

BACKGROUND

Council seeks one-off or recurring grant monies to offset costs, from its standard revenue streams, for the provision of new infrastructure, upgrades and programs or to maintain or improve current assets, such as roads. Well-substantiated justification is required to be awarded such grants.

Success in winning competitive grants come from presenting applications based on fully scoped and fully costed projects or programs that are 'shovel ready', that is, ready for immediate implementation, without the need for further time to negotiate and make decisions in relation to its scope, budget or timeframe; that is, the fewer the 'unknown' variables, the more likely an application will be awarded funding.

How well such projects and programs fit within Council's own adopted strategies, its Delivery Program, Community Strategic Plan, regional, State and Federal strategies and Masterplans and Plans of Management also impacts the success of a grant application; the better the fit, the more likelihood of success in winning the grant.

The window for grant applications is often only one month, meaning that significant preparation work is needed in the lead-up to the opportunity in order to have a rigorously prepared application ready for submission that will have a strong chance of success.

Conversely, grant applications are often unsuccessful when their preparation is triggered by a knee-jerk reaction to a submission opportunity for which a suitable project or program has not been identified, developed, designed in detail, costed and its financial and strategic implications considered.

1. PURPOSES

The purpose of this policy is to develop a proactive approach by Council to grant opportunities, thus optimising the likelihood of success for Council's grant applications and to enhance its reputation in delivering grant-funded projects / programs such that this positively impacts consideration of future grant applications.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Grant Policy are to implement organisational processes that result in:

- Preparation of detailed, 'shovel-ready' project / program proposals, for potential funding through a grant, with their documented justification (or business case in

more complex projects / programs) that clearly identify their scope, duration (Gantt chart), resource requirements and detailed cost, and that place their need within the context of local, regional, State and Federal strategies and plans current at the time, and

- The elected Council being informed of these 'shovel-ready' projects / programs and the operational pursuit of grant funding for their implementation, where such funding does not exceed Council's risk appetite and does not require any in-kind or cash co-contribution.
- A resolution of Council to support those grant applications requiring a cash or in-kind co-contribution as a condition of the grant (where that value is >\$10,000), and
- Accountability authority being given to the relevant Directorate's grants team (through its Director) to ensure the timely delivery of grant-funded project / program milestones and for securing the evidence to demonstrate their completion, and
- The acquittal of grant-funded projects / programs within 30 days of receipt of the final contractor/supplier invoice.

3. LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

Local Government Act 1993

Community Strategic Plan

Delivery Program

Operational Plan

Coonamble Shire Council's suite of strategies and plans (including masterplans and plans of management)

Regional strategies and plans

State and Federal strategies and plans

The Office of Local Government's Capital Expenditure Guidelines

Community Engagement Policy

Project Management Framework

Contract Management Framework

Grant Management Framework and procedures (draft grant application procedure and draft grant-funded project / program reporting and acquittal procedure – also attached)

Risk Management Framework and Risk Appetite Statement

4. APPLICATION/SCOPE

This policy applies to the elected Council, Council directorates and departments and individual Council officials in relation to projects / programs that cannot currently be fully funded through Council's operational funds.

5. POLICY

In preparing to apply for grant funding, Council develops fully scoped, planned and fully costed projects / programs that deliver prioritised Actions of its Operational Plan and Delivery Program that are substantiated by:

- A rational justification (or for more complex projects / programs a business case) that includes:
 - A description of the project / program, its scope and deliverables.
 - A rationale to contextualise and justify the project / program and its deliverables as the satisfier of a need or needs within Council's suite of strategy documents (including the Integrated Planning and Reporting set of documents, Masterplans, Plans of Management, strategies and other plans), and within regional, State and Federal strategies and plans.
 - Current costings (that is, a quantity survey whose details are no more than six months old) for initial development and for ongoing lifecycle costs (and an explanation of how these are to be funded or sustained by Council).
 - A draft project schedule (Gantt chart) with required resource types allocated to tasks.
- A determination by Council's Executive Leadership Team to pursue the grant, based on the above rational justification / business case and Council's Risk Appetite Statement, with the elected Council being informed of the decision.
- A resolution of Council supporting the application where a cash or in-kind co-contribution is required (where the value of that co-contribution is greater than \$10,000).
- A Capital Expenditure Review, where required.

In applying for grants, Council officials be satisfied that Council's fully scoped and fully costed project / program aligns with the grant assessment criteria and has a strong chance of success, thus justifying the allocation of the human and other resources to prepare a grant submission.

In discharging a grant-funded project, the relevant Directorate's grants team be accountable for, and have the authority (through its Director), to ensure the timely delivery of grant-funded project / program milestones, and to obtain the evidence required to demonstrate their completion.

In acquitting grant-funded projects / programs, Council officials submit all required documentation to the funding body within 30 days of receipt of the final contractor / supplier invoice.

