



Financial Assistance & Reduction or Waiver of Council Fees & Charges Policy

POLICY OBJECTIVE

Council may exercise a function by financial provision (s355 *Local Government Act 1993*) and may by resolution, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions (s356 *Local Government Act 1993*).

The objective of the Policy is to establish, improve, or enhance the resources, services and/or facilities for all residents of Goulburn Mulwaree in relation to the funding categories identified by the Policy. By providing funds for events, capital works, equipment, services or facilities Council will meet these objectives.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Local Government Act 1993

POLICY STATEMENT

Funding Principles

Funding under this Policy will be made available under the following funding streams.

- **Financial Assistance for Community Events, Projects and Representation**
Financial contribution to assist with the cost of a community event and/or project or to assist individuals/groups representing their community.
- **Mayor's Discretionary Fund**
Financial assistance available at the discretion of the Mayor and to assist with small projects and community initiatives.
- **Reduction or Waiver of Council Fees & Charges**
Consistent and equitable assessment of requests for the reduction or waiver of Council fees and charges for the use of Council facilities and / or services provided by Council.

Implementation of this policy is dependent upon Delivery Program and Operational Plan resource allocation. Each year, Council may make general budgetary provisions to enable funding to be made available for each of the streams.

Financial Assistance for Community Events, Projects and Representation

Funding Eligibility

This stream is to be made available for:

- Funding requested by community and/or charitable organisations for events that do not satisfy the criteria under the *Event Development Funding Policy*.
- Funding requested by community and/or charitable organisations for projects that add value to the community
- Financial support requested by members of the community to represent or participate in events (both sporting and cultural) at a national or international level.

Funding under this stream will be capped at \$10,000 and may be in the form of:

- Financial contribution/sponsorship
- In-kind support
- Up to 50% fee waiver for Council venue hire

So that funding is allocated in the most equitable and effective way possible, the following criteria will apply –

1. Applications for funding must be for a defined purpose.
2. Priority will be given to –
 - 2.1 Projects/events which support welfare activities
 - 2.2 Projects/events which support the priorities of the various plans adopted by Council
 - 2.3 Projects/events which have not previously received funding.
 - 2.4 Areas where there is an obvious and documented community/local need.
 - 2.5 Areas where the need is considered greatest.
3. Grant funds must be expended within 12 months unless otherwise resolved by Council. No funds will be granted for goods, services or works carried out or purchased in previous year.
4. Where previous funding has been granted under this Policy, the applicant must have fully satisfied the conditions of the previous Grants funding agreement.
5. Contribution from the applicant to the project/event in cash and/or in-kind (voluntary labour and/or materials, etc.) will be highly favoured, as will their efforts to seek funding from other sources.
6. All financial assistance awarded by Council is made on the assumption of honest and full disclosure of information. Evidence of any breach of this trust will make the financial assistance null and void in which case any funds paid under the Policy must be returned to Council.
7. Council grants are made directly to the community organisation or nominated individual therefore Council cannot pay the supplier directly for goods or services purchased with grant funds. To ensure accountability, all grant funds (cash) must go through the organisation's bank account.

Applications are to include details of any other grant funding source for the proposed project (approved or pending).

Funding Assessment

Requests for funding up to \$1,000 can be authorised by the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor.

Requests exceeding \$1,000 will be approved by a resolution of Council.

To ensure continuing objectivity in the funding evaluation process the following procedure will be strictly adhered to –

- All applications/requests will be considered on their merits, taking into account the circumstances of each case, the availability of funds and the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, or any other Act(s) authorising Council to provide grants, subsidies or donations.
- Applications will then be assessed on their eligibility and, where required, will be reported to Council for consideration and resolution.

Funding Applications

Any request for financial assistance under this stream must be made in writing. Such a request can be made at any time during the financial year and must include a completed application form. The form will be made available on Council's website.

For applications for funding of \$5,000 and above, the Application must be accompanied with Financial Statements.

Mayor's Discretionary Fund

Funding Eligibility

The Mayor's Donation Funding Stream will be reserved for donations to charitable and "not for profit" organisations.

Funding Assessment

The Mayor will have discretion to make donations up within the annual allocated budget.

Funding Applications

Any request for a donation under the Mayor's Discretionary Fund must be made in writing. Such a request can be made at any time during the financial year.

Reduction or Waiver of Council Fees & Charges

Eligibility

To be eligible for a reduction or waiver the applicant must be considered in at least one of the following categories:

- Charitable organisation
- Be a non-profit organisation and dependent upon amount requested, may be asked to provide audited financial accounts
- Pensioner groups
- Community groups
- Schools and any group/organisation as determined from time to time by Council
- Demonstrate special circumstances as determined by the Chief Executive Officer or Council's delegated staff

Council **will not** consider applications to waive fees and charges for:

- Any profit-making ventures for commercial entities
- Any activity, event or program that contravenes Council's existing policies
- The bond associated with the use of Council facilities, (only the waiver of fees for an activity, event or function will be considered)
- Retrospective applications, including refunds

Funding Assessment

- All requests to waive or reduce Council fees must be in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive Officer or delegated staff
- Eligibility and assessment criteria must be provided to applicants upon request or on receipt of applications
- A written assessment should be provided to the applicant

- Applications that do not exceed \$2,000 will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor.

Upon request the applicant may be asked to:

- Demonstrate a substantial degree of community support and representation
- Explain the nature of the event or activity
- Explain the perceived benefit of the event or activity to the local community
- Explain the ability of the event or activity to complement existing community services
- Detail alternative funding sources available and accessed by the organisation
- Detail previous funding assistance provided by the Council
- Detail information regarding the organisation to include:
 - a) Organisation profile
 - b) Membership information
 - c) Funding profile and non-profit status
 - d) Marketing intentions and acknowledgement of Council's contribution

Special Conditions

1. Recurrent requests to waive Council fees and charges will be assessed as per the criteria outlined in this policy.
2. Organisations receiving funding under other funding streams in this *Policy* **may be ineligible** for a further reduction or waiver of Council fees and charges. All requests will be assessed against this policy
3. A report of each application determined by the Chief Executive Officer will be forwarded to Council for information.
4. If an application for waiver does not meet the evaluation criteria but is assessed by the Chief Executive Officer as a case warranting further consideration, it will be forwarded to Council for determination.

Approval to waive Council fees does not imply Council's endorsement of the applicant's event or project or of the applicant's philosophy or objectives.

Goods & Services Tax

Any funding provided under the Policy will be the total amount (i.e. GST inclusive or not subject to GST). Recipients for funding should seek advice from financial consultants regarding any accounting requirements for GST and advise Council accordingly.

Version	Council Meeting Date	Resolution	Adoption Date	Effective From
1	18 July 2017	2017/307	Submissions received	
2	19 September 2017	2017/396	19 September 2017	19 September 2017
3	21 June 2022	2022/230	21 June 2022	19 July 2022
All policies can be reviewed or revoked by resolution of Council at anytime				

DIRECTORATE: Executive Services

BUSINESS UNIT: Executive