



SHIRE COUNCIL
Blayney

Community Financial Assistance Policy

Policy	3I
Officer Responsible	Director Corporate Services
Last Review Date	21/12/2020

Strategic Policy

Objectives

The primary objective of the Blayney Shire Council's Community Financial Assistance Policy is, through the provision of financial assistance to community organisations, to:

- (a) encourage local participation in the development and maintenance of community projects, infrastructure and facilities for current and future generations;
- (b) foster the social, economic and/or environmental wellbeing of the community;
- (c) support local schools and individuals to recognise academic and sporting achievements of local young citizens and
- (d) develop and promote the sporting, cultural and tourism potential of the shire through events and activities that support social inclusion and attracts regional attention.

1. LEGISLATION

The Community Financial Assistance Policy has been approved by resolution of Council. It is authorised under section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* which permits a Council to contribute money of otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.

2. ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

To receive financial assistance under this policy an applicant must be an eligible community organisation. For the purposes of this policy, an eligible community organisation is a separately constituted legal entity:

- (a) which operates on a "not-for-profit" basis (meaning that any proceeds of its activities and used for the benefit of the organisation and are not available for distribution to its members); and
- (b) the members of which are predominately members of the Blayney Shire community or, if not, which organises an event or function of regional significance which is supported by Council and benefits the Blayney Shire community.

Examples include Village Progress Associations; Town Committees; Trustees of Public Halls; Schools of Arts; Showground and other Reserves; Historical Societies; Show Societies; Community Service Organisations; Educational establishments; Charity Groups; Churches and Religious establishments; Sporting Clubs; Cultural Groups and Societies; Youth Groups and Senior Citizens; CWA branches; RSL Clubs and other groups assisting Council carry out service functions (as determined by Council).

Financial assistance is provided across a broad range of activities and projects conducted by such organisations.

3. CATEGORIES

Financial assistance to community organisations is provided in two categories:

- (a) **Recurrent Annual Donations.** These are donations made to community organisations on an annual basis to assist financially with specified outgoings (such as public liability insurance), the waiver of Council rates and charges, waiver of Council rental charges, a school activity, or the holding of a regular community event or cultural activity.

Schedule 1 sets out the guidelines for determining the amount of such donations in each case.

The amount of these donations for each organisation or event is approved by Council in its annual budget contained in the Operational Plan. The General Manager may approve other donations to an organisation or event under delegated authority, provided the donation is consistent with the guidelines, within budget and reported to Council via the next available Financial Assistance Committee meeting.

- (b) **One-off financial assistance.** This assistance is provided for projects involving the construction, maintenance or repair of community facilities, the purchase of equipment, or for the organising and conducting of local events and functions. In each case having demonstrated broad community benefit and support. Projects must be in accordance with the Community Strategic Plan and the four year Delivery Program.

Under this category community organisations are eligible to receive Council funding via a competitive submission process. There are two (2) funding rounds each year. Applications are called in June and December via a public notice published in the local newspaper and on Council's website.

Applications received after the close of business on the due dates will not be considered, unless the Financial Assistance Committee in its discretion agrees otherwise. Financial assistance will be made available in June and November.

Schedule 2 to sets out guidelines for determining the amount of such donations in each case. Applications are assessed in accordance with the criteria in paragraph 8 below.

In addition, on an exceptional basis, financial assistance is available as a contribution towards operational costs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Schedule 3 sets out the guidelines for this assistance. This category of assistance will cease to be available once all Public Health Order COVID-19 restrictions cease to apply.

4. AMOUNT

An annual budget allocation for the Community Financial Assistance Policy is made each year in Council's Operational Plan.

This budget allocation covers both categories described above. The amount available for the one-off financial assistance category will be calculated for each round after deducting an estimate for the cost of the recurrent annual donations category, and any prior allocation from the off financial assistance category in that financial year.

5. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Subject to funding availability, a higher level of financial assistance may be available for special projects. These usually entail capital works such as ground works, building construction, and/or major equipment purchase. Funding for special projects is non-recurrent and is subject to the applicant entering into a management agreement for the facility with Blayney Shire Council or the Crown with Council's support.

Council assistance may include support for applications for grants made to a government or other public funding organisation. Success in such applications may result in a reduction of Council financial assistance.

6. APPROVAL PROCESS

All applications for one-off financial assistance are decided by Council upon the recommendation of Council's Financial Assistance Committee, which is a section 355 committee of Council.