6. DEFINITIONS

Action	The means by which a Strategy of the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program or Operational Plan is delivered.
Business case	The justification and rationale for a proposed project / program, including: a modular or staged scope of works, detailed design, draft schedule (Gantt chart) and a quantity survey; along with strategic context that places its need within the context of local, regional, State and Federal strategies and plans current at the time.
Capital Expenditure Review	A Capital Expenditure Review enables the financial impact of projects and programs on Council to be determined methodically, taking into account costs for immediate development or implementation and ongoing lifecycle costs to maintain the outputs of the project or program, such that Council can consider its capacity to sustain such costs.
Council official	Councillors, members of staff, contractors, volunteers, those undertaking work experience with Council, and delegates of Coonamble Shire Council, including members of committees that are delegates of the Council.
Grants team	Those Council officials, within a Directorate, responsible for reporting to the funding body and whom that body holds accountable for this reporting.
Program	A medium- to long-term investment in people that enhances their qualities, attitudes, skills and capacities to collaborate and be active leaders and contributors to their community – thus building the Shire's social capital.
Project	An activity defined and limited by time, scope and budget that delivers a tangible output: eg. a business case, a masterplan or a piece of infrastructure.
Quantity survey	A detailed list of components required to deliver a project / program, along with the cost per item and number of items required, in spreadsheet format, so that costs can be updated and totals calculated; a quantity survey older than six months is considered out of date.

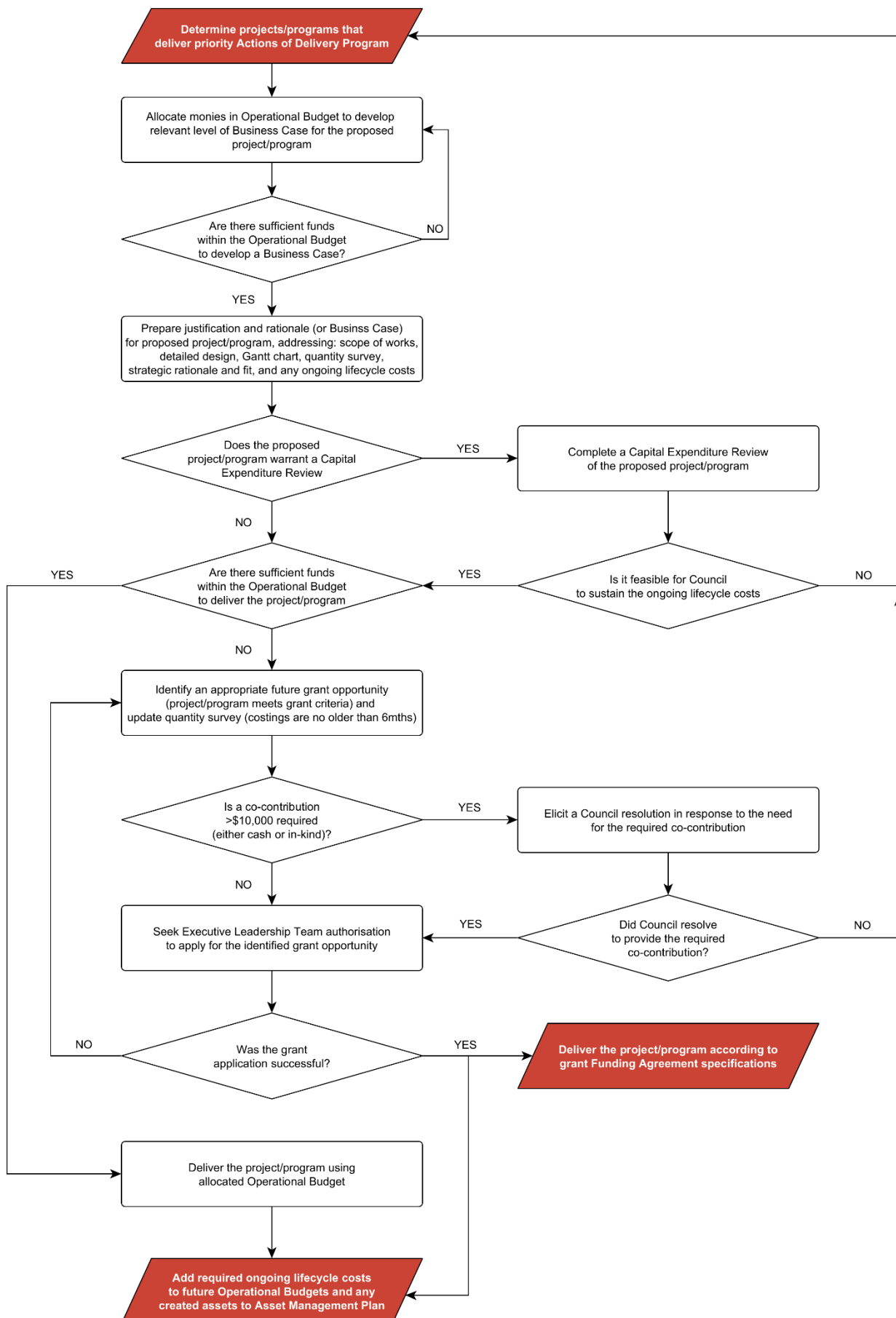
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Amendments in the release:		
Amendment History	Date	Detail
Annexure Attached:		
Phillip Perram Interim General Manager		

