

Financial Assistance Program Policy 2023

POL008



Policy No: POL008

Policy Title: Financial Assistance Program Policy

Section Responsible: Corporate and Community Services

Minute No: 23/069

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1. INTENT

Narrandera Shire Council is committed to making our Shire a great place to live, work and visit. Council recognises that voluntary groups and community groups are often key partners in improving the quality of life for residents, workers, and visitors.

To support the work of these groups, Council provides limited financial assistance to selected voluntary groups and community groups under this policy on an annual basis.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the administration and management of Council's Financial Assistance Program.

3. OBJECTIVE

This document provides a framework of management for the allocation of any financial assistance to eligible local groups under Section 356 of the Local Government Act, 1993.

This policy also ensures that the administration of the financial assistance program is managed in a transparent, accountable, merit-based manner and that all applications received for funding are assessed fairly and without bias.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Summarily Section 356 Local Government Act 1993 provides that a Council may "contribute money or otherwise give financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions".

5. PROVISIONS

5.1 ELIGIBILITY

5.1.1 Financial assistance will be provided

Financial assistance will be provided to support activities, services, projects and/or programs by groups which:

- encourage resident participation in activities that benefit the community as a whole and that facilitates the inclusion of people who are disenfranchised and/or financially disadvantaged.
- have established clear goals and outcomes that enhance community harmony and social cohesion within a particular target group.
- encourages people and groups to help themselves.
- have leaders of the project that belong to or can demonstrate a strong connection with the community they seek to assist.
- able to build on existing community assets, such as a service, physical building, bases of knowledge and community skills.
- have relevant project partners with an appropriate and sound budget.
- show cash or in-kind contributions to the project.
- align with one or more of the strategies contained within the Community Strategic Plan.

5.1.2 Financial assistance will not be provided

Financial assistance will not be provided for:

- use by an individual.
- the waiver of rates and charges - being the ordinary rate levied on the land value for a rateable property, with charges being for the provision of or access to services provided by Council.
- the payment or reimbursement of recurrent operational expenses.
- an applicant that is likely to secure funding through an alternate source such as another service provider or an agency or branch of a Federal, State or another Local Government authority.
- illegal activities.
- funding requests of more than \$2,000.
- political activities.
- commercial activities.
- legal costs.
- reimbursement of expenses for projects that have already commenced or been completed.
- branches of charities that fundraise for projects outside of Narrandera Shire.

5.1.3 Other

Notwithstanding the established criteria, Council at its discretion may make a variation where it is demonstrated that financial assistance is required and that residents of the Narrandera Shire will benefit from the financial assistance.

5.2 OPERATION

- Determinations will be made annually for the following financial year, as part of Council's budget process.
- Applications must be submitted in the required format and must use the relevant application document.
- Applicant organisations will be asked to forward submissions by the first week in February each year.
- Applications must have supporting documentation such as quotations for the supply of goods and or services to be funded through this program.
- Applications will be received once per financial year.
- Impromptu applications may still be considered but will be assessed against the same assessment criteria as the formal applications and a weighted score derived.
- Recipient groups must nominate identifiable outcomes in the project/service program and will be assessed against the eligibility criteria.
- Recipient groups may be asked to provide an acquittal at the end of the nominated project.
- A report will be submitted to Council following the application closure date at which time a copy of all applications will be provided with a scoring against the eligibility criteria with a concluding recommendation.
- Groups financially assisted in one year will not automatically receive ongoing funding in future years.
- Precedence will be given to applicants who did not receive financial assistance during the previous financial year.
- Where a request to waive fees or charges (such as the cost to hire a Council owned or managed facility) is approved by Council, the value of the amount waived is to be deducted from the Mayor and General Manager donations funds.
- Schools within the Shire, TAFE NSW Narrandera Campus and the TAFE NSW regional governing body will be provided with an annual donation towards academic prizes and as such are an automatic inclusion for consideration.

6. DEFINITIONS

- **Acquittal:** The report that recipients of financial assistance from Council may be asked to provide on the final outcomes of the project and the expenditure of funds received.
- **Automatic Inclusion:** A recipient where Council recognises the group's enhancement of the social capital within the Shire community and a written application for financial assistance is not required.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** The measures against which an application is assessed.

- **Financial Assistance Program:** The community funding grants program in which Council supports non-profit groups and community groups in accordance with this policy.
- **Formal Application:** An application submitted using an approved format during the formal advertising period within which Council seeks requests for financial assistance.
- **Impromptu Application:** An application received outside the formal period within which Council seeks requests for financial assistance.
- **Not-for-profit:** Refers to voluntary groups or community groups that operate on a not-for-profit basis with no financial gain to individual members.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Financial Assistance Program is managed within the Corporate and Community Services function of Council.

Council will:

- Register all applications received.
- Create a workflow to the appropriate officer for action.
- Assess each application to ensure that it has been completed in full and that any referenced material also copies of quotations for the supply of goods and or services are attached to support the application.
- Record the application in an assessment spreadsheet where each criteria is weighted and a total scoring derived.
- Prepare a report to Council with recommendations.
- Advise applicants of the determination of applications.

8. RELATED LEGISLATION

- Section 356 of the Local Government Act, 1993

9. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- NSC Application for Financial Assistance

10. VARIATION

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy in accordance with legislation, regulation and award changes, where applicable. Council may also make changes to this policy and the relevant procedures from time-to-time to improve the effectiveness of its operation.

11. PREVIOUS VERSIONS

Reference to a superseded policy number and/or name is also considered a reference to the new policy number. This policy was previously named:

- CS20 Financial Assistance Program Policy 2018.

POLICY HISTORY

Responsible Officer	Governance & Engagement Manager		
Approved by	General Manager		
Approval Date	DD Month 202Y		
GM Signature <i>(Authorised staff to insert signature)</i>			
Next Review	1 December 2025		
Version Number	Endorsed by ELT	Resolved by Council	Date signed by GM
1 Adopted	-	-	30/09/1996
2 Reviewed	-	-	4/09/2000
3 Reviewed	-	-	20/03/2007
4 Reviewed	-	-	15/07/2008
5 Reviewed	-	-	11/12/2013
6 Reviewed	-	-	15/04/2014
7 Reviewed	-	-	17/11/2015
8 Reviewed	-	-	5/01/2016
9 Reviewed	-	-	27/09/2016
10 Reviewed	15/01/2018	20/02/2018	20/02/2018
11 Reviewed	11/08/2020	20/07/2021	23/09/2021
12 Reviewed	24/01/2023	18/04/2023	20/06/2023

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