

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: 26 JUNE 2023

PURPOSE

This policy outlines a process by which Council can distribute community resources in a considered and transparent manner. Under this policy, recipients may include not-for-profit individuals and organisations as well as those who act for private gain.

POLICY INTENT

This policy has been developed in order to provide clarity regarding how Council can grant financial support to individuals and/or groups/organisations. *The Local Government Act 1993* (The Act) allows that a council may provide financial assistance to individuals or organisations for the purpose of exercising its functions. A decision to contribute financial assistance cannot be delegated to the General Manager or other persons, however Council may vote to delegate the implementation of Financial Assistance Programs, to the General Manager. Council must be provided details of recipient and amount for all financial assistance granted. Where financial assistance has been provided under a specific program whose implementation has been delegated to the General Manager, Council should be advised of financial assistance under each program (including details of recipient and amount)

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Provide financial assistance in a consistent, equitable and transparent manner that meets the requirements of the Local Government Act, 1993.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

This policy links to three of the Goals in our Community Strategic Plan. Goal 2: We have an innovative and sustainable economy, Goal 3: Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city, Goal 4: We are a connected and engaged community and Goal 5: We have a healthy community in a liveable city. It also links to Strategy 3.2 'We encourage innovation and creativity'.

POLICY

1. Provision of financial assistance to not-for-profit recipients.

Financial Assistance may be provided to not-for-profit recipients through a resolution of Council, or by implementation of a Financial Assistance Program included in this policy. Methods of submitting a proposal to provide financial assistance for Council approval include:

- Report to Council;
- Inclusion in the adopted Delivery Program and Annual Plan or by way of a specific project with details of recipient and amount;
- Via the Quarterly Review (of the Annual Plan) or the Six-monthly Progress Report (of the Delivery Program) by way of a specific project added throughout the year with details of recipient and amount.

In the interests of openness and transparency in Council decision making, all submissions must include details of recipient and amount proposed.

2. Provision of financial assistance to recipients who act for private gain.

Financial assistance may be provided to recipients who act for private gain through a resolution of Council, or by implementation of a Financial Assistance Program included in this policy.

There are special public notice requirements when proposing to provide financial assistance to a recipient who acts for private gain. A recipient who acts for private gain must not receive benefits until at least 28 days' public notice of Council's intention to consider the matter has been given. Public notice is required prior to Council's consideration of the matter. However, public notice is not required under two circumstances:

2.1. The financial assistance is part of a specific program, the details of which have been included in Council's Annual Plan for the year in which the financial assistance is proposed to be given; and where the program's proposed budget for that year does not exceed 5% of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates levied for that year; and where the program applies uniformly to all persons within the Wollongong LGA or to a significant group of persons within the area;

OR

2.2. The financial assistance is part of a program of graffiti removal work. Regardless of whether public notice is required, where Council approval is being sought the usual Council meeting notification requirements will apply.

2.3. Financial Assistance – General Procedure

All financial assistance that is not part of a Financial Assistance Program detailed in this policy must be approved by Council

To be eligible for inclusion in this policy a Financial Assistance Program must meet all of the following criteria:

- The program must contribute to and align with the goals and strategies outlined in the Community Strategic Plan for the year in which the financial assistance is proposed to be given;
- The program's proposed budget for the year does not exceed 5% of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates levied for that year;
- The program applies uniformly to all persons within the Wollongong LGA or to a significant group of persons within the area.

Each of Council's financial assistance programs has its own procedures and requirements.

- Council must publicise the opportunity for financial assistance and seek written applications. This is undertaken using a variety of mechanisms including: social media, print media, and information sessions.
- Those applications must be assessed against set criteria.
- The applications that meet the criteria and are recommended will be referred to the General Manager for approval under his delegated authority.
- Successful applicants will be advised to Council by way of a Council report to ensure transparency.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Local Government Act 1993

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed each term of Council, or more frequently as required.

POLICY REVIEW AND VARIATION

1. Council is to have the opportunity to review and adopt, at least once during its Term, each Council policy.

2. A resolution of Council is required to adopt any variations to this policy, with the exception of minor administrative changes, such as updates to legislative references, which may be endorsed by the Executive Management Committee (EMC). Endorsement of administrative changes made to this policy by EMC does not alter the requirement for it to be reviewed and adopted by each Term of Council.

REPORTING

Reporting of the programs back to Council as outlined in the Financial Assistance Procedures Management Policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A Wollongong Heritage Fund – Heritage Officer
- B Small Cultural Grants Program – City Culture and Activation Manager
- C Small Grants NAIDOC Celebrations – Community Engagement and Development Manager
- D Sponsorship of Community Events – Events and Visual Strategy Manager
- E Contribution to Public Bands and Choirs – Events and Visual Strategy Manager
- F Minor Donations – Events and Visual Strategy Manager
- G Activities with Economic or Industry Benefit – Economic Development Manager
- H Leisure Centre In-Kind Donations – Commercial Business Manager
- I Connecting Neighbours Grants – Community Engagement and Development Manager
- J Signature Events – Manager Community, Cultural and Economic Development
- K Creative Wollongong Quick Response Grants – City Culture and Activation Manager / Events and Visual Strategy Manager
- L Sports Facilities Grants - Recreation Services Manager

RELATED STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Financial Assistance Procedures Management Policy

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Community Cultural and Economic Development
Date adopted by Council	26 June 2023
Date/s of previous adoptions	22 June 2015, 29 January 2013 (Note: 9 September 2013, Council adopted Parts H and I as an addition to this policy) 27 May 2008, 16 December 2008, 5 July 2011
Date of next review	June 2026