



Financial Assistance Policy

In force from 6 December
2006

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| POLICY NAME | Strathfield Council Financial Assistance Policy |
| COUNCIL ADOPTION | 6 December 2006 |
| REF | Minute 256/06 |
| RELEVANT LEGISLATION | Section 356 (2) Local Government Act 1993 |
| RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Local Government Circular to Councils 06-32 dated 18 May 2006 • Strathfield Council Community Grants Policy • Strathfield Council Heritage Assistance Policy • Strathfield Council Miscellaneous Grants Policy • Strathfield Council Sponsorship Policy |

1. Introduction

1.1 Title and Commencement

This policy is titled Financial Assistance Policy. This policy was first adopted on 2 November 2004 and amended by Council on 6 December 2006.

1.2 Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the policy is to outline the general principles for consideration and approval of application for financial assistance from Strathfield Council. Financial assistance programs, including community grants, are provided in accordance with Section 356 (2) of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).

Strathfield Council provides financial assistance to individuals, community groups and non-profit organisations for various purposes and projects, which provide community benefit and are in accordance with Council's objectives, vision or management plans.

This policy outlines the general principles for consideration and approval of application for financial assistance from Strathfield Council. Strathfield Council's financial assistance programs include:

- Community Grants program
- Miscellaneous Grants program
- Heritage Assistance Fund program

Each separate financial assistance program has specific operational guidelines. If new financial assistance or grants programs are established, operational guidelines must be developed in accordance with the principles established in this policy.

Community financial assistance programs are different from Sponsorship agreements. Council may be asked to 'sponsor' community activities but the request is often involves a financial donation or use of Council facilities. Council must determine whether the request involves financial assistance or sponsorship, making reference to relevant Acts, guidelines and policy.

1.3 Objectives and Coverage of the Policy

The objective of Council's financial assistance programs is to support the community of Strathfield Municipality by the provision of funding, facilities or support services to individuals, community groups or non-profit organisations which:

- Encourage the development of services, facilities and events, which meet and enhance identified community needs and objectives of the Strathfield Municipality.
- Promote the active participation of local residents in community initiatives and the development of their skills, knowledge and opportunities.
- Provide assistance taking into account the need for equality of access to services and the need to target particular groups that are under-served.
- Provide assistance to the community to develop initiatives and services, which are consistent with Council objectives and programs but not directly operated by Council.
- Ensure the focus of services is to bring people into a network of supportive relationships.
- Provide assistance to individuals or groups representing NSW or higher in their chosen field, including sporting, academic, cultural and artistic endeavours who require financial assistance to attend/compete in their chosen field.

Council also provides financial assistance to Community based groups by the reduction of fees for hiring of Council's venues or facilities in Council's Annual Management Plan Fees and Charges Schedule.

1.4 Definitions

'Financial assistance' involves allocation or donation of Council funds, facilities or services to individuals or community groups or non-profit organisations for the purpose of enhancing or improving community services or facilities.

'Sponsorship' involves a commercial arrangement in which a sponsor provides a contribution in money or kind to support an activity in return for a certain specified benefit, beyond recognition or acknowledgment. Sponsorship agreements are negotiated in accordance with Council's Sponsorship Policy.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Priorities

1. Council calls for nominations to the Community Grants Fund and Heritage Assistance Fund on an annual basis.
2. Other applications for financial assistance will only be considered where the applicant is ineligible for funding or applications do not meet the criteria of Community Grants Fund or Heritage Assistance Fund. An example may involve requests for use of Council facilities.

2.2 Assessment

1. Assessment of financial assistance requests must be in accordance with Council policy and guidelines.

2. Council reserves the right to refuse requests or applications that are not in accordance with Council policy and guidelines.
3. Council will not consider bulk mail requests.
4. After consideration of an application and current program objectives, Council can propose an alternative form of assistance to meet the stated objectives of the application.
5. Applications for funding must be expended within the same financial year that the funds were granted.
6. Council will not consider funding arrangements, which extend beyond the current financial year ie approval for funding on an annual basis over 3 to 4 years.
7. Approval of financial assistance requests requires Council resolution as s.377 (1) of the Local Government Act states that only Council can make a decision under section 356 to contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons. This power can not be delegated by Council.
8. Council should include financial assistance programs in the Management Plan.
9. Council's Annual report should contain a list of financial assistance grants approved by Strathfield Council in the previous financial year.

2.3 Accountability

The agreed amount of financial assistance will be paid by Council to the applicant after Council undertakes an inspection of completed works and is satisfied works have been completed in accordance with the approved grant. Variation to stated objectives requires approval.

2.4 Privacy

Strathfield Council collects information for the purposes stated on this Policy. Information including application forms and attachments will be stored on the relevant Council file and may be accessible by requests for information under the Local Government Act 1993 and Freedom of Information Act 1989. Council records are disposed in accordance with the *General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records* (GDA 10)