



ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 11 September 2023

Council Chambers

126-138 Main Road Speers Point

6.30pm

Committees will be held in the following order:

Development and Planning Standing Committee
Planning for the Future Standing Committee
Organisational Services Standing Committee
Built and Natural Assets Standing Committee
Service Delivery Standing Committee
General Business Committee

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Meetings of Lake Macquarie City Council are conducted in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice which supports open, accessible and accountable government.

Councillors are reminded of the oath or affirmation of office taken at the start of the Council term:

- To undertake duties in the best interests of the people of Lake Macquarie City and the Lake Macquarie City Council.
- To faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions under the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgment.

Councillors are also required to declare and appropriately manage conflicts of interest under the Code of Conduct.

Council meetings are streamed live on Council's website at webcast.lakemac.com.au

This allows our community greater access to Council proceedings, decisions and debate.

Organisational Services Standing Committee Meeting

Agenda

Monday 11 September 2023

6.30pm

Acknowledgement of Country:

Apologies: For the non-attendance of Councillors

Declaration of Interests:

Presentations: Nil

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**Recommendations to the Organisational Services Standing Committee
Meeting**

Monday 11 September 2023

23OS017	Requests for donations under the Donations Program
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Key focus area	2. Lifestyle and wellbeing 5. Connected communities
Objective	2.1 Our community has access to adaptable and inclusive community, health and wellbeing services 2.4 We have buildings and facilities for a range of activities and recreation 5.2 We are a supportive and inclusive community 5.4 Our community responds and adapts to change
File	F2023/00975 - D11173881
Author	Council Liaison Officer - Shannon MacKenzie
Responsible manager	Head of Communications and Corporate Strategy - Kate Davies

Executive summary

This report considers seven applications for donations made under the Funding from Council Policy, in accordance with section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Recommendation

Council:

A. approves the donations of:

- i. \$2000 to the Newcastle and Hunter Valley Bird Rescue to upgrade their bird rescue facilities, allowing them to rehome more birds across Lake Macquarie City,
- ii. \$2000 to Kinfish to contribute to the cost of delivering saltwater adventures to Australian Defence Force Veterans and their families in Lake Macquarie City,
- iii. \$2000 to Newcastle Meals on Wheels for the purchase of new uniforms for their Toronto, Boolaroo and Morisset volunteers,
- iv. \$1799 to the 1st Edgeworth Scout Group for the purchase of a new computer to be used for registering new members,
- v. \$1561.98 to the 1st Teralba Sea Scouts for the purchase of new equipment for the Scout Hall in Teralba,

- vi. \$1722 to the Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace Incorporated for the purchase of equipment and materials, and
- B. does not approve the donation of \$2000 to Sunnyfield DisAbility Services for their 'Tool Time' project in Teralba.

Context

Under section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council may provide donations and financial assistance to support community, sporting and cultural projects in Lake Macquarie City. The Funding from Council Policy is a framework of four specific programs to assist Council to distribute its annual funding allocation equitably to external bodies and groups.

Discussion

The Donations Program considers requests from not-for-profit groups and organisations with significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project with significant local benefits. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.

Seven applications have been received for consideration in September 2023, requesting donations totalling \$13,082.98. This total includes the application from Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace Incorporated, which was deferred from the 14 August 2023 Organisational Services Standing Committee meeting.

Community engagement and internal consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with the applicants and Council's Executive and Communications and Corporate Strategy departments.

Assessment of options

The seven applications received for consideration in September 2023 have been assessed by staff against the criteria in the Donations Program Guidelines. It is recommended Council approves six of the requests for donations, totalling \$11,082.98. One application is not recommended for funding, as it is outside the scope of the policy. The assessment of these applications is detailed in Attachment 1.

The Funding from Council Policy does not prohibit Council from considering funding assistance or in-kind support outside the scope of the policy. Council will consider each case on its merits and any assistance provided will not be considered a precedent for future requests.

Key considerations

Economic

The application from Kinfish will support a local business which is being used to facilitate the adventures.

Environment

None.

Community

The application from Newcastle and Hunter Valley Bird Rescue will support people in the community experiencing challenging circumstances who can no longer care for their pet birds.

The application from Kinfish will foster social connections between veterans and their families in the community.

The application from Sunnyfield DisAbility Services would enhance the life skills and wellbeing of people with disability and their families in the community. However, the application is not consistent with the Funding from Council Policy due to the limited National Disability Insurance Scheme funding Sunnyfield receive.

The application from Newcastle Meals on Wheels will support Lake Macquarie volunteers who provide meals and companionship to others in the community.

