

CONSUMER DEPOSIT POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Greater Tzaneen Municipality believes that every consumer should secure his/her account with council by means of either a cash deposit or a guarantee.

2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to lay down criteria and guidelines in which officials should work to collect a guarantee or deposit and also to reduce the possibility of risk to council.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 Subject to section 96 (a) of the Municipal Systems Act, no. 32 of 2000, a municipality must collect all money that is due and payable to it;

3.2 To institute procedures in the handling of consumer deposits;

3.3 To institute procedures in handling deposits which have not been claimed after a period of one year after which the consumer has terminated the agreement;

3.4 To institute procedures with the repayment of a deposit.

4. DELEGATION

The charging of deposits will be in terms of the Systems Act, section 104(1)(d).

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Section 96 of the Municipal Systems Act, no. 32 of 2000 which deals with the debt collection responsibilities of municipalities.

6. POLICY PROCEDURES

6.1 New Consumer Deposits/Guarantees

After having signed the service agreement, the applicant shall deposit the average account of the two months preceding the date of application. This deposit is determined by the history of the charges on the specific stand to which the consumer will be linked. Where the financial manager is of the

opinion that the debtor may pose a risk to council, he/she can increase this deposit to an amount equal to the risk amount determined by the Financial Manager, provided that the amount will not exceed 6 times the average account.

6.2 Current Consumers in Arrears

Where a consumer applies for services and he/she has an outstanding account with council on another account, the deposit shall be equal to the outstanding amount on the account. The financial manager may increase the deposit to a maximum of R5 000 if he/she is of the opinion that the debtor may pose a risk to council, taking into account what the outstanding amount is on the other account was.

6.3 Continuous Non-payment of an operating account

Where a debtor's account remains outstanding for 2 consecutive months, council will increase the deposit by R50 per event of discontinuation of electricity/water supply. This deposit is payable together with the amount for which services have been disconnected.

6.4 Unpaid Cheques/Debit Orders

Where a cheque/debit order has been returned by the bank marked "R/D", council will increase the deposit by R50 per event. This must be paid together with the cash for having the cheque/debit order replaced together with the handling fees.

6.5 Consumer Guarantees

Where a consumer wants to make use of a guarantee, such guarantee will be an "Irrevocable Guarantee", which will be 50% to the amount determined in 6.1, the other 50% should be paid in cash. No guarantee will be accepted from a consumer who applies for services and who already has an outstanding amount on another account with council.

6.6 Revision of Deposits

During September of every year all deposits and guarantees shall be subject to revision and increased according to the average account of the preceding months of July and August. Where a request is received from a consumer to have his/her electricity capacity increased, the financial manager shall require that the increased deposit/guarantee be paid or provided.

6.7 Discontinuation of Supply

The supply to a consumer will be discontinued, if the consumer fails to pay the additional deposit determined in 6.6.

6.8 Refunding of deposit/guarantees

Before a refund of a deposit is made, it must be ascertained whether there are any arrears on the account/s in question, if it is found to be the case, the amount in arrears shall be deducted from the deposit. Only deposits which have been claimed by the consumer will be refunded and these deposits will only be refunded to consumers who can positively identify themselves as the person who has signed the agreement with council, or in the absence of the person the death certificate of such person. Guarantees will only be released upon the full settlement of the outstanding debt to council.

7. RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the financial manager to see that this policy is executed, managed and adhered to at all time.

Inputs must be submitted to the Communication Section on or before 18 June 2004