

Submission to localgovernment@esc.vic.gov.au



Submission to the Local Government Rates Capping and Variation Framework

Moira Shire Council

May 2015

1 Introduction

Moira Shire Council (Moira) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Local Government Rates Capping and Variation Framework Consultation Paper.

The Essential Services Commission is required to develop a framework under which rate increases will be capped. This Submission focuses on the challenges around identifying the true fixed costs of council operations and the variability across councils within a framework of rate capping.

Covering 4,057 square kilometres and with an estimated population of 28,123 Moira is the largest and one of the fastest growing shires in Victoria's North East. Situated three hours drive north of Melbourne; it is strategically positioned within the broader Shepparton Irrigation Region in the heart of the Goulburn and Murray Valleys, one of the most important dairy and fruit production areas in Australia.

Moira's population is distributed throughout the main towns of Cobram, Nathalia, Numurkah and Yarrawonga, as well as 18 other smaller towns and communities. This variety of population distribution reflects Moira's range of lifestyle opportunities, from large orchards and farms, semi-rural 'lifestyle blocks' and smaller urban blocks.

Moira's population is 28,124. Population growth has been consistent. The Shire has an increasing aging population, with close to 30% of residents aged over 60. It is also worthy of noting the significantly lower number of residents aged between 20 and 39.

2 Executive Summary

The introduction of a rate capping and variation process is intended to instil community confidence in Council's rate practices. While this is a welcome aspiration it may also be a rather blunt tool which, if not properly designed, will unduly penalise Council's ability to respond and service the needs of their communities.

For this reason Moira Shire Council urges consideration to the following aspects of setting the Cap:

- Limited to general rates and not apply to total revenue to Council
- Applied through a rate in the dollar calculation
- Supplementary rates yield be excluded from the Cap
- Set for a four year period with simplified annual review to align with existing Council planning cycles
- Calculated using the Local Government Cost Indices; and
- The ESC determining applications for variations during the first four year cycle while the process matures and implementation is reviewed and this be reviewed after the first four year cycle.

With regard to the implementation of the Cap, we recommend implementation be deferred to the next Council Plan cycle in 2017/18. This deferral is essential to ensure appropriate design of a rate capping model and to enable effective community engagement to fully understand the implications for service limitations across communities particularly in rural and remote areas.

Independent and informed consultation is essential to achieve community acceptance and confidence in the rate capping model. The current consultation timelines prohibit the delivery of authentic community participation in a model that is entirely conceived for their benefit.

The rate capping model will establish an administrative obligation on all Councils and particularly on smaller Councils with fewer resources to call on if circumstances required a variation.

We recognise the challenging timelines in which the ESC is endeavouring to develop a robust and appropriate model for Councils and the community. We look forward to further opportunities to inform this process to develop a rate capping model that genuinely meets the needs of our communities and instils confidence in Council's service delivery.

3 Elements

The Form of the Cap

1. *While a cap based on CPI is simple to understand and apply, are there any issues that we should be aware of?*

A CPI rate cap does not address the major cost pressures on Local Government including the Commonwealth government's announcement of the indexation freeze on Local Government Financial Assistance Grants. Nor does it address the areas of cost shifting such as the funding of services such as home and community care, school crossing supervisors, maternal and child health, emergency management and public libraries.

At the time of making this submission the CPI for the March 2015 quarter is 1.3% which is clearly insufficient to meet the cost of delivering Council services and maintaining infrastructure.

2. *What are some ways to refine the cap (for example, alternative indices), in line with the Government's objectives?*

The Local Government Cost Indices would be a more appropriate cap to apply.

3. *Should the cap be set on a single year basis? Is there any merit in providing an annual cap plus indicative caps for the next two to three years to assist councils to adopt a longer term view in their budgeting and planning, particularly when maintaining and investing in infrastructure often takes a longer term perspective? How should such a multi-year cap work in practice?*

Longer term certainty is important for planning and delivery of services and capital programs. The Cap will restrict Council's ability to generate revenue each year therefore major projects will need to be delivered across multiple years. Rather than setting a cap on a single year basis, we urge consideration of a multiyear process supported by a simplified annual review. We encourage alignment with the four year Council Plan process.

4. *Should the cap be based on historical movements or forecasts of CPI?*

The key aspect here is to ensure there is certainty around this. The historical movements are problematic because it creates an environment in which the time lag is perpetuated. This is further exacerbated if applied over a multiyear planning cycle. Therefore it is recommended that forecasts of the Local Government Cost Indices form the basis for the proposed rate Cap. For example the current 1.3% CPI would be unmanageable.

5. *Should a single cap apply equally to all councils?*

A rate Cap built on the rate in the dollar would allow a single Cap to apply to all Councils. Other proposed models imply that all Councils are dealing with the same economic constraints and opportunities and, as a result, are inequitable and comparable to a regressive tax.

There is not consistent growth across all municipalities. Growth is the key factor which can offset the impact of a rate Cap. Large growth areas will exceed this due to an increasing rate base. In slow and negatively growing populated areas a rate Cap can have a far greater financial impact with no opportunity to increase rates to offset the declining or stagnant rate base.

A tiered approach would provide a more equitable outcome across all Councils. Those that are experiencing rapid growth require appropriate infrastructure to keep pace with the growth. An established Council with stable growth requires the ability to sustain service standards.

The criteria for the tiered approach require consideration to the status of the municipality's economic growth in order to provide for its required service needs and infrastructure development.

The Base to Which the Cap applies

6. *What base should the cap apply to? Does it include rates revenue, service rates/charges, municipal charges and special rates/charges?*

We propose the Cap should be strictly limited to general rates.

The rate Cap aims to provide the community with a simple indicator of fair rating within a municipality. The proposal has already created a community expectation that the bottom line of a rates notice will not show an increase above CPI. Unfortunately, Councils do not control all elements that appear on the rates notice, for example in the current Victorian Budget the Fire Services Levy is

proposed to increase by around 7%. For this reason a rate cap based on the bottom line of a rates notice is fraught.

A rate Cap applied to the overall revenue recovered from rate payers is more appropriate but compromises the simplicity for ratepayers. This is further exacerbated due to Council's collecting revenue on behalf of the state such as the fire services levy.

The intent of the Cap is most relevant to the general rate where a range of costs are recovered from all ratepayers. These are directly linked to in-house delivery of services which relates directly to communities' expectations around service delivery efficiencies.

The Cap should not apply to special rates and charges and service rates and charges. Both these types of charges are determined through market testing via the procurement process. It is also important to recognise the delivery of these services in rural and/or widely dispersed communities are often more expensive than in densely populated communities.

7. *Should the cap apply to total revenue arising from these categories or on average rates and charges per assessment?*

We propose the Cap should apply to the rate in the dollar. Applying the Cap to the total revenue is unrealistic due to the combination of charges such as special charges and the fire services levy. Total revenue is not confirmed until the end of the year as it is impacted by supplementary valuations. Applying the Cap to total revenue would be difficult to administer and monitor and would not be easily understood by the ratepayer.

A more practical approach would be to apply the Cap to the rate in the dollar for each type of rate to be levied. This does not penalise Councils that are able to encourage positive growth within their municipality.

How should we treat supplementary rates? How do they vary from council to council?

A Cap based on the rate in the dollar would flow through effectively to the calculation of the Supplementary rates. Supplementary rates should be excluded from the rate cap. They are a source of revenue to support demand from developed and additional properties.

8. *What are the challenges arising from the re-valuation of properties every two years?*

Re-valuation every two years is a necessary and entirely appropriate process however it is important to take this into consideration when planning the implementation of the Cap. Applying the Cap to the rate in the dollar provides certainty for council and the community around how their rates calculation will change if there is no change to the valuation of their property.

9. What should the base year be?

In terms of implementation it would be best to have the first year of implementation coincide with the four year Council plan cycle ie 2017/18. It would therefore be appropriate to establish the base year as 2016/17.

The Variation Process

10. How should the variation process work?

If the Cap applies to a four year cycle subject to an annual review then Councils would have the flexibility to exceed the cap in any year provided the total four year cycle does not exceed the Cap.

11. Under what circumstances should councils be able to seek a variation?

Councils should be able to apply for a variation outside the four year Cap if they can demonstrate exceptional circumstances such as the need to respond to a natural disaster.

12. Apart from the exceptions identified by the Government (namely, new infrastructure needs from a growing population, changes in funding levels from the Commonwealth Government, changes in State Government taxes and levied, increased responsibilities, and unexpected incidents such as natural disasters), are there any other circumstances that would justify a case for above cap increases?

A substantive change in demographics such as the exit of a major industry in a rural or regional area and the declining rate base resulting from this should justify an exception.

Another scenario could be substantive community support for a significant and transformative infrastructure investment.

Councils which are identified to be facing significant challenges around financial sustainability should be eligible for above Cap increases.

13. What should Councils need to demonstrate to get a variation approved? What baseline information should be required for councils to request a variation?

A possible set of requirements could include:

- The council has effectively engaged with its community
- The proposed increase in rates and charges is reasonable to meet the need
- The proposed increase in rates and charges fits into its longer term plan for funding and services
- The Council has made continuous efforts to keep costs down

Community Engagement

14. What does best practice in community engagement, process and information look like? Are there examples that we can draw from?

The underlying intent of the proposed Cap is to instill community confidence in Council's rate practices. This implies that from commencement there is a strong need for community input in the design and implementation. While individual Councils can seek to inform their local communities it is important that independent and informed engagement take place to ensure the broader community is made aware of the constraints and challenges that will apply within their municipality. This will be extremely important to regional communities where cost to service and population decline are genuine threats to the viability of local councils. The community engagement process should be consistent with the principles of the International Association for Public Participation which obligates full disclosure of impact so that the community can provide fully informed feedback. At present the proposed timeline for consultation and implementation falls short of delivering on these requirements.

Incentives

15. How should the framework be designed to provide councils with incentives to pursue ongoing efficiencies and respond to community needs? How can any unintended consequences be minimized?

Application of the rates in the dollar calculation of the Cap does not penalise Councils which attract growth and stimulate development within their communities. It serves as an incentive to boost investor confidence through an effective customer focused Council that operates within a lean and efficient environment.

Timing and Process

16. A rates capping and variation process should ensure there is enough time for councils to consult with their ratepayers and for ratepayers to provide feedback, and for us to review councils' applications. To ensure the smooth functioning of the rates capping and variation framework, it is particularly important that it aligns with councils' budget processes. We are interested in stakeholders' views on how this can be achieved.

It is for this exact reason that we recommend a four year cycle that integrates and aligns with the Council plan cycle.

Transitional Arrangements

17. *What transitional arrangements are necessary to move to the new rates capping and variation framework? Is there merit in phasing in implementation over a two year period to allow for a smooth transition?*

Yes there is absolute merit in phasing in implementation over a two year period. As stated earlier this is necessary to allow for effective and full consultation with communities and Councils.