The application from 1st Edgeworth Scout Group will enhance connectivity between the group, members and the community.

The application from 1st Teralba Sea Scouts will enhance the confidence, education and life skills of their new and existing scouts who are members of the community.

The application from Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace Incorporated will support Lake Macquarie volunteers with their services in a more efficient manner.

Civic leadership

The Donations Program allows Council to support the community and work in partnership with organisations to achieve the best outcomes for residents and visitors to the city.

Financial

Donations budget	2023-2024
Allocation	\$30,000
Proposed additional allocation (September review)	\$20,000
	<u>\$50,000</u>
<u>Less:</u>	
Donation fund commitments as at 31 August 2023	-\$20,957
September 2023 commitment	<u>-\$11,082.98</u>
Remaining funds	<u>\$17,960.02</u>

An additional \$20,000 can be allocated to the Donations Program from other grants funding budgets within Council, as part of the September review of the 2023-2024 Operational Plan and Budget for the consideration of donation requests until 30 June 2024.

Infrastructure

None.

Compliance

It is a condition of receiving funding that the successful applicant will assume all normal commercial responsibilities including public risk and/or any other appropriate insurance cover for the project.

Legislative and policy considerations

Local Government Act 1993

Funding from Council Policy

Donations Program Guidelines

Attachments

1. Requests for donations - Multiple applicants - September 2023 D11176524

Requests for donations – September 2023

A)	Applicant	Request	Funding requested	Funding recommendation
	Newcastle and Hunter Valley Bird Rescue	Upgrades to rescue facilities	\$2000	\$2000
<p data-bbox="300 443 480 477">Request details</p> <p data-bbox="300 488 1370 600">The Newcastle and Hunter Valley Bird Rescue is a not-for-profit organisation which is dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and rehoming of all domestic birds. The organisation has six permanent volunteers and a number of ad-hoc short-term volunteers that are actively engaged in providing care and finding homes for birds in need.</p> <p data-bbox="300 611 1370 701">The service rehomes approximately 50 birds across Lake Macquarie City per year and supports people in the community experiencing difficult circumstances, such as escaping domestic violence and homelessness, who can no longer care for their pet birds.</p> <p data-bbox="300 712 1370 857">The group is seeking a donation from Council to assist with the costs of upgrading the bird rescue cages located in the volunteers' homes, and buying resources such as bird food and consumable bird toys. The purchase of additional 'stacker' cages will increase the volunteers' capacity to rescue birds, and the replacement of damaged and rusted cages will reduce the risk of causing injury or health complications for the birds.</p> <p data-bbox="300 869 1370 925">The total cost of the project is \$6000, with the remaining funds to be provided by personal contributions and the group's other fundraising efforts.</p>				
<p data-bbox="300 936 389 969">History</p> <p data-bbox="300 981 1257 1014">Funding has not previously been requested and/or provided under the Donations Program.</p>				
<p data-bbox="300 1025 783 1059">Donations Program Guidelines provisions</p> <p data-bbox="300 1070 1370 1160">The Donations Program offers financial assistance to not-for-profit groups and organisations that have significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project that shows significant local benefits.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1171 1370 1261">Council will consider each request on an individual basis against the eligibility and criteria requirements of this program. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.</p>				
<p data-bbox="300 1272 448 1305">Assessment</p> <p data-bbox="300 1317 1370 1373">As the project specifically provides benefits to the Lake Macquarie community, this application is consistent with the policy and is recommended for approval.</p>				

B)	Applicant	Request	Funding requested	Funding recommendation
	Kinfish Ltd	Kinfish Saltwater Adventures	\$2000	\$2000
	<p>Request details</p> <p>Kinfish is a not-for-profit organisation which donates saltwater adventures to serving and non-serving Australian Defence Force veterans and their families. The adventures help to foster social connections, promote a healthy mind and ensure that veterans in need of some dedicated family time can access it free of charge.</p> <p>The group is seeking a donation from Council to assist with the costs involved in delivering the saltwater adventures. Kinfish aims to use Lake Macquarie small businesses, such as Sail Lake Macquarie, to facilitate the adventures. They expect approximately 20 Lake Macquarie City participants will directly benefit from this donation.</p> <p>The total cost of the project is expected to exceed \$10,000 annually, with the remaining funds to be provided by their other fundraising efforts.</p>			
	<p>History</p> <p>2022-2023: \$2000 – Outdoor furniture</p> <p>2021-2022: \$2000 – Waterproof jackets for volunteer life savers</p>			
	<p>Donations Program Guidelines provisions</p> <p>The Donations Program offers financial assistance to not-for-profit groups and organisations that have significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project that shows significant local benefits.</p> <p>Council will consider each request on an individual basis against the eligibility and criteria requirements of this program. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.</p>			
	<p>Assessment</p> <p>As the project specifically provides benefits to the Lake Macquarie community, this application is consistent with the policy and is recommended for approval.</p>			

