



**GEORGES
RIVER
COUNCIL**

**COUNCILLOR WARD
DISCRETIONARY FUND
POLICY**

Amended August 2018

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Dates	Policy approved 28/05/2018 This policy is effective upon its approval. Policy is due for review May 2019.
Approved by	Council Meeting 28/05/18 Council Resolution CCL025-18
Exhibition Period	N/A
Policy Owner	Executive Manager, Office of the General Manager
Related Documents	Sponsorship and Donations Policy
Appendices	Appendix A – Application Form – Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund
References & Legislation	N/A
Document Identifier	Policy #: Pol-049.01 Doc #: D18/177630
Breaches of Policy	Breaches of any policy will be dealt with and responded to in accordance with adopted codes and/or relevant legislation.
Record Keeping	All documents and information obtained in relation to the implementation of this policy will be kept in accordance with the NSW State Records Act 1998, Georges River Council's Corporate Records Policy and adopted internal procedures.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund Policy (the Fund), is to provide a framework which enables Councillors to provide financial support to individuals, community groups or for the provision of minor capital works, subject to Council resolution.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all requests for the allocation of funds to individuals, community groups and/or for minor capital works through the Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Term	Meaning
<i>Community Group</i>	A recognised group (whether incorporated or not), association or organisation established to serve the interest of members and/or the broader community on a not-for-profit basis.
<i>Grant</i>	A sum of money given for a specific purpose and with an expectation that the money will be used for the agreed purpose.
<i>The Fund</i>	Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Introduction

Funding allocations identified through the Fund must benefit residents of Georges River Local Government Area (LGA). The Fund can be allocated to capital projects and social initiatives and will supplement Council's existing community grants program and sponsorship and donations program, allowing a timely and flexible approach to requests for funding from the community.

- 1.1. The Policy provides a framework to allow for the consideration of these requests in a manner that ensures:
 - The approval of applications through the Fund can only be considered at a formal meeting of Council;
 - The process for consideration of applications through the Fund is open, transparent and accountable, to this end a register of all approved Fund allocations will be made available on Council's website;
 - There is an appropriate acquittal process for the spending of funds; and
 - That Council is acknowledged for providing them.

2. Funding Model

- 2.1. Funds are available annually through the Office of the General Manager and will be allocated to the Fund as capital and non-capital components, details of which will be included in Council's Operational Plan. The amount of funds allocated will be determined by Council on an annual basis. Funds are only able to be utilised in the financial year in which they are allocated.

3. Applications for Funding

- 3.1. Applications for funding through the Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund fall within two classifications:
- a) Applications put forward by an individual or Community Group; and
 - b) Applications for minor capital works.
- 3.2. Councillors can apply for funding using the prescribed form which must be lodged with Council, as attached as Appendix A to this policy.
- 3.3. The General Manager will provide a report to the next ordinary Council Meeting outlining the details of any requests that have received support from Councillors seeking a resolution of Council to provide the financial assistance.
- 3.4. Councillors will then be able to approve requests they would like to support and the amount they would like to contribute. Multiple Councillors can nominate to support the same request for funding, however the maximum amount a recipient of funds may receive in the financial year is capped at \$4,500.
- 3.5. Each resolution for funding from the fund will detail the following:
- The recipient of funding;
 - Name of project / purpose of funding;
 - Amount of funding;
 - Councillor who has requested the funding (including amount contributed from each Councillors discretionary fund); and
 - Balance of funds.
- 3.6. Requests from Councillors for funding of minor capital works shall be made on the prescribed form and will be forwarded for consideration to the relevant Director who will be responsible for the submission of a report to Council which will take into account the benefits and lawfulness of the application.
- 3.7. In both application circumstances outlined above, Councillors are required to make a declaration in regards to conflicts of interest in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct,

- 3.8. Details of all funds awarded through the Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund will be made available on Council's website, including the amount of funds provided and the purpose for which the funds are to be utilised and the outcome.

4. Applications on behalf of Community Groups or Individuals

- 4.1. Applications for the provision of funds to Community Groups or individuals must comply with section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 which states that:

“(1) A council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.

(2) A proposed recipient who acts for private gain is not ineligible to be granted financial assistance but must not receive any benefit under this section until at least 28 days' public notice of the council's proposal to pass the necessary resolution has been given.

(3) However, public notice is not required if:

- a) The financial assistance is part of a specific program, and
- b) The program's details have been included in the council's draft operational plan for the year in which the financial assistance is proposed to be given, and
- c) The program's proposed budget for that year does not exceed 5 per cent of the council's proposed income from the ordinary rates levied for that year, and
- d) The program applies uniformly to all persons within the council's area or to a significant group of persons within the area.”

- 4.2. Applications from Community Groups and individuals are capped at a total amount of \$1,500 per financial year per Councillor, to a maximum of \$4,500 per recipient and will be considered in accordance with the criteria consistent with Council's Sponsorship and Donations Policy. All applications must be lodged utilising the specified application form which stipulates that applications must comply with the following criteria.