Roles

18. *What are stakeholders' views on the respective roles of the key participants? Should the Commission's assessment of rates variations be advisory or determinative?*

It is our recommendation that the Commission's assessment be determinative during the first four year cycle to provide opportunity for the process to mature without undue political interference and to provide certainty for Council and ratepayers. Over the longer term this can be reviewed as part of the evaluation of the first four year rollout. It would be expected that over the longer term there would be provision to apply to the Minister for Local Government for variation. It is expected there would be direct linkages between the rate capping framework and Ministers special powers. Special provision for Councils to act outside of the proposed cap should be made for response to a natural disaster.

Other Matters

19. *Is there a need for the framework to be reviewed to assess its effectiveness within three years' time?*

Yes. This is ideal timing as it is midway through a Council election cycle and would provide a relatively stable environment for review.

20. *How should the costs of administrating an ongoing framework be recovered?*

In keeping with the intent of transparency and accountability it is proposed that the administrative costs be ascertained and a cost recovery reimbursement structure developed.

Other Matters Raised in Earlier Chapters

21. *We are interested in hearing from stakeholders on:*

- ***Whether we have developed appropriate principles for this review***

The broad range of principles highlights the challenges associated with introducing a Cap. It is a complicated process that may have an array of unintended consequences. It is necessary that sufficient time and planning is in place to enable success.

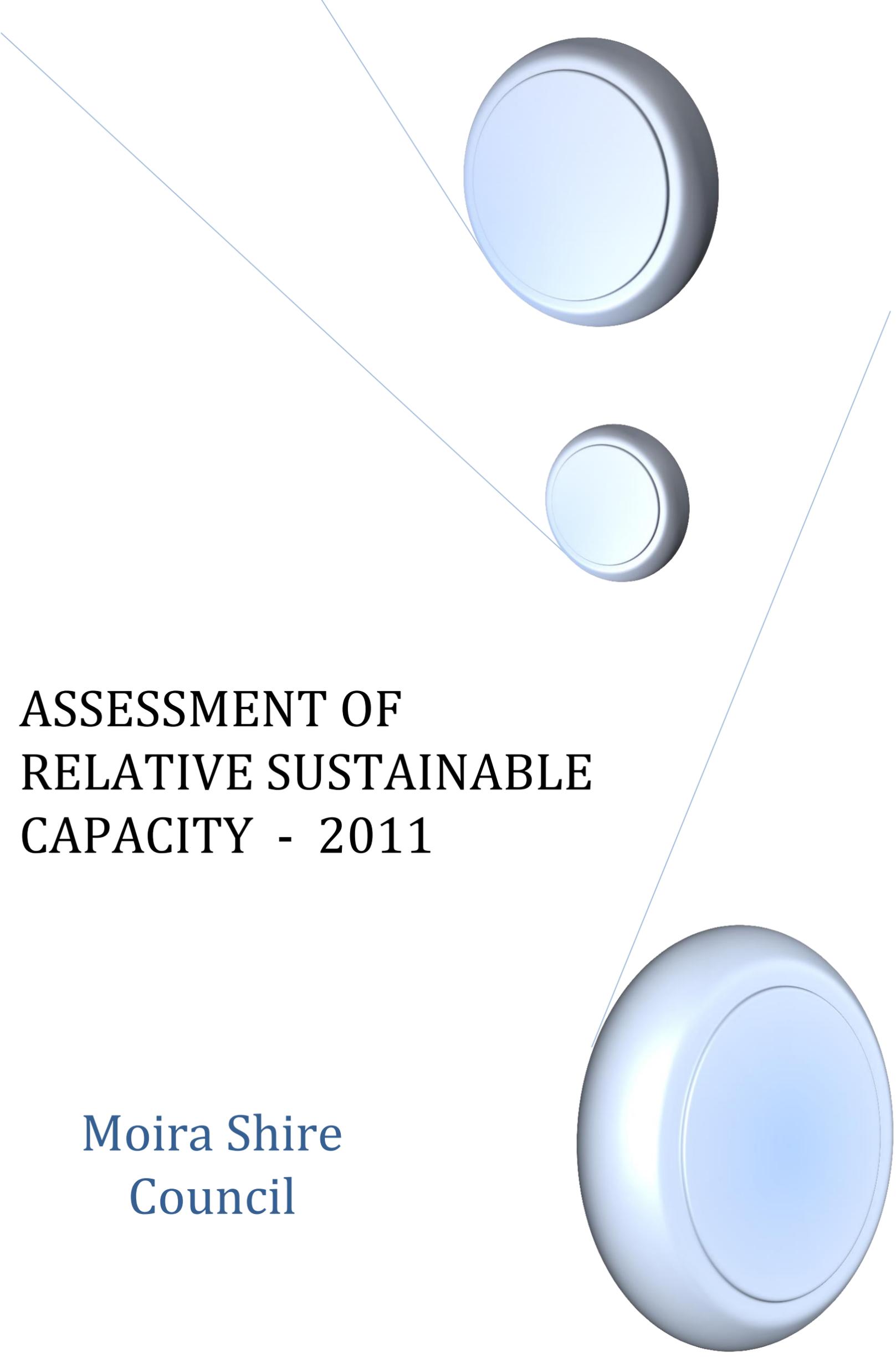
- ***Whether there are other issues related to the design or implementation of the rates capping and variation framework that stakeholders think are important***

Rural councils in particular are constrained by the limitations around available revenue streams. Aside from rates and charges, government grants are another key funding stream. We are seeing a trend in regards to the available pool of these funds decreasing. The impact of these needs to be considered in conjunction with the impact of rate capping.

The introduction of a Cap at any point in time will constrain each specific Council to operating within their current cost recovery structure. For example neighbouring Councils may have significant variances in their existing rate in the dollar and this variance will be locked in as a result of rate capping. While challenging to determine, a more equitable approach would be to determine the true cost of delivering services across rural shires, rural cities, regional cities and metropolitan councils.

- ***Supporting information on the major cost pressures faced by councils that are beyond their control and the impact on council rates and charges.***

Attached is a copy of a Moira Shire Council commissioned report (The Whelan Report) which clearly demonstrates the specific structural challenges faced by our Council and which largely determines the cost of servicing the community.



**ASSESSMENT OF
RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE
CAPACITY - 2011**

**Moira Shire
Council**

MOIRA SHIRE COUNCIL

ASSESSMENT OF RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY - 2011

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Moira Shire is classified as 'Large Rural'

This classification comprises:

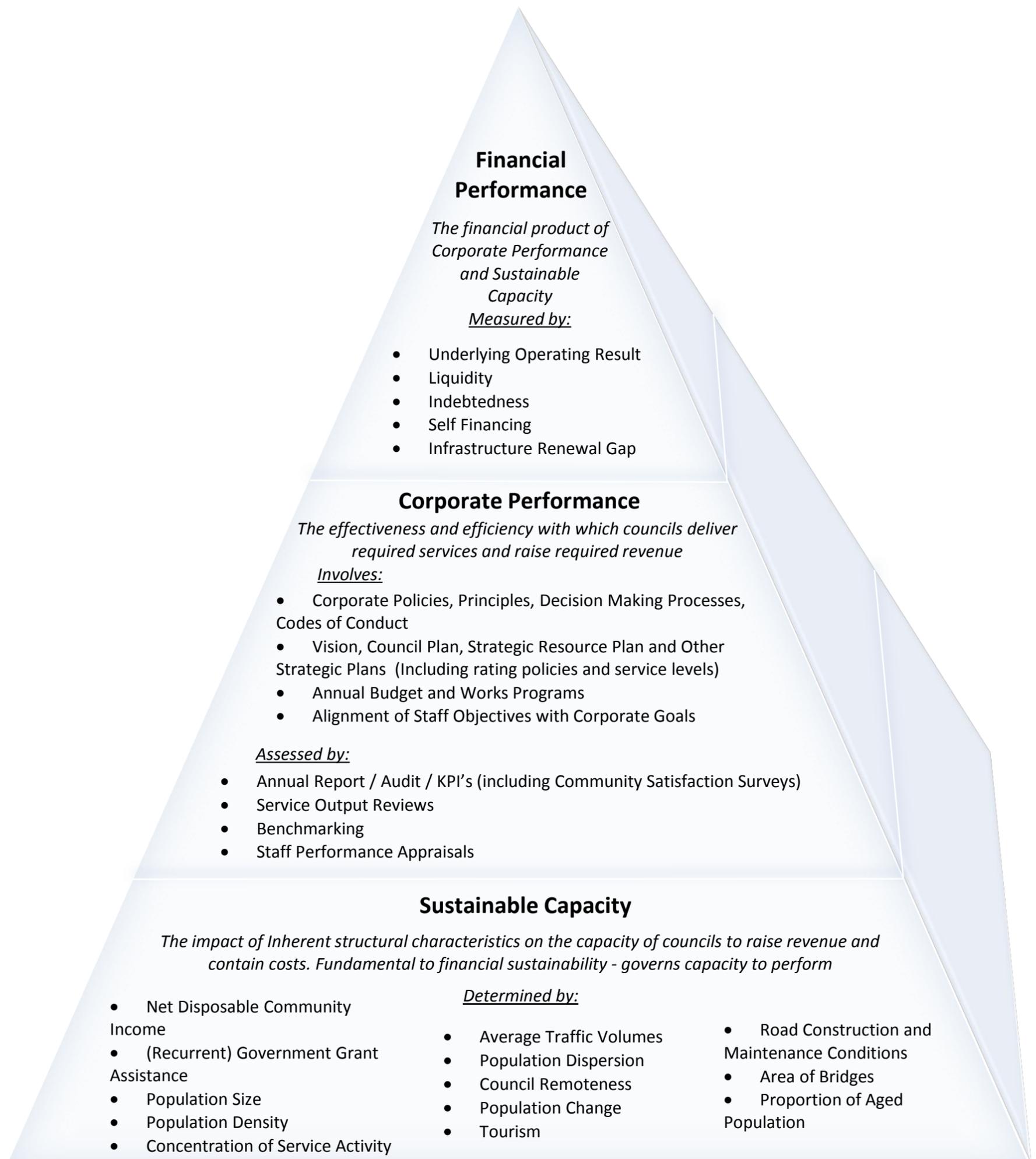
<i>Bass Coast</i>	<i>Baw Baw</i>	<i>Campaspe</i>
<i>East Gippsland</i>	<i>Macedon Ranges</i>	<i>Mitchell</i>
<i>Moira</i>	<i>South Gippsland</i>	<i>Wellington</i>

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW

A financially sustainable council is able to provide and fund required services, ensure equitable imposition of rates and charges, maintain operational viability and preserve intergenerational equity.