C)	Applicant	Request	Funding requested	Funding recommendation
	Sunnyfield DisAbility Services	Tool Time	\$1627	Nil
Request details <p>Sunnyfield is a not-for-profit charity that supports people living with intellectual and physical disability to learn new skills, have fun with their friends and enrich their everyday life. They currently operate a Community Service Hub in Teralba, offering clients access to recreational, educational and therapeutic activities five days a week.</p> <p>The group is seeking a donation from Council to assist with the costs of their new program 'Tool Time'. The program teaches woodworking skills, safety and project planning to 10 Sunnyfield clients ranging from 16 to 66 years old, one day a week from their Hub in Teralba.</p> <p>This donation of \$1627 will be used by Sunnyfield to purchase a storage shed and woodworking accessories such as tools, nails, a workbench and sander. Sunnyfield is committed to the longevity of the Tool Time project and aims to source additional funds through internal reserves and small fundraising activities for future resources.</p>				
History <p>2020-2021: \$2000 – Sun safe space at Lake Macquarie Community Services Hub at Teralba</p>				
Donations Program Guidelines provisions <p>The Donations Program offers financial assistance to not-for-profit groups and organisations that have significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project that shows significant local benefits.</p> <p>Council will consider each request on an individual basis against the eligibility and criteria requirements of this program. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.</p> <p>Exclusions</p> <p>In accordance with the Funding from Council Policy, the Donations Program does not provide funding for:</p> <p>2.7 government organisations and government-funded organisations – noting this does not exclude organisations who receive funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).</p> <p>Requests for assistance outside of the policy</p> <p>Nothing in this policy prohibits Council from considering funding assistance or in-kind support outside the scope of this policy. Council will consider each case on its merits and any assistance provided will not be considered a precedent for future requests.</p>				
Assessment <p>Sunnyfield receives limited government funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and therefore falls outside the scope of the policy. Funds from the NDIS only cover the cost of staff and some overheads such as rent and electricity. Any projects or initiatives at each facility are required to be funded by the community, the members or other fundraising and grants.</p>				

D)	Applicant	Request	Funding requested	Funding recommendation
	Newcastle Meals on Wheels	Volunteer Uniform Project	\$2000	\$2000
Request details <p>Newcastle Meals on Wheels is a not-for-profit organisation that provides meals to the aged, frail and those with disability. The delivery service is designed to enable people to remain in their own homes and enjoy a level of independence and style of living to suit their individual needs.</p> <p>Newcastle Meals on Wheels have 130 volunteers across their Toronto, Boolaroo and Morisset branches and service approximately 360 customers who are residents of Lake Macquarie City.</p> <p>The group is seeking a donation from Council to assist with the costs of purchasing new uniforms for their volunteers, as the ones used currently have become worn and faded and they have limited sizing left. Having appropriate uniforms for their volunteers will increase brand awareness, which may result in an increase of volunteers and customers across Lake Macquarie.</p> <p>The total cost of the volunteer uniform project across all of their branches is \$8146, with the remaining funds to be provided by internal reserves and private donations to the group.</p>				
History <p>Funding has not previously been requested and/or provided under the Donations and Financial Assistance program.</p>				
Donations Program Guidelines provisions <p>The Donations Program offers financial assistance to not-for-profit groups and organisations that have significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project that shows significant local benefits.</p> <p>Council will consider each request on an individual basis against the eligibility and criteria requirements of this program. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.</p>				
Assessment <p>As the project specifically provides benefits to the Lake Macquarie community, this application is consistent with the policy and is recommended for approval.</p>				

