

## ITEM 16

## NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR RYAN MORRIS - INCREASED RATE RELIEF FOR AGED PENSIONERS

Councillor Ryan Morris has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that –

- 1 Council receive a report detailing options for implementing a cost neutral Voluntary Rebate for eligible pensioners, in addition to the \$250 pensioner rates discount currently available. The report should include, but not be limited to –
  - a Detail of eligibility criteria for the Voluntary Rebate, such as the requirement that eligible pensioners must have been a rate payer in the Wollongong LGA for a minimum of 15 years.
  - b A review of the Voluntary Rebate be undertaken every term of council.
- 2 The report be delivered within 3 months to allow due consideration prior to implementation of the report recommendations.”

**Background provided by Councillor Morris:**

The aged pension discount, as provided for by Section 575 of the *Local Government Act 1993* has not been revised since 1993. Significant rises in the cost of living have been felt by nearly all during those 32 years, however, the pensioner discount has not changed during this time.

Currently, Wollongong City Council does not offer a voluntary rebate to aged pensioners. The introduction of a voluntary rebate with a restrictive eligibility criterion of having been a Wollongong rate payer for a minimum of 15 years, rewards those who have paid into the system over decades and excludes those who sell up in other areas and move to the LGA with hefty bank balances, until they have made similar contributions to the city.

The aged pensioners of the LGA helped build the foundations that make Wollongong the city it is today. This small but impactful Voluntary Rebate will go some way to helping those who are no longer able to work but have worked hard for our city and should be rewarded for their stewardship.