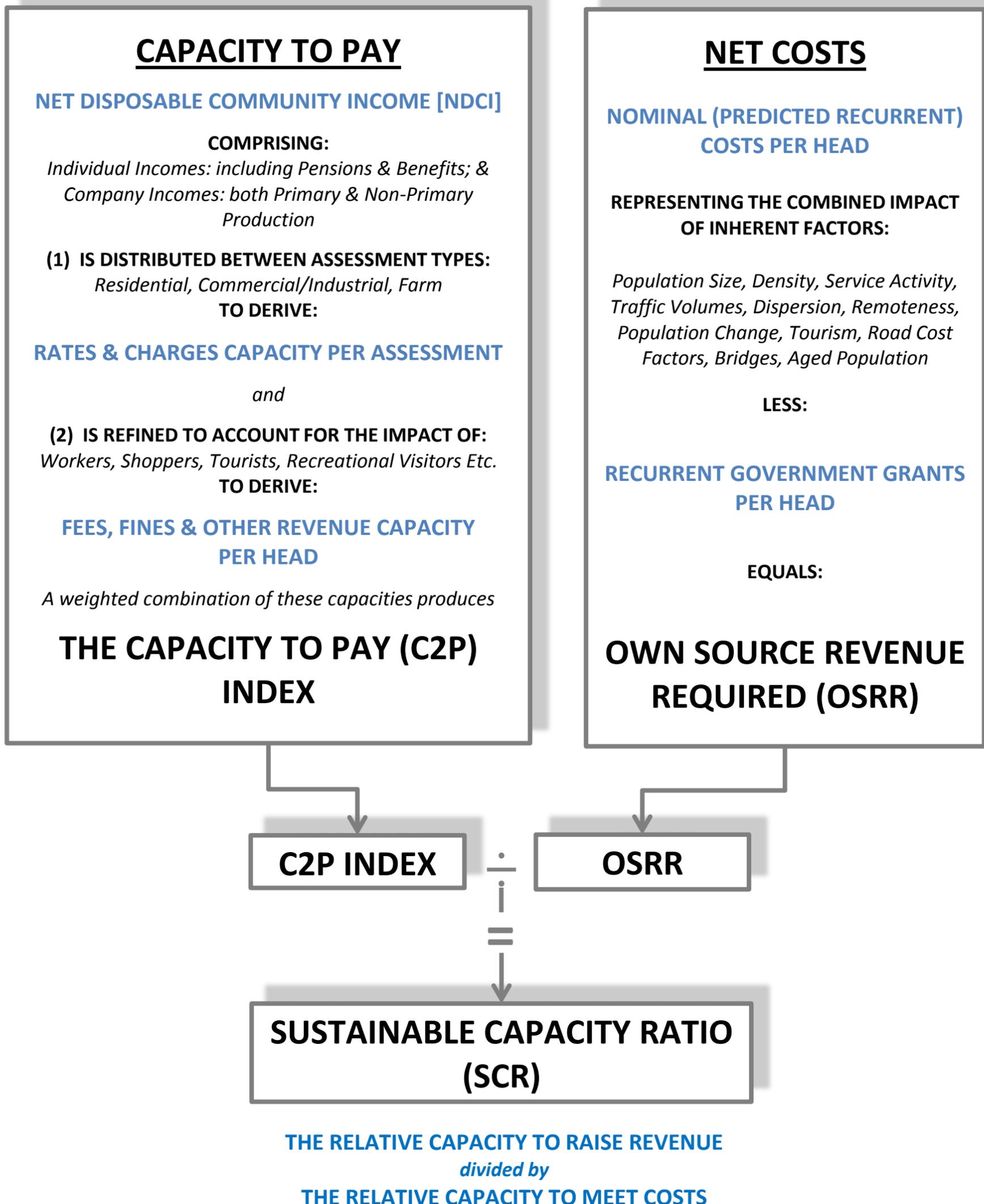
Assessing the financial sustainability of Moira Shire Council involves determining its sustainable capacity, reviewing its corporate approach and measuring its financial performance. This process is represented graphically in the pyramid.

COUNCIL FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PYRAMID



THE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY RATIO

The Sustainable Capacity Ratio for Moira Shire Councilis calculated in accordance with the methodology presented in the following diagram:



MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011

CAPACITY TO PAY & NOMINAL COSTS

BASED ON 2010/11 DATA FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE, THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, CENTRELINK, THE VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION, COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS AND ON THE 2011 ABS CENSUS DATA

MOIRA

**MEDIAN
ALL
COUNCILS**

**LARGE
RURAL
AVERAGE**

CAPACITY TO PAY (C2P)

* ex Melb.

RATES, CHARGES & PROPERTY BASED FEES	Relative capacity to raise rates & charges revenue and property based fees (per assessment).	\$ 48,242	\$60,240	\$53,301
FEES, FINES, USER CHARGES & OTHER REVENUE	Relative capacity to raise fees, fines, user charges & other revenue (per head).	\$ 27,849	\$31,463	\$33,457
C2P INDEX	Relative capacity to raise own source revenue from Net Disposable Community Income. The Index is a weighted combination of the above two capacities.	\$ 47,130	\$56,801	\$53,118

Moira's capacity to raise revenue from rates & charges is:

- moderately low relative to all councils (Range: \$26,738 to \$137,020*); and
- moderately low with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: \$42,470 to \$68,696).

Its capacity to raise revenue from fees, fines & user charges is:

- reasonably low relative to all councils (Range: \$15,469 to \$113,530*); and
- low with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: \$23,806 to \$56,360).

Council's capacity to raise own source revenue (C2P) is:

- moderately low relative to all councils (Range: \$28,651 to \$148,870*); and
- low with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: \$44,228 to \$63,788).

OWN SOURCE REVENUE REQUIRED (OSRR) - NOMINAL COSTS less: RECURRENT GOVERNMENT GRANTS

NOMINAL COSTS

* ex Melb.

NOMINAL COSTS	Nominal (predicted recurrent) costs per head derived from inherent factors (independent variables).	\$ 1,745	\$ 1,427	\$ 1,524
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Moira's nominal cost per head is:

- slightly high relative to all councils (Range: \$648 to \$3,460*); and
- particularly high with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: \$1,268 to \$1,745).

MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011

INHERENT FACTORS USED TO PREDICT (NOMINAL) RECURRENT COSTS

BASED ON 2010/11 DATA FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE, THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU of STATISTICS, CENTRELINK, THE VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION, COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS AND ON THE 2011 ABS CENSUS DATA

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These factors are used as independent variables in a regression model to predict recurrent (nominal) costs. The model explains 98.8% of variability in actual recurrent costs of the 79 councils.

Comments are made with reference to the State median:

** ex Melb.*

POPULATION NUMBER	Population is directly related to economies of scale. It has an exponential impact on cost per head; (State range: 3,061 to 261,282).	28,406	42,826	36,586
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Moira's population is moderately small but growing slightly. This limits to some extent Council's relative ability to achieve economies of scale.

POPULATION DENSITY	Population per kilometre of road. Provision of services to fewer residents over large distances increases service costs; (State range: 1.13 to 407).	5.69	21.90	14.82
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Population is sparse, having a very negative impact on Council's operating costs.

CONCENTRATION of SERVICE ACTIVITY (CSA)	Greater relative regional significance of a commercial centre intensifies demand for council services and infrastructure, and increases costs; (State range: 42.7 to 664*).	116.0	133.7	134.8
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The relative Concentration of Service Activity in Moira is moderately low, minimising to some degree the costs of providing associated services and infrastructure.

AVERAGE TRAFFIC VOLUMES (ATV)	Derived from traffic counts, ATV indicates the demand on infrastructure. It has a material impact on road & traffic management costs; (State range: 34.7 to 1,963*).	175.2	344.6	231.1
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Average traffic volumes are low. This has a relatively modest impact on Council's road, traffic management and other infrastructure costs.

POPULATION DISPERSION	Multiple (and distant) urban centres and townships increase costs through the duplication and administration of council services and infrastructure; (State range: 0.0 to 43.2).	28.6	3.4	19.6
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Moira's population dispersion is very high, adding significantly to costs through service duplication and administration.

COUNCIL REMOTENESS	Council distance by road from major population centres (based on ARIA+ score). Greater remoteness increases costs; (State range: 0.00 to 5.58).	2.10	1.08	2.22
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Remoteness is rather high and has a reasonably significant impact on Council's costs.

POPULATION CHANGE	Observed population change over the previous 10 years. While a higher population improves economies of scale, the growth itself increases costs in the short term.	7.6%	7.0%	12.6%
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Moira's population is growing slightly, having a moderate impact on costs associated with growth.

MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011

INHERENT FACTORS; RECURRENT GOVERNMENT GRANTS; SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY RATIO

BASED ON 2010/11 DATA FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE, THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU of STATISTICS, CENTRELINK, THE VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION, COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS AND ON THE 2011 ABS CENSUS DATA

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Comments are made with reference to the State median:

** ex Melb.*

TOURISM	Total visits per capita - 3 year average. Tourism adds to demand on council services and infrastructure; (State range: 4.4 to 177.1*).	35.68	21.01	42.36
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Moirra experiences a modestly high level of tourism, placing some pressure on council to provide extra services and infrastructure.

ROAD COST INDEX (RCI)	Sub-grades, materials, climate and freight combine to form a Road Cost Index; (State range: 0.07 to 0.74).	0.11	0.29	0.28
BRIDGES	Bridge area (sqm/head) included in the local road network; (State range: 0.00 to 1.74).	0.37	0.11	0.32

Road cost factors and bridges combined have a reasonably limited impact on Moira's road and bridge costs.

AGED POPULATION	The percentage of the community aged 70+ impacts on aged care services costs; (State range: 4.0% to 23.2%).	15.0%	11.4%	12.3%
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The percentage of Moira's community aged over 70 has a significant impact on aged care service costs.

less: RECURRENT GOVERNMENT GRANTS (per head)

UNTIED GRANTS	Distributed by the Victoria Grants Commission.	\$ 272	\$ 143	\$ 214
TIED GRANTS	Those provided for specific services (including R2R).	\$ 190	\$ 127	\$ 158
TOTAL GRANTS	Total recurrent government grants.	\$ 461	\$ 307	\$ 372

Moirra's total recurrent government grant level is modestly high relative to all councils (Range: \$75 to \$1,527) and very high with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: \$245 to \$485).

equals: OWN SOURCE REVENUE REQUIRED / NET COSTS (per head)	\$ 1,319	\$ 1,028	\$ 1,163
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SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY (SC)

