Robe will be desludged at intervals not exceeding four years, or as otherwise required by applicable legislation, standards or guidelines. For the purposes of managing the desludging program, the township will be divided into sectors and serviced on a rotational basis.
- 16.4** Residential properties and commercial properties not otherwise specified in Clause 16.5 that are connected to the CWMS and able to be serviced by the scheme will have one septic tank desludged by a licensed liquid waste contractor engaged by Council on a four-year cycle as part of Council's CWMS service. Where these properties contain more than one septic tank, or require desludging more frequently than the scheduled cycle, the property owner is responsible for arranging and funding any additional desludging services.
- 16.5** Hotels, motels, caravan parks and accommodation businesses that are charged in accordance with the LGA Property Units Code will have their septic tanks desludged annually by a licensed liquid waste contractor engaged by Council as part of Council's CWMS service. Where such properties contain multiple septic tanks or require additional desludging outside the annual program, the property owner is responsible for arranging and funding any additional services unless otherwise determined by Council.
- 16.6** Council will provide advance notice to affected property owners prior to scheduled desludging activities and advise the expected timeframe for the works.
- 16.7** Property owners are responsible for maintaining septic tanks and associated private infrastructure located on their property and must ensure safe and reasonable access to the exposed septic tank extraction point for Council's contracted desludging services. Where a property owner fails to provide access to the septic tank, Council may recover any reasonable costs incurred in locating or exposing the septic tank.
- 16.8** Council's contracted desludging provider may report septic tank failures, defects,

maintenance issues or the discharge of prohibited substances identified during the desludging process.

- 16.9** Where faults, failures, defects or non-compliant conditions are identified during desludging activities, Council may notify the property owner and require appropriate corrective action to be undertaken within a specified timeframe.

17. TRADE WASTE DEVICES, PRE-TREATMENT DEVICES AND GREASE ARRESTORS

- 17.1** Where Council requires a property to install a trade waste device, pre-treatment device or grease arrestor in accordance with applicable legislation, standards or guidelines, details of the device must be provided to Council as part of any application to connect to the CWMS.
- 17.2** Property owners are responsible for the ongoing operation, maintenance and efficient functioning of any trade waste device, pre-treatment device or grease arrestor installed on their property.
- 17.3** Property owners must ensure trade waste devices, pre-treatment devices and grease arrestors are inspected, maintained and desludged at intervals necessary to ensure their effective operation and compliance with applicable legislative and operational requirements.
- 17.4** Council may request evidence of maintenance or desludging activities, including copies of pump-out dockets, service records or other documentation, to demonstrate compliance with this Policy.
- 17.5** Where a trade waste device, pre-treatment device or grease arrestor is not adequately maintained, Council may require the property owner to undertake corrective action to protect the effective operation of the CWMS.

18. EXEMPTIONS AND REVIEWS

Council may consider exemptions, alternative charging arrangements or reviews in exceptional circumstances.

Requests for review should be made in writing and supported by relevant information.

Nothing in this section limits Council's statutory obligations or powers.

19. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council: Responsible for adopting this Policy, approving annual CWMS charges and fees, and considering any amendments required to ensure the ongoing sustainability and effective management of the CWMS.

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy and that Council's CWMS services are administered in accordance with legislative, regulatory and Council requirements.

Director Corporate Services

The Director Corporate Services is responsible for the administration of CWMS pricing and charging arrangements, including the development and review of service charges, connection fees and augmentation fees, management of CWMS reserves, and monitoring compliance with applicable financial and regulatory requirements.

Director Infrastructure and Operations

The Director Infrastructure and Operations is responsible for the operation, maintenance, renewal and replacement of CWMS infrastructure, assessment of connection applications, and providing technical advice to support the sustainable management of Council's CWMS assets.

Property Owners and Customers

Property owners are responsible for maintaining private plumbing and wastewater infrastructure located on private property and complying with Council's connection requirements.

20. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Records associated with this Policy will be managed in accordance with Council's Records Management Framework and Policy and legislative obligations.

21. FURTHER INFORMATION

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council offices listed below during ordinary business hours and available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's internet site: www.robe.sa.gov.au

Royal Circus, Robe SA 5276

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request. Email council@robe.sa.gov.au

Any grievances in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of Council.

22. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy may be amended at any time and will be reviewed at least every four years following its adoption or most recent amendment, or earlier where required by legislative, regulatory or operational changes.