E)	Applicant	Request	Funding requested	Funding recommendation
	1st Edgeworth Scout Group	New laptop	\$1799	\$1799
Request details <p>1st Edgeworth Scout Group is a not-for-profit organisation which aims to provide fun and challenging opportunities for young people to grow through adventure. Its programs are designed to develop skills such as leadership, teamwork, problem solving, and communication to enable members to take their place as productive members of society.</p> <p>The group is seeking a donation from Council to purchase a new laptop. Currently all of their new members are registered manually, however due to the requirements of their overarching body (The Scout Association of NSW), the limited space to file documents and the everchanging nature of technology, they have identified the need to move to an online registration system.</p> <p>The new laptop will provide the means to electronically store their Joey, Cubs and Scouting members registration records and enhance connectivity between the group and the community.</p>				
History <p>2020-2021: \$2000 – Security upgrade to Scout Hall</p>				
Donations Program Guidelines provisions <p>The Donations Program offers financial assistance to not-for-profit groups and organisations that have significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project that shows significant local benefits.</p> <p>Council will consider each request on an individual basis against the eligibility and criteria requirements of this program. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.</p>				
Assessment <p>As the project specifically provides benefits to the Lake Macquarie community, this application is consistent with the policy and is recommended for approval.</p>				

F)	Applicant	Request	Funding requested	Funding recommendation
	1st Teralba Sea Scouts	New equipment	\$1561.98	\$1561.98
Request details <p>1st Teralba Sea Scouts is a not-for-profit organisation which aims to provide fun and challenging opportunities for young people to grow through adventure. Its programs are designed to develop skills such as leadership, teamwork, problem solving, and communication to enable members to take their place as productive members of society.</p> <p>The group is seeking a donation from Council for the purchase of equipment for the Scout Hall in Teralba including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a speaker to be used when training their youth members through outdoor activities • a printer to prepare material for leadership courses and print promotional material to encourage the community to register • a portable hard drive to store new members online registration information (a new requirement of their overarching body, The Scout Association of NSW) • a shredder to discard hard-copy registration paperwork containing members personal information • containers to store course material and other scouting equipment. <p>This new equipment will provide means for new and existing members of scouts to participate in courses, therefore building their confidence, education and leadership skills.</p>				
History <p>2015-2016: \$987 – Maintenance of donated yacht</p> <p>2019-2020: \$2000 – Participation in Northern Territory Venture</p>				
Donations Program Guidelines provisions <p>The Donations Program offers financial assistance to not-for-profit groups and organisations that have significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project that shows significant local benefits.</p> <p>Council will consider each request on an individual basis against the eligibility and criteria requirements of this program. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.</p>				
Assessment <p>As the project specifically provides benefits to the Lake Macquarie community, this application is consistent with the policy and is recommended for approval.</p>				

G)	Applicant	Request	Funding requested	Funding recommendation
	Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace Incorporated	Equipment and materials	\$1722	\$1722
	Request details			
	<p>The Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace is a not-for-profit organisation which aims to improve the education of Justices of the Peace (JP) so they can proficiently provide a wide range of services to the community, such as certification of documents and witnessing signatures.</p>			
	<p>The group is seeking a donation from Council to purchase equipment and materials for their volunteer JPs including:</p>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Lenovo Tablet for internet searches and digital verification • a pull-up banner and flyers to promote their services and community signing desks • self-inking stamps and stationary supplies • disinfectant wipes and hand sanitiser. 			
	<p>This will assist approximately 60 of their members from the Lake Macquarie community to provide free JP services to the public more efficiently.</p>			
	<p>In the past three years, these members have provided JP services to an average of 1190 people and assisted with over 3750 enquiries at various locations in Lake Macquarie City. By making these services readily available to the community, the Federation aims to alleviate some of the pressure on other businesses where JP services are available, particularly pharmacies.</p>			
	History			
	<p>Funding has not previously been requested and/or provided under the Donations Program.</p>			
	Donations Program Guidelines provisions			
	<p>The Donations Program offers financial assistance to not-for-profit groups and organisations that have significant local membership or participation, and/or are undertaking a project that shows significant local benefits.</p>			
	<p>Council will consider each request on an individual basis against the eligibility and criteria requirements of this program. The maximum allowable donation per financial year under this program is \$2000.</p>			
	Assessment			
	<p>As the project specifically provides benefits to the Lake Macquarie community, this application is consistent with the policy and is recommended for approval.</p>			

23OS018	Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards
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Key focus area	4. Diverse economy
Objective	4.2 We have an adaptable, diverse, prosperous and circular economy
File	F2023/00180 - D11151454
Author	Digital and Brand Lead - Sally Newport
Responsible manager	Head of Communications and Corporate Strategy - Kate Davies
Previous items	<p>19SP013 - Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards - Ordinary Council - 25 Mar 2019 6:30pm</p> <p>21SP112 - Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards - Ordinary Council - 22 Nov 2021 6.30pm</p> <p>22SP015 - Lake Mac Awards Committee and Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards Committee - Ordinary Council - 21 Feb 2022 6.30pm</p>

Executive summary

The annual Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards celebrate individuals, businesses and their achievements in Lake Macquarie City. In March 2019, Council accepted the management of the business awards for a three-year trial period from 2019 to 2021. In 2021, Council accepted an extension of this trial for an additional two-years and agreed to review the ownership and operation of the business awards prior to the 2024 awards. This report seeks Council's support for the business awards to be managed by Lake Macquarie City Council on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation

Council accepts the ongoing management of the Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards.