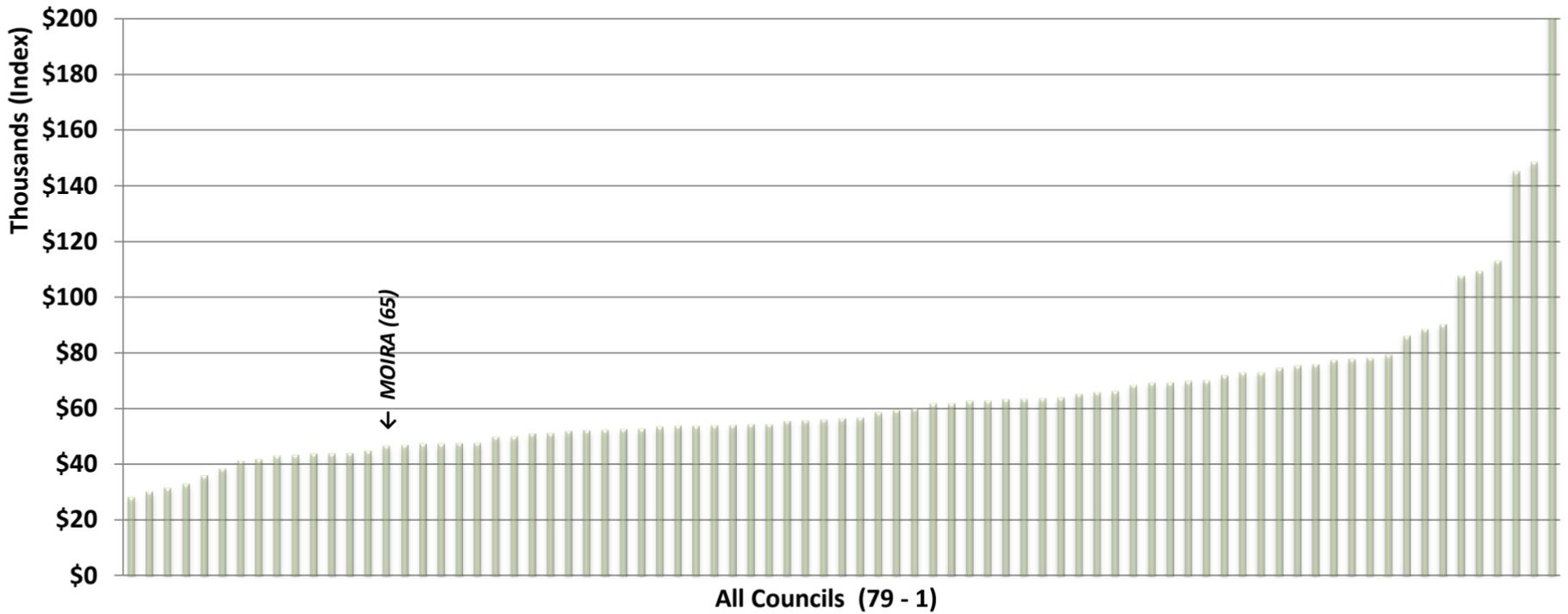
SC RATIO	<u>C2P Index divided by OSRR</u> . Number of times Capacity to Pay covers net costs per head.	35.7	57.5	46.3
SC RATING	RATING SCALE: 10 - VERY POSITIVE TO 1 - VERY NEGATIVE	3	N/A	4.1

Moirra's level of sustainable capacity is:

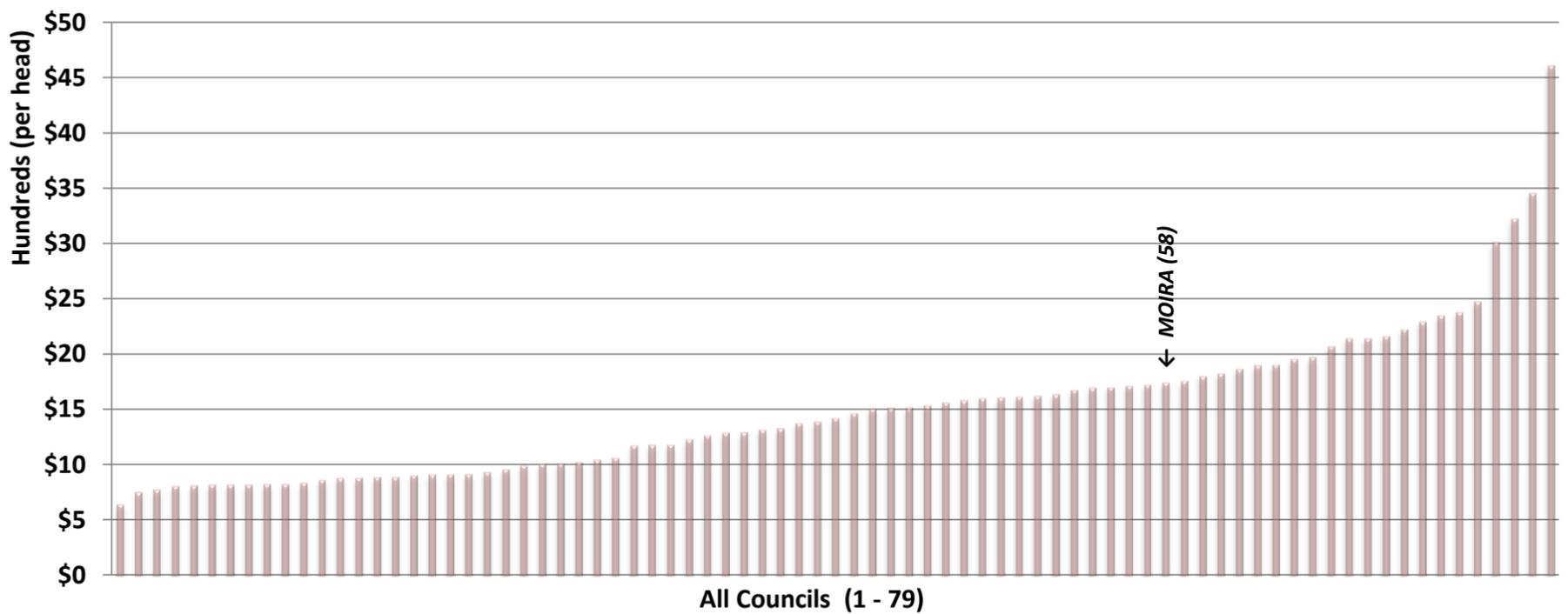
- negative relative to all councils (Range: 15.1 to 165.1); and
- particularly negative with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: 35.7 to 62.3).

MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011
POSITION RELATIVE TO ALL COUNCILS - KEY SUSTAINABILITY COMPONENTS