The Financial Assistance Committee is chaired by a Councillor nominated by Council and comprises the Chairman, the General Manager of Newcrest Mining or their delegate; and 4 community representatives appointed by Council. The executive officer is Council's Director of Corporate Services.

Assessment of applications will remain confidential and no appeal is permitted as to any funding allocation decision.

7. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Council will use the following general criteria when considering requests for financial assistance:

- (a) activities which address gaps in service or community development;
- (b) activities which promote community development in a multicultural context and seek to address issues of access and equity;
- (c) involvement from volunteers and self-help initiatives which build upon Council's contribution;
- (d) consumer / use participation in management of services / activities
- (e) innovative and creative approaches to identified needs; and
- (f) activities which use Council funding to attract further resources.

Council will give low priority to following types of requests for financial assistance:

- (a) activities/services which do not attempt to become self-supporting where the potential exists through fees or other feasible income-producing activities;
- (b) activities of a purely social nature, which do not address the needs of disadvantaged groups;
- (c) activities which are eligible for support from state-wide or regional parent bodies; and
- (d) organisations, which have not observed accountability requirements for past Council assistance.

8. WHAT IS NOT FUNDED?

One-off financial assistance is not available for:

- (a) projects or organisations wholly outside the shire of Blayney;
- (b) operating or administrative overheads, such as rent, wages, office equipment or utility costs or travel, accommodation and conference costs;
- (c) projects by individuals or that benefit personal business interests;
- (d) projects that duplicate an existing project or service; or
- (e) completed projects.

9. GENERAL CONDITIONS/PAYMENT

Funds approved under the community financial assistance policy are to be claimed by 30 June of the following financial year of approval. In the event that funds are not claimed the applicant shall re-apply, if required, and funds will be returned to the community financial assistance program budget for reallocation.

9.1 Recurrent Annual Donations

- (a) Where Council is providing a contribution for Rates and Sewer charges, this funding will be processed after the Rates Instalment notice has been issued in July.
- (b) For grants for sporting achievement:
 - (i) only the highest level of achievement will be recognised;
 - (ii) participation must be based on merit (not self-selection); and
 - (iii) evidence of participation and a letter of support from the relevant sporting association should be provided.
- (c) For those categorised as Public Liability Insurance or Rental, Council requires a tax invoice prior to payment of financial assistance to be accompanied by the relevant Insurance Policy and Premium notice or proof of payment. GST will be added to all financial assistance where applicable. Applicants should provide their ABN. Applicants without an ABN must submit a "Statement by a Supplier" form available from the Australian Tax Office or from Council.

9.2 One-off Financial Assistance

- (a) Projects must be clearly described, illustrate the community benefit that the financial assistance will provide and identify which of Council's vision statements in the Community Strategic Plan will be addressed.
- (b) Council does not offer any guarantee of funding as funding is subject to funds being available and not previously allocated. Also, as not all projects will receive funding, available funds will be allocated for projects that best meet the required community based criteria.
- (c) Applications that match \$ for \$ will be considered favourably. Any matching funding from the applicant or other sources are to be identified on the application.
- (d) Applicants must ensure that necessary approvals such as development applications or licences are considered prior to application lodgement. Evidence to this end in the form of a pre-development application consultation letter or correspondence from the relevant licence authority should accompany the application.
- (e) For projects involving construction / installation of new assets or renewal of existing assets on any Council controlled land, park, oval or recreational facility, consultation with the responsible Council department will be required prior to application lodgement.
- (f) Council reserves the right to manage any project approved on Council controlled land, park, oval or recreational facility as it deems required in consultation with the community organisation.
- (g) All applicants must provide certificates of currency for public liability insurance and the constitution or rules of their organisation where requested.
- (h) Council must be acknowledged in all promotional activities and must be provided with copies of advertising or promotional materials featuring Council for Council's approval prior to use in any promotional activity.
- (i) Any funds unspent at the completion of the project must be returned to Council.
- (j) Council requires a tax invoice prior to payment of financial assistance. GST will be added to all financial assistance where applicable. Applicants should provide their ABN. Applicants without an ABN must submit a "Statement by a Supplier" form available from the Australian Tax Office or from Council.
- (k) Applicants who are not registered for GST should consider the applicability of Council's Community Infrastructure Projects Policy (No. 3h) which is intended to assist such groups with projects on Council land by enabling them to recover the GST paid on taxable supplies associated with of the project.