- 4.3. The Fund is to be administered in a strategic manner that aligns with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. To be eligible for Funding, proposed projects must achieve at least one or more of the following outcomes:

- Align with Council's Community Strategic Plan;
- Provide economic benefits to the Georges River local government area;
- Provide opportunities for education and information exchange, regional, national and/or international events and activities that enhance the image and reputation of the area;
- Promote Council as a natural sustainable city;

- Promote the cultural diversity of the local government area;
 - Provide Council with positive media, promotional and publicity opportunities across a range of media platforms.
- 4.4. To be eligible Community Groups are required to have relevant and appropriate business/not-for-profit registration and have objectives and values (including those of any parent companies and subsidiaries) that are consistent with the objectives and values of Council. Information will be required to be provided regarding their membership base. Community Groups will be required to include in their application demonstrated proof of their financial need, details of how the funds will be expended and the purpose for which the funds will be utilised.
- 4.5. To be eligible, individuals must be seeking funding to defray the costs of participation in an elite level sporting tournament, artistic or cultural event at a State, National or International level.
- 4.6. The following are examples of eligible activities or projects:
- Groups activities or programs that provide benefit to members and/or the wider community – such as sporting groups, seniors groups, youth groups, children’s and family groups, cultural groups, environmental groups and social support groups;
 - Small one-off projects to support incorporated not-for-profit groups to deliver community led projects and initiatives open to the community;
 - Community forums, information sessions or training programs that will directly benefit residents of Georges River Local Government Area;
 - Community events or celebrations that encourage wider community engagement;
 - Events that raise funds for charitable purposes;
 - Activities that increase participation in sport, the arts, environmental or civic activities;
 - Establishment of a new group.
- 4.7. The following are examples of expenditure for donated funds:
- Cover expenses associated with membership activities;
 - Transport costs;
 - Insurance;
 - Meeting room or venue hire fees.
- 4.8. The following will not be eligible for funding:
- Activities that have already taken place at the time application is received by Council (in these circumstances, extenuating circumstances, may be taken into consideration);
 - Activities that promote specific political or religious views;

- Enterprises that are profit-making;
- Individuals or community groups that have received financial contributions from the Councillor Ward Fund in the same financial year totalling \$4,500;
- Salaries, wages or other payments made to staff and/or members of the community group or an individual;
- Capital works, renovations, and purchasing and installation of fixtures and fittings to facilities that are not available to members of the public;
- Ongoing/operating costs of community organisations;
- Projects that cannot demonstrate satisfactorily that they will commence in the financial year for which the financial assistance is provided;
- Repeat projects or events that have previously been supported by Council will be subject to assessment on a merit basis.

4.9. Conditions of Funding:

- Where the project is of an ongoing nature, Council will not be responsible for recurrent costs or ongoing maintenance;
- Community groups and individuals may only receive a maximum of \$4,500 of funding through the Fund annually;
- Community groups or individuals who are the successful recipient of funds through another Council program will be subject to assessment on a merit basis;
- Funding may be used in conjunction with funding from other sources outside Council provided that funding is disclosed at the time of request to Council;
- Funding must be used for the purpose for which it is granted;
- Community groups and individuals will be required to acknowledge funding for projects; to this end the use of the Council approved logo is required in any promotional activity or signage related to the funded project and acknowledgement of this assistance must be included in media releases, invitations, posters, signs, digital channels such as website and any other suitable communications. "This project is supported by Georges River Council";
- Community Groups and individuals who receive funding are required to give permission for Council to use their name, value of the support offered and intended use of funds for any reporting or promotion purposes the General Manager deems appropriate.
- Should the project not proceed, or the recipient not be able to demonstrate satisfactorily that they will commence by the end of the financial year in which funding is allocated, all funds are to be returned to Council.

4.10. Acquittal Process

- Community Groups and individuals who are the recipients of funds will be required to account for funds through the completion of a Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund expenditure form provided by Council. The form will require details of how the funds were spent and in the case of community groups, provide income and expenditure statements and or supporting invoices and receipts. All funding recipients are requested to supply photographs of the finished project or event and any other relevant information.
- Failure to abide by the acquittal process will make a community group or individual ineligible for future funding.

5. Applications for Minor Capital Works

- 5.1. Funds will be allocated to each Ward, with total funds being available through the Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund to fund applications for minor capital works. In this regard, Councillors may collaborate across Wards for community benefit.
- 5.2. Eligibility for funds is restricted to works of a minor capital nature, examples which include but are not restricted to installation of kerb and guttering, playground equipment, street furniture or tree plantings.
- 5.3. Applications for funds in regards to minor capital works must be submitted on the provided application form which will be forwarded to the Director Assets and Infrastructure for determination of eligibility, taking into consideration Council's existing and future Capital Works Program, details of which will be included in a report to Council for consideration of funding.
- 5.4. Applications for funding of minor capital works must be considered and resolved by Council prior to 31 December each year. This will allow sufficient time for planning, procurement, resource allocation and construction prior to the end of financial year on 30 June.
- 5.5. There will be no carry-over of funds to future budgets if funds are not fully expended by 30 June each year.
- 5.6. The fund is for the construction of new capital works or installation of new plantings and shall not be used for asset renewal purposes or upgrades of existing facilities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Responsibility
<i>General Manager's Office</i>	Review the operation of the Fund once the Fund has been in operation for one year in accordance with the Resolution of Council.
<i>Head of Executive Services</i>	Implementation of the Fund in accordance with the Policy.
<i>Executive Manager, Office of the General Manager</i>	Review the implementation of the Fund to ensure compliance with the Policy.

VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Amendment Details	Policy Owner	Period Active
1.0	New Georges River Council Councillor Ward Discretionary Fund Policy	Executive Manager, Office of the General Manager	28/05/2018