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Policy Category: Community Development
Title: Community Support Policy
Adoption Method: CEO x Council **Date Adopted:** 11 March 2014
Review Period: Annually x Two-yearly **Date Last Reviewed:** New Policy
Responsible Officer: Director Sustainable Communities **Next Review Date:** 10 March 2016
CEO Signature:  **Date:** 2 June 2014

Purpose / Objective:

This policy provides an overarching framework to determine the nature and level of support provided to community groups, organisations and committees.

Who is Affected by this Policy?

Eligible community groups and organisations, communities of interest within Mount Alexander Shire, Council and Council officers.

Background / Reasons for Policy:

Council supports community groups and organisations through:

1. providing long-term accommodation in Council-owned facilities;
2. community rates for the hire of Council-owned facilities and the community bus;
3. direct funding agreements;
4. community grants;
5. provision of in-kind support;
6. capacity building;
7. governance assistance;
8. auspicing;
9. events;
10. advocacy; and/or
11. sponsorship.
- 12.

Implementation of the policy will provide a consistent rationale to enable Council to assess and respond to requests for support.

Scope:

The policy applies to eligible organisations and community groups seeking support from Council.

Policy Content:

Implementation of the policy will be based on the following principles and criteria:

Base level criteria to be considered for all types of community support

- The group or organisation is:
 - an incorporated community group or auspiced by an incorporated organisation (as defined by the Australian Taxation Office), or
 - a Special Committee (Section 86) of Council.

- The group or organisation:
 - has provided evidence of its financial sustainability;
 - has documented evidence for how the program, activity or service aligns with Council's current strategic directions identified in the *Council Plan and Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017*, as well as policies specific to the nature of that program, activity or service;
 - has documented evidence of need for the program, activity or service offered by the group or organisation;
 - has outlined the intended community outcomes from the program, service or activity;
 - will deliver the program, activity or service within the Shire;
 - is willing to enter into an agreement with Council which requires the community group or organisation to undertake an acquittal and review/evaluation process; and
 - is willing to publicly acknowledge Council's support in all promotional material and in the media.

Additional criteria for consideration for direct funding agreements and/or provision of longer term accommodation in Council owned or managed facilities

The group or organisation has:

- A demonstrated track-record in delivering community development outcomes in the Shire;
- Relationships and partnerships with other organisations;
- Measures in place that maximise opportunities for community members to access the service, program or activity;
- A current strategic plan based on comprehensive evidence that demonstrates the need for the program or service in the Shire; and
- Evidence demonstrating that it is maximising opportunities for community members to access the service, program or activity. This includes justification for aspects of access such as length of programs, costs and opening hours/periods across the year.

Council will also consider the following aspects in determining community support:

- A Shire wide perspective of community need, access and equity;
- Avoiding duplication of service, programs and activities;
- Equity of Council support across groups and organisations;
- Availability of facilities;
- Public safety; and
- Risk management and potential liability for Council.

Council does not provide community support for:

- For-profit organisations, unincorporated groups and individuals;
- Groups or organisations involved in gaming;
- The benefit of political parties;
- Activities or events where the primary purpose is to support religious or spiritual activities;
- Groups or organisations that have received funding in the last three financial years that did not undertake the required acquittal and reporting process;
- Programs, services or activities that are considered to be the responsibility of the state or federal government;
- Retrospective projects; or
- Capital works projects.

Related Policies:

- Council Plan 2013-2017*
- Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017*
- Community Grants Policy 24 August 2010*
- Community Grants Scheme Guidelines, as issued annually*
- Special Grants Guidelines 2012*
- Community Newsletter Photocopying Policy, 21 April 2008*

Related Legislation:

- Australian Tax Legislation*
- Local Government Act 1989*