

FILE NO: PSC2007-2386

TITLE: GRANTS AND DONATIONS

OWNER: GOVERNANCE SECTION MANAGER

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 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.

2. CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 Council has provided financial assistance to the Port Stephens community over many years under a number of funding avenues.
- 2.2 Funds have been provided to enhance the Port Stephens local government area to build on the Council vision and the surrounding communities.
- 2.3 Requests for sponsorship should be considered under the Sponsorship policy and community group loans are managed under the Community Group Loans Policy.
- 2.4 Council has a requirement to ensure any monies distributed under section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993, adhere to the legislative requirement.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. Port Stephens Council provides grants and donations to those within the local government area to assist in building our community.
- 3.2. This policy covers the following funding opportunities:
- a) Aboriginal Projects Fund
 - b) Community Support Fund
 - c) Mayoral Funds - available throughout the year, subject to funding availability.
 - d) Rapid Response - available throughout the year, subject to funding availability and requires signature of requesting councillor
 - e) Community Event Development Fund - available throughout the year, subject to funding availability and requires the signature of all ward councillors.
 - f) Vibrant Spaces Fund
 - g) Vibrant Spaces Micro Grant Fund

- h) Major Event Sponsorship Fund
- i) Sport Grant Program.

- 3.3. 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.
- 3.4. Applications received from individuals will be subject to further legislative provisions and will require a public exhibition period prior to final approval.
- 3.5. Funds must be spent within the Port Stephens local government area or provided to a resident or organisation located within the local government area.
- 3.6. There may be a formal acquittal process for each application.
- 3.7. This policy does not cover requests for sponsorship or community group loans, please refer to Council's Sponsorship Policy and the Community Group Loans Policy.
- 3.8. Council will not be responsible for any ongoing maintenance or improvements that arise from successful application for funding, other than where the works may be on Council owned or managed lands, subject to Council agreement.

4. DEFINITIONS:

- 4.1 An outline of the key definitions of terms included in the policy.

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.
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Grants	Financial support given to an individual or organisation to assist with identified activities or projects.
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Expenditure does not represent an equal benefit to Council.

Donations	Grants are financial assistance and are covered under section 356 of the Local Government Act. Financial or non-financial (in-kind) support which is provided with limited terms and conditions.
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	<p>Expenditure does not represent an equal benefit to Council.</p> <p>Donations are financial assistance and are covered under section 356 of the Local Government Act.</p>
Loans	<p>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.</p> <p>Expenditure does represent an equal benefit to Council.</p>
Sponsorships	<p>Loans are commercial agreements and are not covered under section 356 of the Local Government Act.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Expenditure does represent an equal benefit to Council.</p> <p>Sponsorships are commercial agreements and are not covered by section 356 of the Local Government Act.</p>

5. STATEMENT:

- 5.1. Port Stephens Council is committed to supporting its community with financial assistance where appropriate.
- 5.2. Council's commitment is:
 - a) 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.
 - b) 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.
- c) To promote a sense of community, community harmony and social cohesion.
- d) To assist communities under stress.
- e) To ensure fair distribution of activities and services throughout Port Stephens.
- f) To provide financial assistance by way of a grant or donation, not sponsorship.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. 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 under section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- 7.1 Local Government Act 1993
- 7.2 Financial Assistance for Disposal of Waste Policy
- 7.3 Community Group Loans Policy
- 7.4 Sponsorship Policy
- 7.5 Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy
- 7.6 Council Charter
- 7.7 Code of Conduct.

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

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EDRMS container No	PSC2007-2386	EDRMS record No	25/137488
Audience	Port Stephens community		
Process owner	Governance Section Manager		
Author	Governance Section Manager	Next review date	8 April 2029
Review timeframe	4 years		

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
3.1	10/12/2019	Governance Section Manager	Reviewed the policy, included numbering to each paragraph and updated the version control. Updated title of policy owner. 3.2 – updated item numbering. 3.8 – new paragraph stating Council is not responsible for ongoing maintenance of projects. 5.2 – updated itemising of paragraphs.	254

Version	Date	Author	Details	Minute No.
3.2	14/9/2021	Governance Section Manager	<p>Reviewed the policy and updated the version control.</p> <p>2.1 – remove previous financial assistance categories.</p> <p>2.2 – minor rewording.</p> <p>2.3 – remove out-dated content.</p> <p>2.3 – insert new paragraph.</p> <p>3.1 – updated to include new program and remove obsolete programs.</p>	236
4	08/04/2025	Governance Section Manager	<p>Reviewed the policy, transferred policy into new template and updated the version control.</p> <p>2.3 – Update policy title</p> <p>2.4 – minor rewording.</p> <p>3.2 – reworded funding categories</p> <p>3.2 – added (f) Vibrant Spaces Fund*, (g) Vibrant Spaces Micro Grant Fund, (h) Major Event Sponsorship Fund and (i) Sport Grant Program.</p> <p>3.7 – Update policy title.</p> <p>5.2(a) – minor rewording.</p> <p>6.2 – minor rewording.</p> <p>7.3 – Update policy title</p> <p>7.4 – Update policy title</p> <p>7.6 – remove reference to Rate Donation for Community Groups policy as this has been revoked.</p>	009