Context

In 2012, the Business Growth Centre established the Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards to showcase quality businesses and foster growth within the business community. The Business Growth Centre approached Council in 2018 to manage the business awards and in March 2019, Council endorsed the management for a three-year trial period. COVID-19 impacted the 2020 and 2021 events, and Council endorsed a two-year extension of the trial in 2022 and 2023.

The business awards have a direct alignment to the Diverse Economy strategic priorities in the Lake Macquarie Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032, supporting economic development, investment and growth and enhancing the profile our city. They offer an opportunity for Council to reinforce its commitment to supporting the 14,081 businesses in Lake Macquarie City.

Discussion

The business awards have been operating for 12 years and have continued to grow since Council endorsed the trial management of the program in 2019. The number of quality nominations received has tripled in this time. Below is a summary of the performance metrics used to evaluate the business awards from 2019-2023.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Nominations received	48	59	80	97	146
Attendees at event	281 (in-person) <i>sold-out</i>	70 (online event due to Public Health Order)	n/a due to Public Health Order	190	279 (in-person) <i>sold-out</i>
Sponsors	13	7	10	14	13

The business awards align with the regional Business Hunter Awards and the state Business NSW Awards, with winners from the Lake Macquarie event progressing as a finalist at the regional level. Management of the business awards by Council, along with the continued support from media, business partners and sponsors, will ensure they continue to be the premier business event in Lake Macquarie City.

In accordance with 22SP015, the Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards Committee will be extended for one year to align with the Council term. A new committee for the new Council term will be subject to a future Council report in line with the Community-centred Council Committee Framework Policy.

Community engagement and internal consultation

Feedback sought from past business award applicants, judges and sponsors within the Lake Macquarie business community supports the recommendation. Dantia and Business Hunter see value in Council continuing to manage the business awards and recognise the high calibre of applications Council is attracting. Dantia also expressed its desire to be involved in future business awards events. Local businesses see the business awards as an opportunity for exposure and recognition within the community.

Internal consultation with Council's Communication and Corporate Strategy and Arts, Culture and Tourism departments has confirmed the value of the business awards and a willingness to accept ongoing management.

Assessment of options

It is recommended Council accepts the ongoing management of the business awards, as it is unlikely the awards would exist without Council's ongoing management of the program. It offers the opportunity to position the awards as a premier business event in our city and increase city profiling opportunities for Lake Macquarie City at the regional and state awards.

If Council does not endorse the ongoing management, the local business community may feel unsupported and the exposure opportunities for Lake Macquarie City will be reduced. If the business awards did not exist, local businesses would need to apply directly to the Business Hunter awards, without the momentum generated from the Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards.

Next steps

If endorsed by Council, the Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards will be identified as an action in future annual operational plans and reported on as part of this process.

Key considerations

Economic

The recommendation supports economic development, investment and growth in Lake Macquarie City. The Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards align with the regional Business Hunter Awards and the state Business NSW Awards. Winners from the local business awards progress as a finalist at the regional level, guaranteeing further exposure and community recognition of Lake Macquarie City.

Environment

None.

Community

The recommendation provides an opportunity for Council to reinforce its commitment to supporting local business by recognising the role local businesses play in supporting and growing our city. The increasing profile of the city will support increased economic sustainability, social cohesion and community resilience. The recommendation provides an opportunity for industry, government, tourism and businesses to work together collaboratively to raise the profile of Lake Macquarie City.

Civic leadership

The recommendation allows Council to continue to work collaboratively with key partners, including Business Hunter and Dantia, to support local industries to adapt and grow. Council has built strong relationships with key stakeholders including previous sponsors Newcastle Herald, University of Newcastle, Hunter Water and Ramsay Health Care, and ongoing management of the awards will help Council maintain these relationships.

Extending the committee for one year will facilitate the judging of the business awards for the remainder of the Council term.

Financial

Management of the business awards uses existing staff resources within Communications and Corporate Strategy. Continued support from media partners, sponsors and ticket sales is critical to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the awards.

Infrastructure

None.

Compliance

None.

Attachments

Nil.