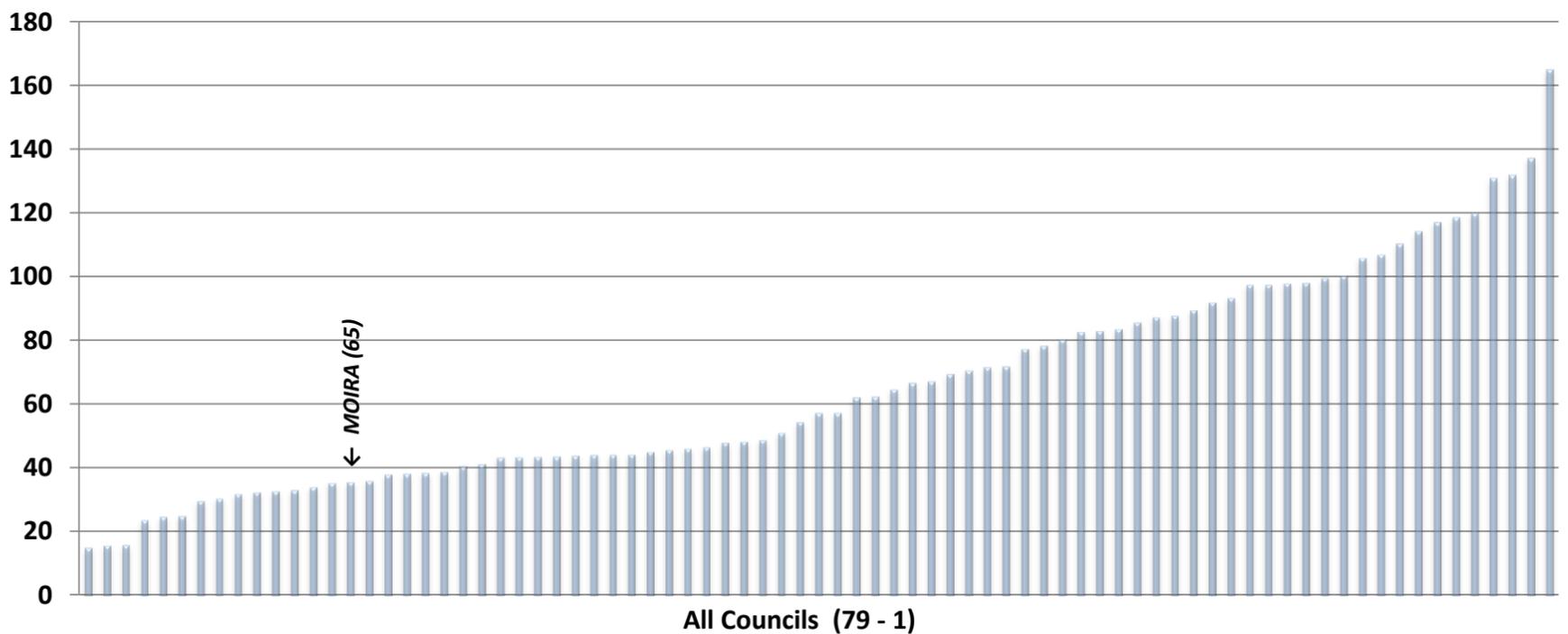
Capacity To Pay - All Councils



Nominal Costs - All Councils

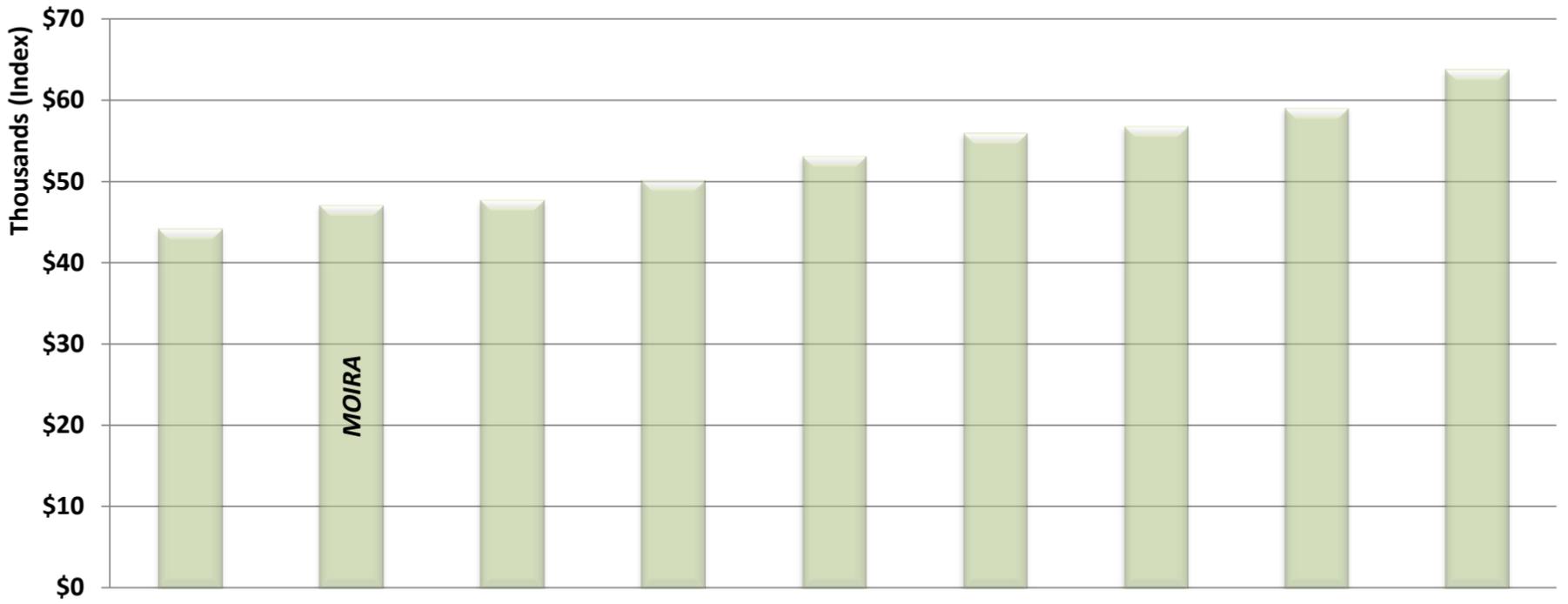


Sustainability Ratio - All Councils

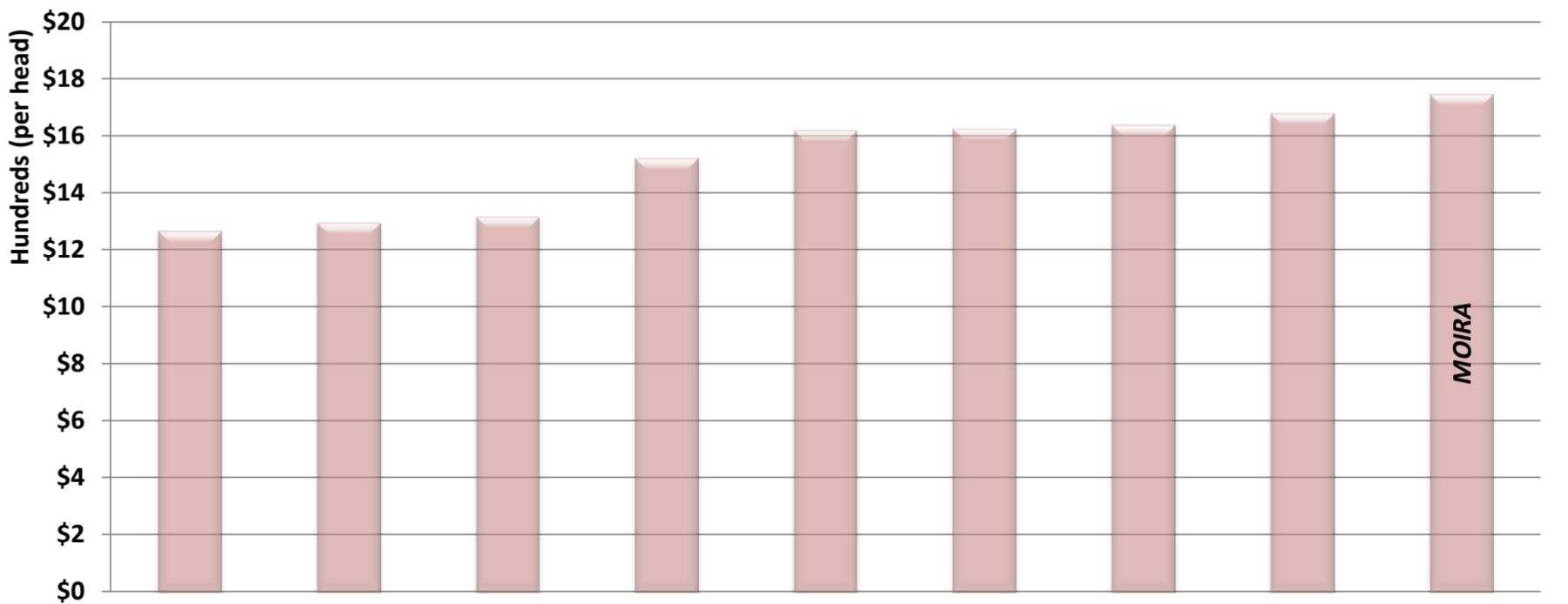


POSITION RELATIVE TO LARGE RURAL COUNCILS - KEY SUSTAINABILITY COMPONENTS

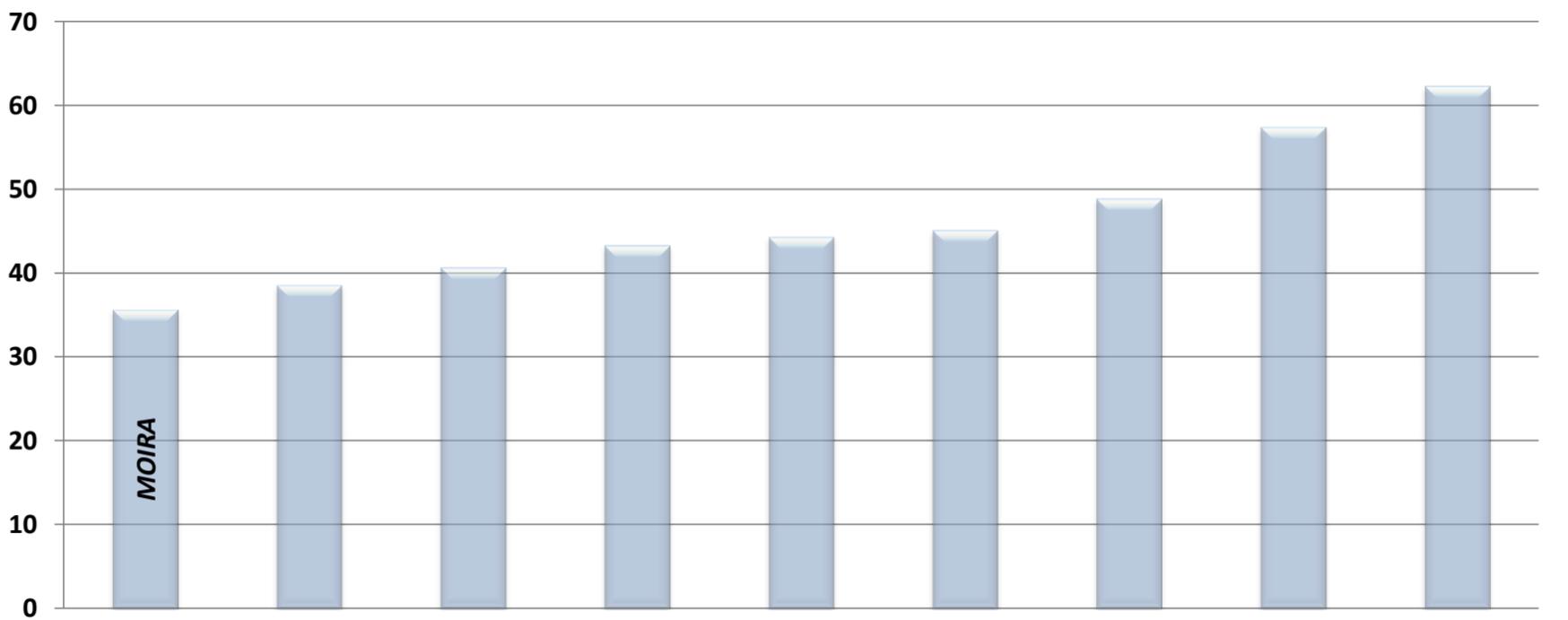
Capacity To Pay - Large Rural



Nominal Costs - Large Rural



Sustainable Capacity Ratio - Large Rural



MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011

IMPACT ON RECURRENT OPERATIONS

BASED ON 2010/11 DATA FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE, THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, CENTRELINK, THE VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION, COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS AND ON THE 2011 ABS CENSUS DATA

MOIRA

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RECURRENT REVENUE

⌘

USE OF CAPACITY TO PAY	Compares actual own source revenue to the Capacity To Pay Index. (Refer Page 10 for details of components)	3.66%	3.09%	3.31%
	Average own source revenue per assessment	1,759	1,959	1,690
	divided by: Capacity to Pay Index	47,130	56,801	53,118

Moiras use of total capacity to raise own source revenue is:

- reasonably high relative to all councils (Range: 0.83% to 4.99%); and
 - reasonably high with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: 2.51% to 4.36%).
- adjusted to allow for the outsourcing of aged care services.

RECURRENT COSTS

NOMINAL COST RATIO	Compares recurrent operating cost per head to nominal (predicted recurrent) cost per head.	91%	100%	98%
	Actual cost per head	1,583	1,429	1,439
	divided by: Nominal cost per head	1,745	1,427	1,524

Moiras actual recurrent operating cost per head, relative to the nominal cost level predicted by the Model, is low (adjusted for the outsourcing of aged care services).

Possible explanations for this include:

- Council placing emphasis on its recurrent operating result.
- The impact of the moderately low capacity to raise revenue from rates and charges (refer Page 5).
- The influence of a moderately low capacity to raise revenue from fees, fines, user charges and other sources (refer Page 5).

RECURRENT OPERATING RESULT

RECURRENT OPERATING RESULT (ROR)	Recurrent (continuous, reliable) revenue less recurrent expenses divided by recurrent revenue.	-4.5%	-2.1%	-2.3%
	Actual recurrent revenue per head	1,367	1,367	1,415
	less: Actual recurrent expenses per head	1,429	1,429	1,439

Moiras recurrent operating result is:

- moderately weak relative to all councils (Range: -25.8% to 9.9%); but
- weak with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: -9.3% to 3.6%).

⌘ Note: Medians / averages do not cross calculate.

MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011
IMPACT ON CAPACITY TO RAISE RATES & CHARGES REVENUE

BASED ON 2010/11 DATA FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE, THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, CENTRELINK, THE VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION, COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS AND ON THE 2011 ABS CENSUS DATA

MOIRA	MEDIAN ALL COUNCILS	LARGE RURAL AVERAGE
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USE OF CAPACITY TO RAISE RATES, CHARGES & PROPERTY BASED FEES (PBF's)

REVENUE MIX: # AS A % OF TOTAL ACTUAL RATES; * AS A % OF TOTAL ACTUAL OSR

TOTAL RATES, CHARGES & PBF'S	*	Compares actual total rates, charges & PBF's to the calculated capacity of the community to pay (disposable income available per assessment).	87.3%	80.2%	81.0%
			3.01%	2.47%	2.62%
		<i>Average Rates, Charges & PBF's per assessment divided by: Disposable income available per assessment</i>	1,475 48,242	1,600 60,240	1,366 53,301
RESIDENTIAL RATES, CHARGES & PBF's	#	Compares actual residential rates, charges & PBF's to the calculated capacity of the community to pay (disposable income available per residential assessment).	64.3%	75.4%	72.9%
			3.18%	2.47%	2.70%
		<i>Average Rates, Charges & PBF's per residential assessment divided by: Disposable income available per residential assessment</i>	1,363 42,927	1,341 49,168	1,205 45,822
COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL & OTHER (CIO) RATES, CHARGES & PBF's	#	Compares actual CIO rates, charges & PBF's to the calculated capacity of the community to pay (disposable income available per CIO assessment).	11.2%	11.2%	9.9%
			2.41%	2.05%	2.21%
		<i>Average Rates, Charges & PBF's per CIO assessment divided by: Disposable income available per CIO assessment</i>	2,261 93,745	3,361 123,927	2,493 113,312
FARM RATES, CHARGES & PBF's	#	Compares actual farm rates, charges & PBF's to the calculated capacity of the community to pay (disposable income available per farm assessment).	24.4%	6.9%	17.3%
			3.52%	4.06%	3.84%
		<i>Average Rates, Charges & PBF's per farm assessment divided by: Disposable income available per farm assessment</i>	1,463 41,576	2,213 49,449	1,894 50,648

⌘ Note: Medians / averages do not cross calculate.

