



GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

ATTACHMENTS

**Under Separate Cover
Ordinary Council Meeting**

6.00pm Tuesday 25 February 2020

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COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM POLICY



Community Grants Program Policy

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COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM POLICY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose this policy is to:
- 1.2 Outline Council's commitment to providing the community with funding.
- 1.3 Provide the framework for a transparent, equitable and inclusive process which is understood by the community
- 1.4 Identify Council's commitment to accountability through acquittal and evaluation processes.
- 1.5 This policy aligns community grants with Council's strategic objectives and establishes clear expectations for both Council and community.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy provides guidance to any community groups who apply for a community grant
- 2.2 The policy also applies to all Council staff involved in the administration, assessment and evaluation of community grants

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Council's community grants program aims to enable community groups to further enhance the wellbeing and quality of life of the wider community in a partnership relationship with Council.
- 3.2 The framework for the community grants program is informed by the Golden Plains Shire vision and the community development principles of community strengthening and building.
- 3.3 The objectives and priorities of funding for the community grants program are a reflection of the objectives and priorities of the Council Plan
- 3.4 Council's community grants program supports the following key objectives:
 - To assist common interest groups to take an active involvement in the life of their community for the overall benefit of that community
 - Increase the capability of communities to become stronger and more sustainable economically, environmentally and socially.
 - Enable communities to address local issues and challenges
 - Develop a sense of community spirit, pride, ownership and identity
- 3.5 The community grants program will be responsive to emerging themes, issues and trends. Council will support projects that reflect demonstrated community need, address priority themes of the Council Plan and/or fulfill identified service gaps.

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Specific grant priorities will be communicated through streams of the program that link to the Council plan and relevant strategies. The streams of funding are:

- Small Grants: Community Events and Youth
- Community Strengthening Grants: Healthy Active Living, Environment and Sustainability, Community Safety and Creative Community

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Funding: The guidelines for funding are as follows:
- 4.2 Council will be responsible for setting the total annual budget allocation for community grants
- 4.3 Funding will be allocated on a ratio basis which may be either cash or in kind. The ratios for funding will be communicated through the guidelines relevant to each stream
- 4.4 Grants will be assessed to a maximum of \$10,000
- 4.5 Council reserves the right to consider allocating more than \$10,000 in funding to any given project where significant community benefit is identified
- 4.6 The program will adhere to the following key processes
- 4.7 Documented guidelines with clearly defined criteria. This will include:
- Eligibility, detailing any exclusions
 - Assessment criteria – clearly defined and weighted
 - Conditions of funding
 - Insurance and legislative requirements
 - Timeline
 - Step by step guide to the application process
 - Evaluation and feedback opportunities within the application process
- 4.8 Application process – Council will only consider grant applications from eligible organisations. Applications must be submitted on the appropriate form which will be made available on Council's website. The majority of grant categories will be processed using the online grant management system SmartyGrants. Council will take an active role in the promotion of grants available and the facilitation of quality applications through information sessions, access to relevant and detailed guidelines on Council's website and access to Council officer's advice. The application process will include:
- Applicant details

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- Assessment criteria
 - Budget breakdown
 - Electronic verification
- 4.9 Assessment process: The assessment process will be formal and clearly documented to maintain community confidence and ensure transparency. Projects will be assessed via a competitive process whereby a panel of 3 Council officers relevant to the specific stream of funding make an initial assessment against a set of pre-determined, weighted criteria. Final endorsement will be given by the CEO. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in writing.
- 4.10 Agreement process: The agreement between Council and the successful applicant will include all details of the applicant organisation, amount funded, funding period, conditions of the grant, acknowledgement of Council and reporting requirements and must be electronically verified (signed) by Council officers and the successful applicant.
- 4.11 Accountability requirements – Successful applicants will be required to:
- Notify in writing changes to agreed project/funding terms
 - Provide an evaluation report on the outcomes of the project, including a financial summary within the funding period specified in the agreement process
 - Return unspent funds to Council or obtain written approval for variation to agreement
- 4.12 Grievance process – All applicants whether successful or unsuccessful have the opportunity to discuss the application process. Applicants have the opportunity to write to the CEO if they are not satisfied with the grant process. The applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing
- 4.13 Conflict of Interest – Councilors and Council officers assessing grant applications must declare any conflict of interest in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 in particular sections 76AA to 81
- 4.14 Asset Transfer – As per Council's Asset Disposal Policy section 4.2.8 Council may provide community groups the opportunity to submit an expression of interest for assets that have reached their useful life at Council in accordance with Council's asset management policy. This process will be consistent with the community grant process whereby following notification the community group submits its request to Council for a particular asset and the item will be granted to the Community Group.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1 The policy owner is responsible for ensuring the policy:
- aligns with relevant legislation, government policy and Council's requirements/strategies/values;

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- is implemented and monitored (i.e. the policy is followed, reflects the changing policy environment, and emerging issues are identified); and
- is reviewed every 3 years in accordance with Council’s planning processes to evaluate its continuing effectiveness (e.g. achieving its purpose, remains relevant/current)