- (l) Council fees and charges incurred in the holding of an event may be deducted before the financial assistance is paid.
- (m) For financial assistance of \$10,000 and above, a performance agreement must be completed between Council and the organisation following approval.

In submitting an application, the applicant accepts and acknowledges the general conditions set out in this Policy and in the Guidelines and in particular acknowledges that if unsuccessful it cannot appeal, contest or petition any councillor, staff member or community representative acting on behalf of or for council or its funding partners.

10. APPLICATION FORM

An application on the approved Council form must be submitted for those applicants seeking Council support under this Policy. Letters of request or verbal applications will not be accepted as funding applications.

An application form and Guidelines for applicants is available on Council's website and from Council's offices. These guidelines describe the information that must be included in the application and set out the acquittal and reporting requirements which must be complied with.

SCHEDULE 1
Guidelines for Annual Donations

Type of assistance	Amount
Public liability insurance	(i) reimbursement of 100% of the premium up to \$1,000 pa; and (ii) reimbursement of 50% of the premium exceeding \$1,000 up to a maximum grant of \$2,000 pa
Property rates and charges	as per Notice of Assessment
Rental	as per Council invoice
Schools and sporting related donations	(i) for school prizes, \$100 per school per annum (ii) for sporting achievements: (A) \$100 for regional selection; (B) \$300 for state selection; and (C) \$500 for national selection
Community Events/Cultural Activities	Not exceeding \$2,000 except with the approval of Council

SCHEDULE 2
Guidelines for One-off Financial Assistance

Type of assistance	Amount
Financial Assistance for community facilities	Up to \$3,000
Special projects enhancing a community facility (see paragraph 6 of the Community Financial Assistance Policy)	Up to \$10,000
Development Applications	The total amount development application costs levied on works to be undertaken on Council-owned facilities

SCHEDULE 3

Guidelines for community hardship and assistance grants

OVERVIEW

Council recognises that COVID-19 restrictions have impacted the capacity of our community organisations to meet ongoing expenses due to decreased revenue streams such as facility hire, entry fees and other fundraising. Community Hardship and Assistance Grants offer targeted financial assistance to community organisations that have been impacted by COVID-19. The intent of this category of financial assistance is to:

- assist community organisations to meet ongoing costs despite loss of revenue
- support community organisations to keep operating, alter the way they deliver services and maintain connection with each other and with the community

Community groups can apply for a grant from this program, in recognition that these groups were affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for funding community groups must:

- Operate within the Blayney Shire
- Have not received funding or financial assistance under other COVID-19 funding programs e.g. the Commonwealth Government's JobKeeper Payment
- Be a registered incorporated body
- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have held that ABN at 1 March 2020
- Rely on fees paid by the public (as distinct from members of the community group) as their primary source of "self-generated" revenue.

WHO CANNOT APPLY

Applications cannot be made by:

- government agencies or departments of local, state or federal government
- educational, religious or medical organisations or groups raising funds for them
- businesses or charitable not-for profit-organisations that operate a commercial business e.g. nursing home
- individuals

HOW MAY FUNDING BE USED

Grant funds may be used to assist community organisations, for example on:

- Meeting operating and overhead costs, including utilities, insurance or rent;
- Any other supporting activities related to the operations of the organisation.

GRANTS AVAILABLE

How much can I apply for?

Actual substantiated overhead costs up to \$1,000 per annum.

What type of costs can be funded in this category?

- Ongoing operational costs (e.g. electricity, insurance, water, communications)
- Statutory or recurrent maintenance and repairs to maintain the safety, hygiene and integrity of a community facility (e.g., annual safety checks, cleaning, gutter clearing, pest control, solar panel maintenance).

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Category Priorities (must address all):

- Demonstrated loss of revenue from public visitations of at least 30% between one month or quarter pre COVID restrictions to the same month or quarter post COVID restrictions
- Have primary responsibility for payment of costs
- Evidence that options to cover these costs through community organisation's own cash reserves or other funding sources have been thoroughly explored.

WHAT IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Projects, events or activities for the following purposes are ineligible for funding:

- The core business of educational, religious or medical organisations
- Prize money, prizes or trophies
- Development of privately-owned facilities
- Payment of debt, where the debt was not incurred to due to the COVID-19 impact
- Political activities
- Projects run solely for commercial profit.

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