Moiras use of its capacity to raise rates and charges is:

- high relative to all councils (Range: 0.38% to 4.91%); and
- particularly high with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: 2.25% to 3.01%).

The relative impact of this source of revenue is increased because it comprises 87.3% of the Council's own source revenue, compared to the state median of 80.2%.

Moiras approach is further clarified by analysing the degree to which Council uses its capacity to raise rates and charges from each assessment type; in particular both residential and farm as they constitute 64.3% and 24.4% respectively of total rates & charges.

Council's use of its capacity to raise residential rates & charges is:

- particularly high relative to all councils (Range: 1.52% to 4.03%); and
- particularly high with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: 2.45% to 3.18%).

Use of capacity to raise farm rates & charges is:

- low relative to all councils (Range: 0.00% to 9.68%); and
- low with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: 3.24% to 4.57%).

MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011

IMPACT ON CAPACITY TO RAISE FEES, FINES & USER CHARGES / SUMMARY

BASED ON 2010/11 DATA FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE, THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, CENTRELINK, THE VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION, COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS AND ON THE 2011 ABS CENSUS DATA

MOIRA

**MEDIAN
ALL
COUNCILS**

**LARGE
RURAL
AVERAGE**

USE OF CAPACITY TO RAISE FEES, FINES, USER CHARGES & OTHER REVENUE

✕

REVENUE MIX: # AS A % OF TOTAL ACTUAL RATES; * AS A % OF TOTAL ACTUAL OSR

FEES, FINES, USER CHARGES AND OTHER REVENUE	Compares actual fees, fines, user charges and other revenue to the assessed capacity of the community to pay. Viewed as an ability or effort to make use of capacity.	*	12.7%	19.8%	19.0%
			0.52%	0.56%	0.67%
	Average fees, fines & user charges per head divided by: Disposable income available per head	Ω	181	204	207
			27,849	31,463	33,457

Moira's effort to use its capacity to raise revenue from fees, fines & user charges is slightly low relative to all councils (Range: 0.26% to 1.90%); and reasonably low with respect to Large Rural councils (Range: 0.35% to 1.53%).

Consequently, the revenue contribution of 12.7% received by Council from this source is very limited compared to the State Median of 19.8%.

Sources of this revenue include: "User Charges" - \$1,434,000 (5.1% of OSR), Caravan Park - \$254,000 (0.9% of OSR) and Rent - \$62,000 (0.2% of OSR).

✕ Note: Medians / averages do not cross calculate.

Ω adjusted to allow for the outsourcing of aged care services.

SUMMARY OF SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY WITH RESPECT TO...	ALL COUNCILS	LARGE RURAL COUNCILS
--	--------------	----------------------

Council's sustainable capacity level, as determined by the Model, is:

negative

particularly negative

This position represents the combined impact of:

- a capacity to raise own source revenue that:
 - for rates & charges is
 - for fees & fines is
- a nominal (predicted) cost level that is:
- a recurrent government grant level that is:

moderately low
reasonably low
slightly high
modestly high

moderately low
low
particularly high
very high

Council has responded to its sustainable capacity by:

- using own source revenue raising capacity to a level:
 - that for rates & charges is
 - that for fees & fines is
- incurring actual costs compared to nominal that are:

high
slightly low
low

particularly high
reasonably low
low

Moira has thereby achieved a recurrent operating result that is:

moderately weak

weak

SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY RATING	10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	NEGATIVE	PARTICULARLY NEGATIVE
OPERATING RESULT RATING	A B B- C C- D D- E E- F	MODERATELY WEAK	WEAK

SIGNIFICANT RATING DIFFERENCES INDICATIVE OF INFLUENCE OF OTHER FACTORS

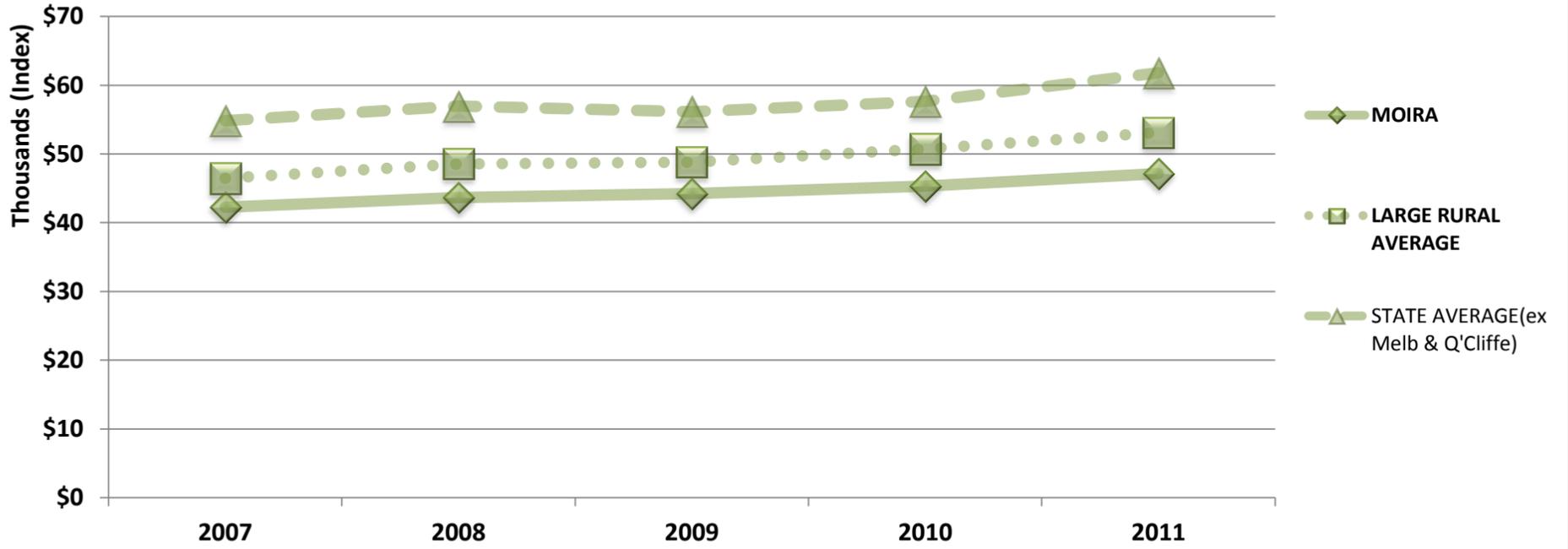
**MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011
TRENDS IN SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2007 - 2011**

BASED ON 2010/11 DATA FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE, THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, CENTRELINK, THE VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION, COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS AND ON THE 2011 ABS CENSUS DATA

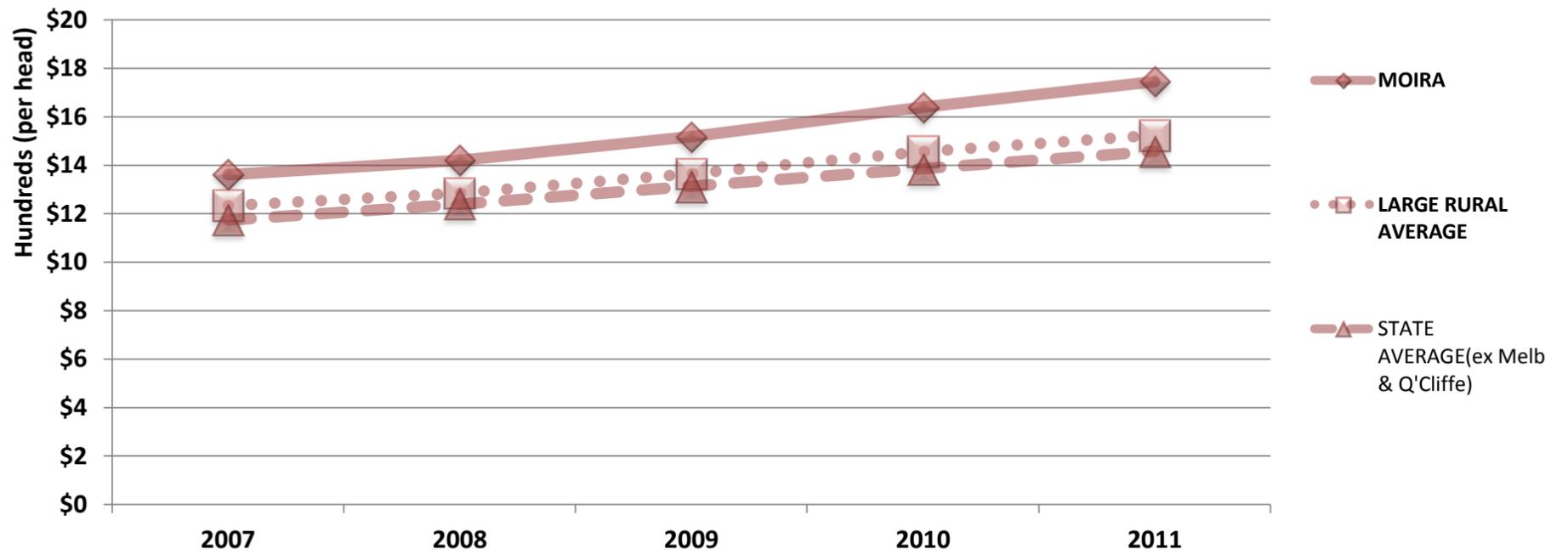
		MOIRA		STATE AVERAGE <i>(ex Melb & Q'Cliffe)</i>		LARGE RURAL AVERAGE	
CAPACITY TO PAY	YEAR	# / \$	%	# / \$	%	# / \$	%
<p>Moira's Capacity to Pay grew modestly from 2007 to 2011 (11.5%).</p> <p>Material changes in components of NDCI impacting on Capacity to Pay include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in Individual After Tax Income of 17.5% over the five years to 2011. Note the absence of virtually any change from 2008 to 2009. • An increase in Pensions & Benefits Income of 38.4% over the five years to 2011. Note an increase of 14.1% from 2008 to 2009. • A decrease in Company Profit After Tax of 8.4% over the five years to 2011. Note an increase of 10.6% from 2010 to 2011, more than offsetting the decrease of 10.0% from 2008 to 2009. 	2007	42,271		54,822		46,452	
	2008	43,643	3.2	56,954	4.0	48,555	4.5
	2009	44,233	1.4	56,150	0.4	48,803	0.5
	2010	45,314	2.4	57,641	2.7	50,707	3.9
	2011	47,130	4.0	61,821	2.7	53,118	4.8
	2007-2011			11.5		12.8	
NOMINAL COSTS							
	YEAR	# / \$	%	# / \$	%	# / \$	%
<p>Moira experienced a significant increase in Nominal Costs from 2007 to 2011 (28.2%).</p> <p>Material changes in inherent factors that have impacted on Nominal Costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decrease in Density of 5.4% from 2010 to 2011. 	2007	1,362		1,174		1,234	
	2008	1,421	4.3	1,240	5.6	1,285	4.1
	2009	1,518	6.8	1,313	5.9	1,365	6.3
	2010	1,640	8.0	1,386	5.5	1,457	6.7
	2011	1,745	6.4	1,458	5.2	1,524	4.6
	2007-2011			28.2		24.2	
RECURRENT GOVERNMENT GRANTS							
	YEAR	# / \$	%	# / \$	%	# / \$	%
<p>Moira received a slightly below average increase in the level of Recurrent Government Grants from 2007 to 2011 (13.9%).</p> <p>Material changes in general sources of grants include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in Roads To Recovery Grants of 17.8% from 2009 to 2010. 	2007	405		316		316	
	2008	426	5.3	331	4.9	331	4.7
	2009	442	3.6	348	5.0	337	2.0
	2010	457	3.5	361	4.0	347	3.0
	2011	461	0.9	368	1.9	372	7.2
	2007-2011			13.9		16.6	
SUSTAINABILITY RATIO							
	YEAR	# / \$	%	# / \$	%	# / \$	%
<p>Moira's Sustainable Capacity level deteriorated significantly in the five years to 2011 (16.7%).</p>	2007	42.9		70.8		50.9	
	2008	42.6	-0.7	69.8	-1.2	51.1	0.4
	2009	39.9	-6.2	65.4	-5.5	47.6	-6.7
	2010	37.2	-6.7	64.4	-2.4	46.1	-3.3
	2011	35.7	-4.0	64.5	1.3	46.3	0.6
	2007-2011			-16.7		-8.9	

MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011
TRENDS IN KEY SUSTAINABILITY COMPONENTS - 2007 to 2011

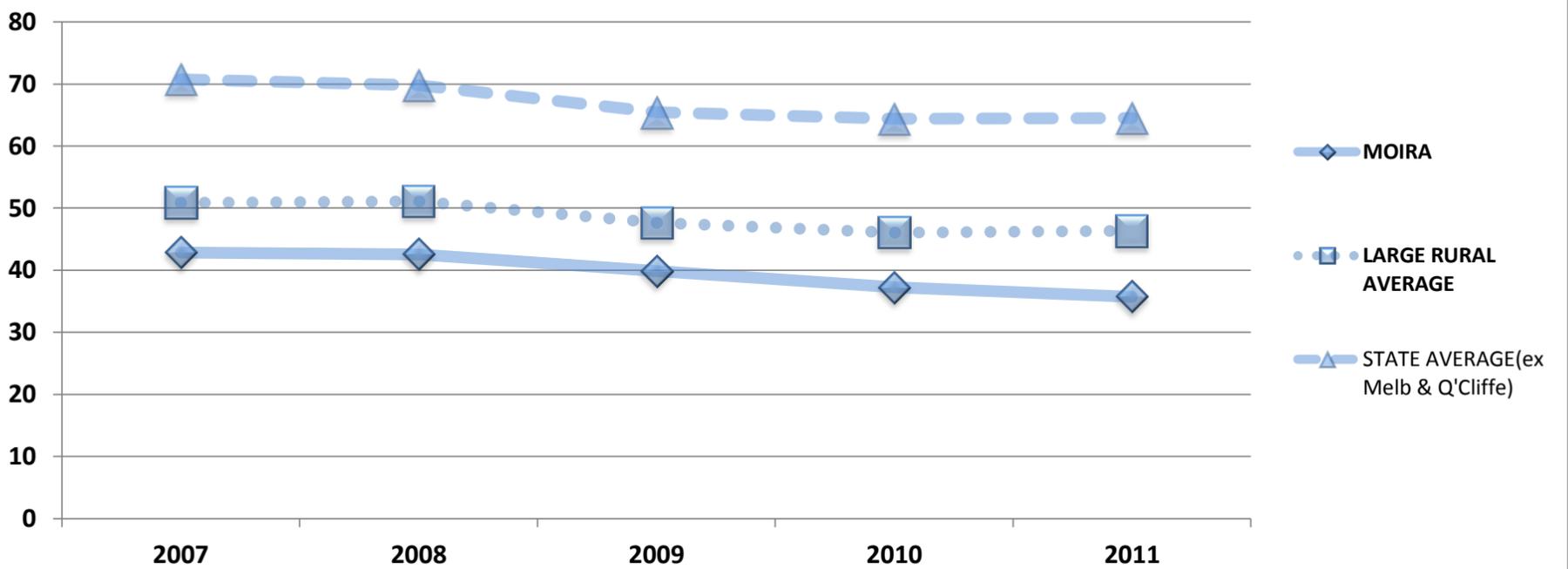
Capacity To Pay



Nominal Costs

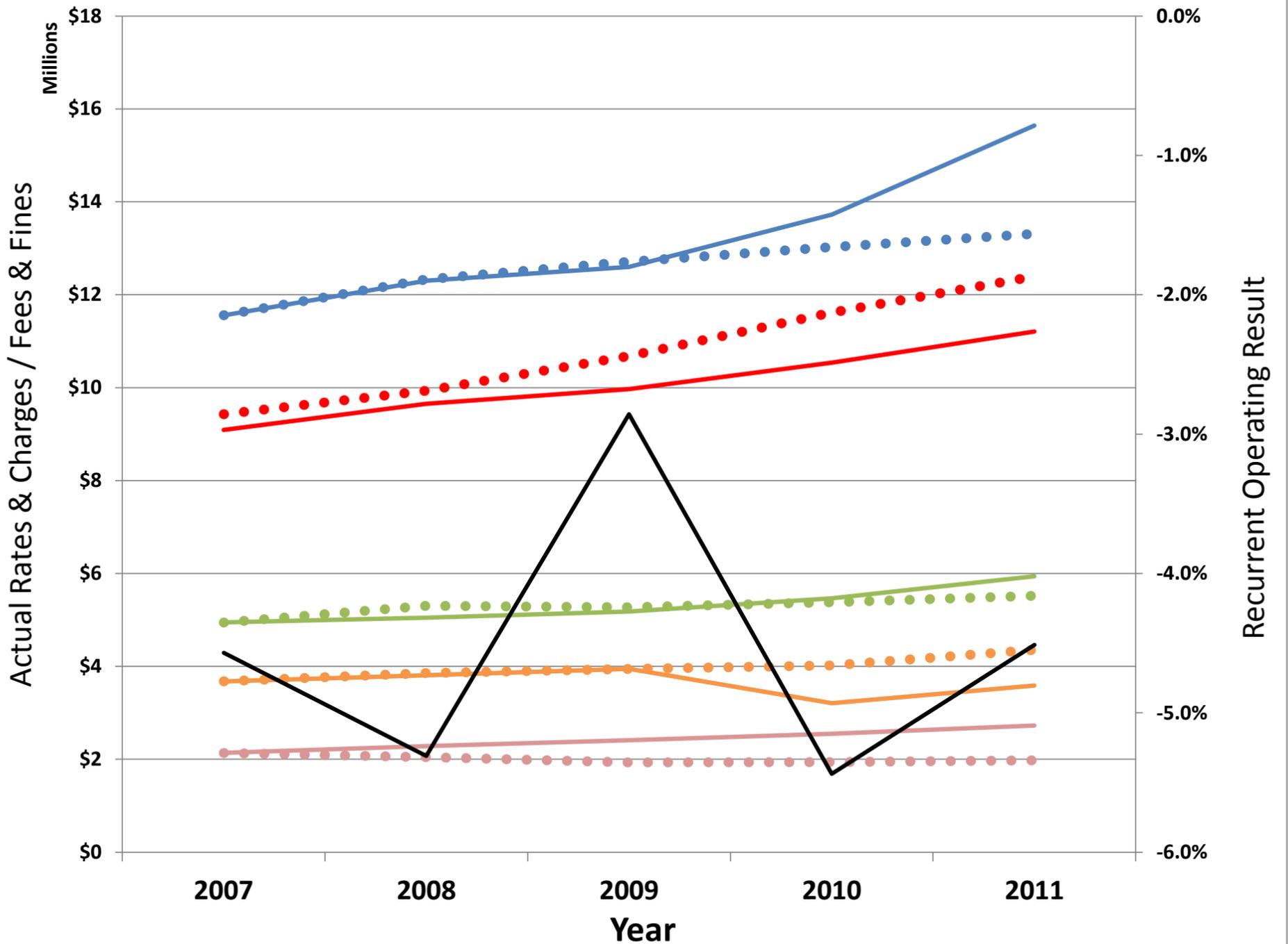
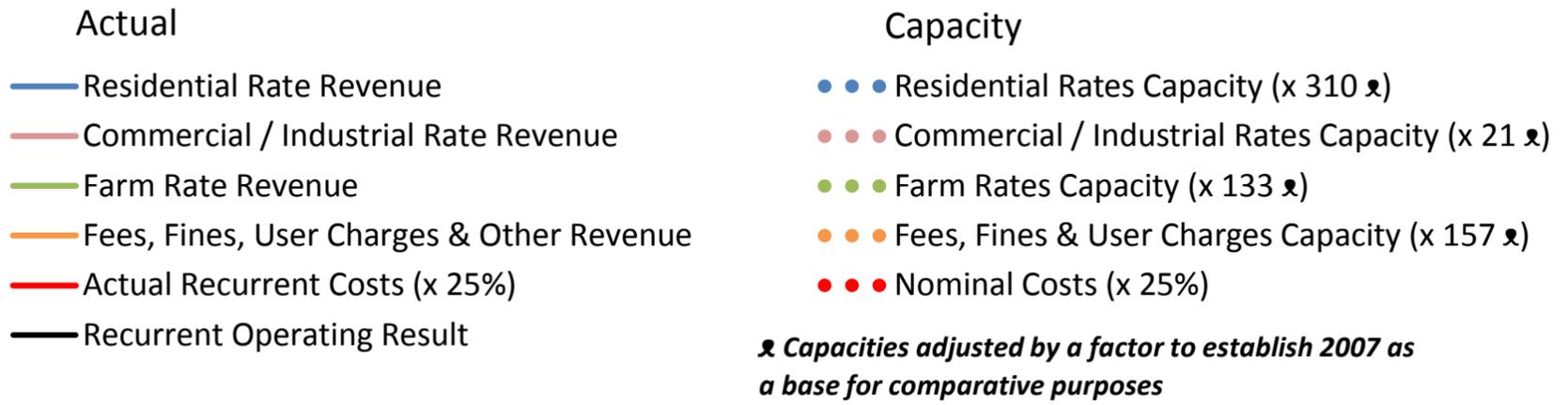


Sustainability Ratio



TRENDS IN SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY & ITS IMPACT ON OPERATIONS 2007 - 2011

TRENDS IN ACTUAL vs CAPACITY OVER 5 YEARS USING 2007 AS A BASE



Note: The gap between actual and capacity is indicative of the change in the use of capacity.

