


Financial Assistance Policy

As at September 2020

	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY		
RESPONSIBILITY	Corporate Services		
DATE ADOPTED	6 December 2006	MINUTE	256/06
REVISED	September 2020	REVIEW	2021
ECM No	1352108		
ASSOCIATED POLICIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardship Policy • Code of Conduct 		
ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> 		
ASSOCIATED GUIDELINES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Local Government Circular to Councils 06-32 dated 18 May 2006 		

1.0 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. The following amendments have been made:

Date	Description	Council Meeting/Approval
2 November 2004	Adoption	Council Meeting 6 December 2006
September 2020	Review	CEO

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*.

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 Grants program
- Community Events Grants 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 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..

2.0 Policy Statement

2.1 Priorities

Council calls for nominations to the Community Grants Fund, Community Events Grants and Heritage Assistance Grants on an annual basis.

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, Community Events Grant or Heritage Assistance Grants. An example may involve requests for use of Council facilities.

2.2 Assessment

- (a) Assessment of financial assistance requests must be in accordance with Council policy and guidelines.
- b) Specific conditions will apply to each of the grants being offered and these must be met in conjunction with the provisions of this policy for an award to be made.
- c) Council reserves the right to refuse requests or applications that are not in accordance with Council policy and guidelines.
- d) Council will not consider bulk mail requests.
- e) 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.
- f) Applications for funding must be expended within the same financial year that the funds were granted.
- g) 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.

- h) 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 cannot be delegated by Council.
- i) Council should include financial assistance programs in the Operational Plan.
- j) 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.