



Grants to Community Organisations

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act 2009

Reviewed: June 2020

To be reviewed: June 2021

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate & Community Services

1 Purpose

In recognition of the efforts of residents of the Shire, Torres Shire Council has formulated a Grants to Community Organisations Policy to provide financial and other forms of assistance through which the Council will help develop, strengthen and enhance community capacity of individuals and organisations to provide services and activities of benefit to the Torres Shire Community.

2 Provisions

Council generally provides access to grant and donation funds through its open and competitive programs. Recognising the need to be responsive to its community and proactive in building community capacity, the Council also provides donations outside of its open and competitive programs for Community Events and a range of miscellaneous projects including Local Promotions. Community Grants Policy Printed copies are uncontrolled.

Council has regard to the following principles when considering the granting of financial assistance to community organisations:

- a. recognising the diversity of the Torres Shire community and aiming to provide grant funds for purposes in a manner it considers to be in the public interest;
- b. transparency in the administration of its financial assistance programs;
- c. acting fairly in assessing applications and allocating funds;
- d. providing equitable opportunities to community organisations that apply for available funds;
- e. late applications will not be considered unless endorsed by Council resolution;
- f. incomplete applications will not be considered unless endorsed by Council resolution;
- g. Council does not provide funding under this policy to individuals;

- h. funding will not be provided for projects or activities that have already been completed unless exceptional circumstances exist and endorsed by Council resolution;
- i. funding will not be provided for projects or events conducted or held specifically for the purpose of raising funds for transfer to a third party unless exceptional circumstances exist and endorsed by Council resolution;
- j. funds granted must be fully spent in the financial year in which they are awarded unless approved by the Chief Executive Officer;
- k. funding will not be provided to government or semi-government organisations (except schools and educational institutions);
- l. funding will not be provided to organisations with a delinquent debt to Council (excluding interest free loans);
- m. funding will not be provided to organisations that have not provided the required acquittal reports for prior grants or where an acquittal report is deemed unsatisfactory;
- n. decisions about the extent and type of assistance are final and there are no appeal mechanisms;
- o. where recipients wish to vary an approved project, the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) may approve such requests;
- p. all unspent and/or uncommitted funds must be returned to Council;
- q. all applications for financial assistance to community organisations will only be considered on an annual financial year basis.

The Council will allocate total annual **funds not to exceed \$10,000** dependant on the respective annual budget and may advertise for submissions for grants each financial year. Grants may take the form of monetary donations, reimbursement of net general rates, reimbursement of Council fees or a donation equivalent to the cost of plant hire.

3 Eligibility Criteria

Each application for assistance submitted for a grant will be considered by applying the following criteria:

- Organisations must be community-based and provide services and activities of benefit to Torres Shire residents.
- The objective of the organisation must be solely non-profit making.
- Organisations that operate a licensed premises and/or gaming machines will not be eligible for assistance.
- State and Commonwealth Government agencies will not be eligible for assistance.
- Organisations should be incorporated or sponsored by an incorporated body.
- Organisations that are not incorporated may be eligible for assistance under this policy provided that the organisation meets all other criteria. Unincorporated not-for-profit community organisations can apply for assistance through eligible incorporated sponsor organisations. Sponsor organisations must agree to take responsibility for the receipt, application and acquittal of the assistance provided.
- All organisations requesting assistance will be required to make a submission on each occasion with the exception of rate reimbursements where the term of the assistance is determined by Council.

Note: Preference will be given to requests towards a specific project, e.g. fee relief towards a building project, or work to be carried out for safety reasons.

4 Monetary Donations

Monetary donations, aside from sponsorship, will only be given towards specific capital Projects and seeding grants. Proof of full or partial completion of the project within the financial year will be required before funds are paid.

5 Rate Reimbursement

Reimbursement of rates will be for net general rates only. No utility charges, e.g. water or sewerage charges, will be refunded.

6 Fee Relief

All applicants seeking a concession regarding fees must make a written application to Council. Approval may be sought for the reimbursement of one-off application fees, e.g. building application fees, sport and recreation facilities hire, etc. However, the fees must be paid to Council prior to payment of donation. If not taken up, approval will lapse at the end of the financial year. Annual licence fees will not be considered. Where Council grants a fee concession, that concession will be paid from Council's donations item and paid to the applicant granted the concession.

7 Plant Hire

The Council will provide assistance to organisations by allowing plant to be made available to organisations when not required by Council provided the plant is operated by Council personnel. The donation amount will be calculated in accordance with Council's current rates and charges for plant hire and wages and include travel time and stand down time. The Chief Executive Officer has delegated authority to approve plant hire donations to a limit of \$1,000. Donations may be refused if Council's plant hire donations budget is fully allocated.

8 Administration

The maximum level of financial assistance allocated to the donations budget will be determined each year within Council's annual budget process. Requests for monetary donations, grants, rate reimbursements or fee relief will be considered by Council on an "as needs" basis and Council will determine which, if any, organisations will receive assistance in accordance with the above criteria.

In any one financial year an organisation will be limited to:

- a monetary donation (sponsorship) to a limit of \$250;
- a seeding grant to assist community groups with set-up costs, etc. to a limit of \$250;
- a monetary donation (capital projects) to a limit of \$1,000;
- net general rate relief of \$500;
- fee relief of \$1,000;
- plant hire of \$1,000; or

- an equivalent combination of the above to a maximum of \$1,000.

Any donation greater than the amounts above must be listed for budgetary consideration or resolved by Council resolution. The Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer have delegated authority to approve donations of up to \$1,000.

9 In-kind Assistance

Council will continue to provide in-kind assistance (photocopy, faxes, etc.) from time to time with the Chief Executive Officer being delegated authority to make decisions on the amount of assistance provided.

This policy conforms to the requirements of the Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulation 2012.