

5.3 REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S DISCRETIONARY FUND POLICY & PROCEDURES

Responsible Senior Officer: Jarrod Doake, Chief Operating Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council Discretionary Fund Policy & Procedures be amended as detailed in the Officers' Report dated 26 October 2021.

INTRODUCTION

The current Council Discretionary Fund Policy and Procedures requires to be reviewed. It is proposed that one minor amendment be made to the Policy and Procedures, to align it with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

BACKGROUND

The current Policy and Procedures were last reviewed in November 2018 and saw a change to the title of the document, to meet the recommendations of the Local Government Inspectorate which considered the use of the word "Councillors" in the title to be misleading.

To the Inspectorate, the title (although not the contents of the document itself) suggested a Ward Councillor fund.

This was despite assurances over a number of years from officers, that the Council never had such a fund and the current policy was not a Ward Councillor fund policy.

PURPOSE/DISCUSSION

The proposed amendment to the current policy and procedures document comprises one straightforward update; the replacement of the term 'assembly of councillors' with the term 'Informal Meeting of Councillors', to reflect the current *Local Government Act 2020*, which has removed the previous term.

No other amendments to the policy or the procedures is recommended at this point in time.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications to this process.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A gender impact assessment has not been undertaken on this item, at this point in time. Such an assessment will be undertaken when this item is next due for review.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that one amendment be made to the Council Discretionary Fund, and that is to replace the term 'assembly of councillors' with the term 'Informal Meeting of Councillors', to reflect the current *Local Government Act 2020*, which has removed the previous term.



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COUNCIL DISCRETIONARY FUND POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This Policy was adopted by resolution of the Monash City Council on 27 November 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Council Discretionary Fund (CDF) provides Council with the ability to approve small miscellaneous discretionary grants to community members or groups in response to requests which are received from time to time.

This fund differs from the Community Grants Program in that it recognises that small activities, events, etc., deserving of support from Council, come up in an ad hoc way throughout the year and would not otherwise be eligible for funding or would not coincide with the timing of the annual Community Grants Program.

Any funding or support provided is approved by Council through a formal and transparent process, ie a formal resolution at a Council meeting.

A. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Applicants for funding must be individuals or groups with a substantial connection to the City of Monash.
2. Applicants will only be eligible to receive funding once per financial year, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
3. Groups making an application for funding must be incorporated associations and submit evidence of that incorporation with their application.
4. Applications for funding from groups which are already funded under the Council's Community Grants Program, will not be considered, for the same activity or activity type that the applicant already receives under the Community Grants Program, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
5. Applications for services, activities or events that are considered the funding responsibility of another tier of government will be considered for funding, where the Council deems such support to be appropriate.

B. EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. The activity or project being funded must clearly target City of Monash residents and provide a direct service/function to local groups or individuals.
2. Preference for funding will be given to applicants seeking to meet the costs of hiring Council-owned or managed facilities.
3. Applications must identify the dollar amount of funding sought (if known) and the purpose for which the funding is to be used.

C. FUNDING LIMITS

Applications of up to a maximum of \$1,000, each, are encouraged.

D. PROCESS

Applications

1. Applications for Discretionary Funding must be received in writing by the Council and submitted either directly to the Council or through a Councillor.
2. Applications for funding may be made by using the form available on Council's website or contacting Council's Civic and Governance Unit on 9518 3509.
3. Applications for funding may be initiated by a Councillor.
4. Discretionary Fund applications must be received at least 3 weeks prior to a Council meeting.

Decision-making

1. All discretionary funding applications will be discussed by Councillors at an [assembly of Informal Meeting of eCouncillors](#) (Councillors' briefing meeting).
2. Where the majority of Councillors in attendance at that meeting support an application and agree on the level of funding, that recommendation will be made to a formal meeting of Council.
3. All discretionary fund applications will be submitted to Council for a formal Council decision.
4. Applications for funding will be considered at least 11 times per year, at a formal meeting of the Council.
5. Decisions on funding allocations will only be made at a formal meeting of the Council.
6. The funding allocation will be made public at the Council meeting.
7. Details of the funding recipient will be made public at the Council meeting at which approval for that funding is given.
8. Applicants will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of their application.

9. Council Officers will randomly acquit a minimum of two successful funding applications per annum to ensure the funds provided have been used in accordance with the application.

E. PLANNING AN APPLICATION

Before applying for funding, it would be helpful for applicants to ensure that:

1. They are/their organisation is eligible for funding.
2. Their project/activity is eligible for funding.
3. They have identified the need for the project/activity.
4. They have identified the purpose of the project/activity.
5. They have carefully considered the budget for the project/activity.

F. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

1. Applicants may be required to provide additional information to Council to enable a full assessment of their application.
2. Applicants may be asked to provide an acquittal of their funding.

Successful applicants must use the funds for the stated purpose for which the funding was awarded unless written permission has been o