

FILE NO: PSC2007-2386

TITLE: GRANTS AND DONATIONS POLICY

POLICY OWNER: GOVERNANCE MANAGER

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a policy framework to enable Council to provide financial assistance to the Port Stephens community in an equitable and fair manner, whilst ensuring legislative compliance.

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Council has provided financial assistance to the Port Stephens community over many years under a number of funding avenues such as; Community Financial Assistance Grants, Rapid Response financial assistance, Community Capacity Building, Heritage, Cultural, Aboriginal and Environmental projects.

These funds have been provided to enhance the Port Stephens local government area to build on the Council vision and the surrounding communities.

This policy has been updated following a major review of all financial assistance provided by Council. As a result grants and donations will be covered by this policy, however any requests for sponsorship should be considered under the Corporate Sponsorship policy. Community group loans are managed under the Community Groups Loan policy.

Council has a legislative requirement to ensure any monies distributed under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

SCOPE:

Port Stephens Council provides grants and donations to those within the local government area to assist in building our community.

This policy covers the following funding opportunities:

- 1) Aboriginal Projects Fund*
- 2) Community Projects Fund*
- 3) Cultural Projects Fund*
- 4) Environmental Projects Fund*
- 5) Heritage Projects Fund*

- 6) Mayoral Funds - available throughout the year, subject to funding availability
- 7) Rapid Response - available throughout the year, subject to funding availability and requires signature of requesting councillor.
- 8) Community Capacity Building - available throughout the year, subject to funding availability and requires the signature of all ward councillors.

*Council will call for applications on an annual basis with each Project Fund offering different grant limits per application, with eligibility criteria applicable to each Project Fund. Guidelines are available for each Fund.

Applications received from individuals will be subject to further legislative provisions and will require a public exhibition period prior to final approval.

Funds must be spent within the Port Stephens local government area or provided to a resident or organisation located within the local government area.

There may be a formal acquittal process for each application.

This policy does not cover requests for sponsorship or community group loans, please refer to Council's Corporate Sponsorship policy and the Community Groups Loan policy.

DEFINITIONS:

Financial assistance Financial mechanisms provided by Council, as a third party, to an organisation or individual to support activities that are in line with Council's Community Strategic Plan. As a third party, Council is not connected to the activities but may be affected by them.

Grants Financial support given to an individual or organisation to assist with identified activities or projects.

Expenditure does not represent an equal benefit to Council.

Grants are financial assistance and are covered under s356 of the Local Government Act.

Donations Financial or non-financial (in-kind) support which is provided with limited terms and conditions.

Expenditure does not represent an equal benefit to Council.

Donations are financial assistance and are covered under

s356 of the Local Government Act.

Loans

Financial support, to be repaid with interest over an agreed term, which is provided to develop buildings or facilities that are Council owned or managed.

Expenditure does represent an equal benefit to Council.

Loans are commercial agreements and are not covered under s356 of the Local Government Act.

Sponsorships

Financial or non-financial (in-kind) support from Council to an organisation or individual (the recipient) in return for mutually agreed economic, cultural, community or reputational benefits. These benefits may include promotion, marketing and/or tickets.

Expenditure does represent an equal benefit to Council.

Sponsorships are commercial agreements and are not covered by s356 of the Local Government Act.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Port Stephens Council is committed to supporting its community with financial assistance where appropriate.

Council's commitment is:

- To provide an equitable, transparent, accountable and coordinated approach for providing financial assistance to community groups in accordance with the terms of Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- To provide equitable financial assistance to people and organisations, bearing in mind that the Council is trustee and custodian of public assets and is bound by its charter to effectively account for and manage those assets.
- To promote a sense of community, community harmony and social cohesion.
- To assist communities under stress.
- To ensure fair distribution of activities and services throughout Port Stephens.

- To provide financial assistance by way of a grant or donation, not sponsorship.

POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) Applications for grants and donations will be coordinated by a project officer. Please refer to the relevant guidelines for contact details or Council website www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au.
- 2) The General Manager is responsible for reporting to Council annually and certifying that expenditure under the Financial Assistance Program meets the necessary probity and transparency required by the Act. The Financial Assistance Program expenditure is reported in the Annual Report (Statutory Statements) as part of the requirements for s356.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- 1) *Local Government Act 1993*
- 2) Financial Assistance for Disposal of Waste policy
- 3) Community Groups Loan policy
- 4) Corporate Sponsorship policy
- 5) Debt Recovery and Hardship policy
- 6) Rate Donation for Community Groups policy
- 7) Council Charter
- 8) Code of Conduct

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

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TRIM container No	PSC2007-2386	TRIM record No	16/384443
Audience	Port Stephens community		
Process owner	Governance Manager		
Author	Governance Manager		
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Adoption date	28/06/2016
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VERSION HISTORY:

Version	Date	Author	Details	Minute No.
1.0	19/05/2009	Corporate Planner	Adoption by Council	151
2.0	19/10/2010	Executive Officer	Adoption by Council	338
3.0	28/06/2016	Governance Manager	New policy following review of all financial assistance offered by Council and inserted into the new policy template.	191