Material changes in Moira's capacity, and use of that capacity, include:

- An increase in the capacity to pay residential rates and charges of 15.2% over the five years to 2011. Note an increase of 6.7% from 2007 to 2008.

Use Made of Sustainable Capacity / Councils Approach

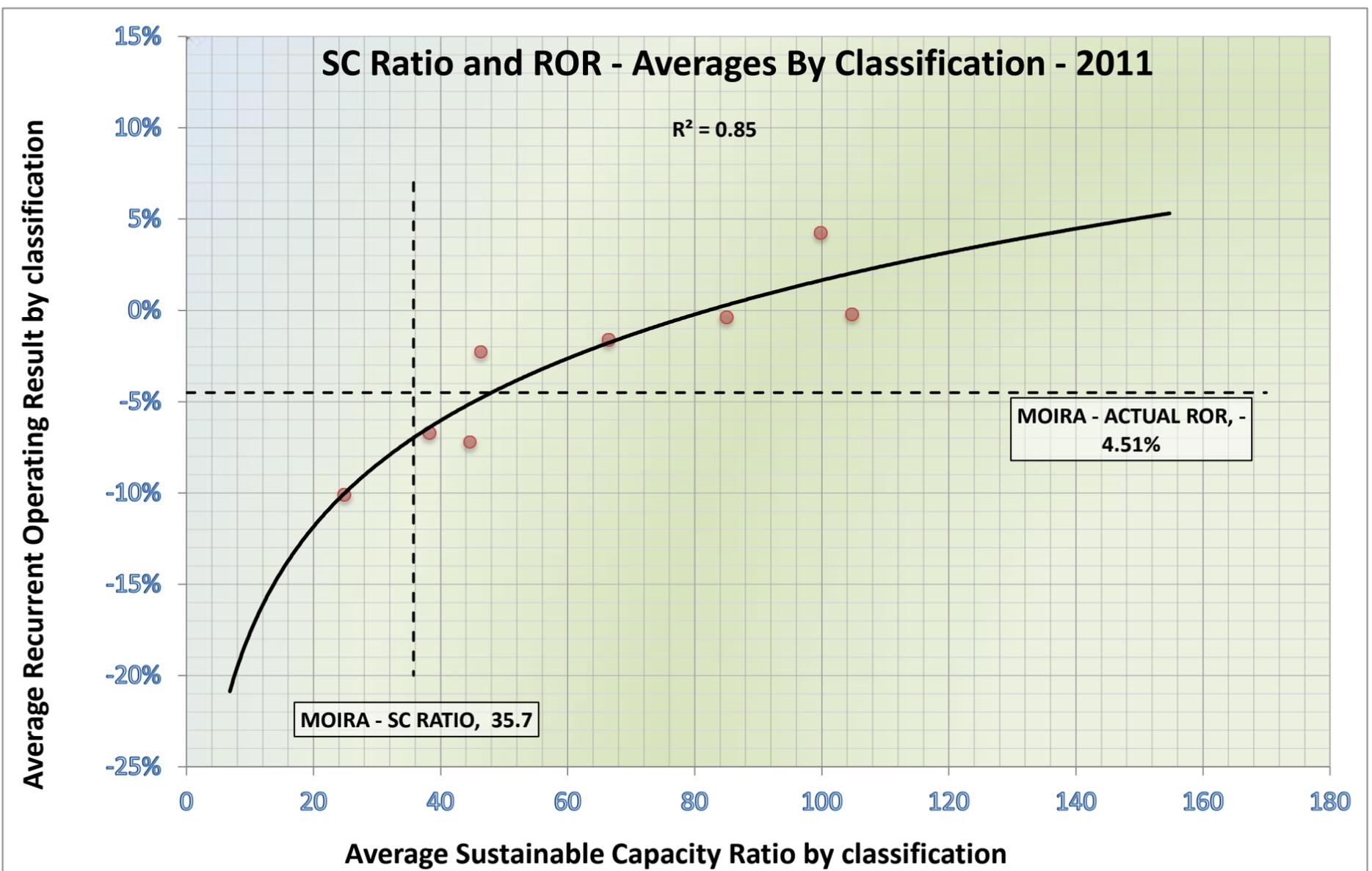
The strategies developed by Council in response to the impact of inherent structural characteristics on its capacity to perform may be observed from two perspectives.

The first is by comparing its actual financial results, revenue raising policies and approach to financing of operations with the State Median and the Large Rural Average (refer pages 9, 10 & 11 of this Report).

The second is by comparing each of these measures with the levels implied by its Sustainable Capacity Ratio and other relevant criteria. This method involves an analysis of Council's corporate approach and actual performance against its own capacity.

Operating Result

This graph plots average Sustainable Capacity Ratios by classification against average Recurrent Operating Result by classification. The trend line represents the expected Recurrent Operating Result based solely on the Sustainable Capacity Ratio.



The graph clearly demonstrates that sustainable capacity (inherent factors) impacts on the recurrent operating result (financial performance).

Moira's Sustainable Capacity Ratio implies a recurrent operating deficit of 7.0%.

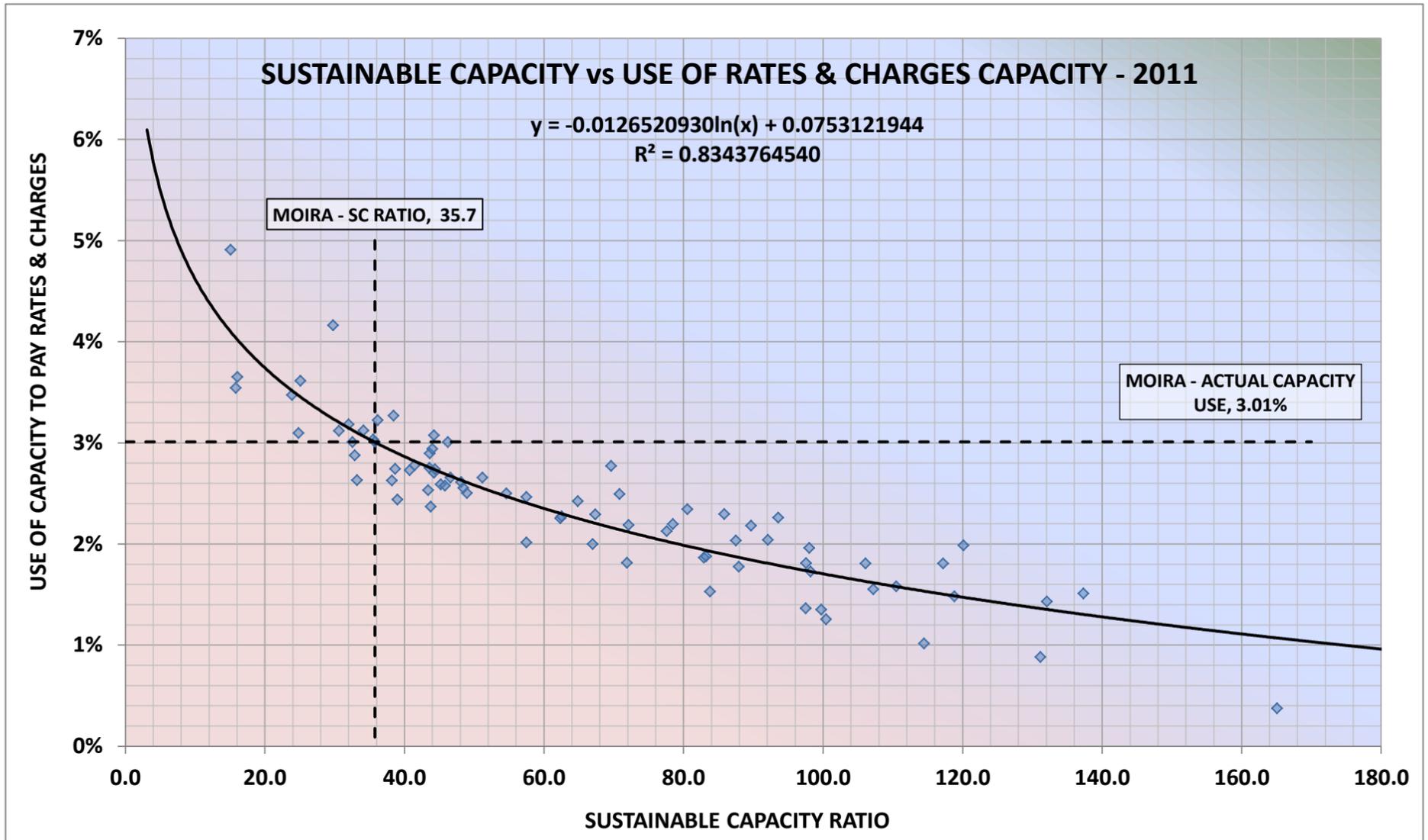
Council actually incurred a recurrent operating deficit in 2011 of 4.5%, a result slightly more favourable than that indicated by the Ratio. Its average recurrent operating result over the five years to 2011 is a deficit of 4.5%.

This outcome is primarily due to the extent to which Council used its sustainable capacity to raise own source revenues and provide operational services.

MOIRA SHIRE RELATIVE SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY 2011
APPROACH TO RATING LEVELS / SUMMARY

Rating Levels

The following graph plots Sustainable Capacity Ratios against the **use** of capacity to pay rates & charges for all 79 councils. The trend line represents the expected use made of rates and charges capacity based solely on the Sustainable Capacity Ratio.



The graph clearly demonstrates that sustainable capacity (inherent factors) impacts on the **use** of capacity to pay rates and charges.

Moira's Sustainable Capacity Ratio implies a rates and charges capacity use of 3.01%.

Its actual use of rates and charges capacity in 2011 was 3.01%, approximately the same as that indicated by the Ratio.

Operating Costs

Council's actual recurrent operating costs are 91% of those predicted by the Model.

Fees, Fines, User Charges and Other Revenue

Council's USE of its capacity to raise fees, fines, user charges and other revenue is 78% of the average for large rural councils.

Summary

Moira's corporate approach, relative to its assessed capacity, includes:

- use of its community's capacity to pay rates and charges - as predicted;
- investment in operational services - very conservative;
- use of its capacity to raise revenue from fees, fines, user charges and other sources - moderately conservative; and
- recurrent operating result - slightly more favourable than expected (5 year average - slightly more favourable than expected).