Draft Grant Application Procedure

Preparing a shovel-ready project / program business case (see process flow chart on following page)

1. Directorates determine their priority Actions (and projects / programs that would deliver them) from the current Operational Plan and Delivery Program.
2. Directorates determine whether there are sufficient funds budgeted in the Operational Budget to deliver the proposed projects / programs.
3. If intending to seek grant funding, Directorates either find within their current budget monies to develop a level of business case sufficient to justify their proposed project / program (including a modular or staged scope of works, detailed design, draft schedule (Gantt chart) and a quantity survey, along with a strategic rationale), or seek grant funding to develop a business case for the proposed project / program if such business case development is allowed (eg. Active Transport grants allow this).
4. If the project / program is of significant scope or cost that it is expected to have ongoing lifecycle costs beyond the grant parameters, the Directorate will seek advice from the Director of Corporate Services as to the need for the preparation of a Capital Expenditure Review, and organise funding for such a review, if required.
5. The grants team (and Directorates with completed business cases and any required Capital Expenditure Review) seek grants appropriate to their priorities and confirm that the proposed projects / programs meet the grant consideration and assessment criteria.
6. Directorates identifying an upcoming grant opportunity immediately commission the updating of the quantity survey of the business case such that its update is within six months of the grant submission date.
7. In collaboration with the grants team, Directorates determine whether a Council co-contribution of more than \$10,000 is required, either in cash or in kind, and in consultation with the Executive Leadership Team, determine a recommendation to Council to resolve to support the intended project and grant funding with the level of in-kind or cash co-contribution required. Directorates should be mindful that some grant submission 'windows' are only of three weeks' duration, while our Council meeting cycle is four weeks, so readiness and vigilance are required.
8. As an input to a grant submission application, Directorates provide to the grants team an updated Business Case, the strategic rationale, and Council's assessment of the Capital Expenditure Review, with documentation that demonstrates that Council can sustain the ongoing lifecycle costs of the proposed deliverable.
9. The grants team prepares and submits the grant application.

Grant Application Process Flow



Draft Grant-funded Project / Program Delivery and Reporting Procedure and Acquittal Procedure

In-Progress Delivery and Reporting (see process flow chart on following page)

In general, the relevant Directorate's grants team is accountable (through its Director) for the timely delivery of grant-funded projects / programs and for milestone reporting to funding bodies. The relevant Directorate's grants team will work collaboratively with other departments for the timely reporting of each milestone achievement and evidence of the required deliverables by its contracted due date. This team, through its Director, has the authority to require responsibilities for this delivery to be completed, within identified timeframes, by other departments delivering the work (in collaboration with that department's Director).

The relevant Directorate's grants team is responsible for the formal request of a variation to project / program scope, budget or contracted due date, supported by evidence from the Council team delivering the project and requiring the variation, with as much notice as possible given, where practicable.

Specifically, the procedure for the delivery and in-progress reporting of grant-funded projects / program is:

1. Council is advised of the success of a grant application.
2. The grants team advises the Council department, who has been determined to be responsible for the grant's delivery, of the grant deliverables and milestone dates (and deliverables by those dates, including the need for photographic evidence).
3. The grants team and relevant department responsible for delivery will determine and agree on the feasibility of the milestone dates and deliverables and the requirement to report progress towards these milestones, and photographic evidence, to the grants team.
4. The relevant department will be responsible for the ongoing delivery of the project / program, in line with the grant's Funding Agreement, recording periodic progress in a written report and providing photographic evidence.
5. The grants team will be responsible for formal milestone reporting to the funding body according to the Funding Agreement milestone dates.
6. Concerns about the ability to meet progress milestones and their deliverables, or the contracted due date, within scope and budget, are to be dealt with, in the first instance, by the development and implementation of a project recovery plan (by committing more resources, at Council's expense, from elsewhere), and, failing the success of the recovery plan, be passed to the grants team, who will consult with the funding body. If it is deemed impossible to meet one of the milestones and any of its deliverables, the grants team will be responsible for filing a formal variation request.
7. The relevant department delivers the project / program through to its completion by the contracted due date.

Acquittal

The relevant grants team and finance teams will collaborate to complete any required grant acquittal documentation – within 30 days of the payment of the final invoice from a supplier to the project or program (or sooner depending on the deadline imposed by the relevant funding body) – including the preparation of:

- A Costing Report.
- A body of evidence of completion, including photographs.
- Evidence of Funding Acknowledgement, where required.

The Council department responsible for the delivery of the project / program is responsible for ensuring the timely delivery of all invoices from suppliers, particularly any final invoices at the completion of the project.

Grant Delivery and Acquittal Process Flow