Reporting

5.2 *No additional reporting is required*

Records Management

- 5.3 Council must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in accordance with the Public Records Act 1973
- 5.4 Council must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in accordance with Council’s Privacy Collection Notice

6. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS OR ABBREVIATIONS USED

Term	Definition
<i>Council</i>	<i>Golden Plains Shire Council</i>
<i>Council Plan</i>	<i>Golden Plains Shire Council Plan</i>
<i>Successful Applicant</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Refers to the group/organisation who has been assessed as suitable for receiving a community grant</i>
<i>Eligible Organisation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A group or organisation deemed as eligible to apply for and be funded according eligibility criteria as outlined in the grants guidelines</i>
<i>CEO</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>

7. RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Strategic Documents, Policies or Procedures

Council Plan, Municipal Health and Wellbeing plan, Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, Environment and Sustainability Strategy, Youth Strategy, Community Development Strategy, Emergency management Strategy, Asset Disposal Policy, Asset Management Policy, Privacy Policy

Legislation

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Local Government Act 1989 Section 3C2b Objectives of Council, Section 3D2c Role of Council, Section 140 Accounts and Records

Working With Children Act 2005, In accordance with the Act, Council requires all successful applicants to have their relevant staff and volunteers who work with children or young people under 18 years of age to undergo a working with children check.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT OF COMPATABILITY

- 8.1 As a public authority, Council has a duty to act compatibly with human rights and to give human rights proper consideration in decision making.
- 8.2 It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)

9. POLICY OWNER

- 9.1 *The policy owner is The Director of Community Services.*
- 9.2 The policy owner is the individual who is given the responsibility to review, edit and maintain this policy and associated procedure. The policy owner is also the point of contact for any questions regarding this policy.

10. FEEDBACK

- 10.1 You may provide feedback about this document by emailing enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

11. DOCUMENT INFORMATION

DOCUMENT TYPE:	Council Policy document
DOCUMENT STATUS:	Approved
DOCUMENT OWNER POSITION:	Director Community Services
APPROVED BY:	Council
DATE ADOPTED:	25/02/2020
VERSION NUMBER:	1
REVIEW DATE:	25/02/2023
EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL:	Signed by Chief Executive Officer
FILE LOCATION:	INT20/267F756
NOTES:	Policy documents are amended from time to time, therefore you should not rely on a printed copy being the current version. Please consult Council's Policy page on the Golden Plains Shire

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	<p>Council website to ensure that the version you are using is up to date. Available at: https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/residents/my-council/about-council/council-policies</p>
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- The team: It is appropriate for the youth team to assist with both the development and assessment of a quick response youth grants as well as working closely with youth groups to support them in scoping out projects and applying for grants.

Health and Wellbeing:

Background: The Health and Wellbeing Team has been administering a small grants program since 2011 (up to \$500 per grant), funded by the Department of Health and Human Service Integrated Health Promotion funds. Originally known as the 'Gem of an Idea' Grant (GOI), between 2011 and 2013, 70 grants were provided to the value of \$35,000.

In 2013, the program was reviewed to strengthen not only the guidelines but the application, assessment and evaluation process to align the outcomes of the grants strongly to the reporting requirements of the Integrated Health Promotion Plan Priorities:

1. Healthy Active Communities
2. Connected Communities

However in 2017, a further review was conducted as it became apparent that the GOI grants were not having the reach, nor were they meeting the outcomes or the intent of the grant and little or no long terms outcomes were being achieved. Since 2013 , 41 grants had been awarded with 17 '*one off events*' being funded and only 3 healthy eating, 5 sport/recreation and 1 health initiative

So in 2017 in line with the new priorities within the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 - 2021 and that Golden Plains Shire has made a commitment to work on 'Healthy Eating and Active Living' at a regional level (G21 & Central Highlands) as of 2017/2018 financial year GOI become 'Healthy Eating and Active Living Grants' (HEAL)

- 8 grants as opposed 12 are awarded a year
- Guidelines are reviewed to reflect outcomes we are aiming to achieve regionally
- Assessment process was strengthened to improve efficiencies and increase transparency
- Recipients of grants are utilized to promote successful initiatives to elevate and promote 'Healthy Eating & Active Living priority' and community led action.

Future : Health and Wellbeing Team supports the current review of the community grants process and strongly believe that Council need to explore a grants program that incorporates 'streams' that are responsive and reflect community need and interest. Furthermore , we would advocate that in future a 'H&WB' stream replaces HEAL Grants as currently these grants are externally funded, however if this funding ceased there would be no grants in place that consider health and wellbeing as a priority.

Key points for consideration

- Grant streams align closely with council plan objectives and in particular 'Health and Wellbeing' still hold a mandate to address Healthy Eating and Active Living, given our commitment to a regional priority in this space.

Health & Wellbeing Team Support: The Health and Wellbeing team is committed to assisting in the review process and working collaboratively to develop guidelines, application and assessment processes and monitoring and evaluation framework development to ensure that effectiveness and reach of grants is captured. The Health and Wellbeing team will allocate a staff member to the grants assessment panel.

Benefits of this approach

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