

Policy

Financial Hardship (Rates and Charges Relief)

1 Background

The NSW Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act) enables councils to provide relief to ratepayers experiencing hardship in relation to payment of rates and charges. It does not permit rates and charges to be deferred, waived or reduced.

A ratepayer experiencing financial hardship is someone who is identified as having the intention, but not the financial capacity to make the required payments within the timeframe set out in the rates and charges notice. Where a customer falls within this definition, Greater Taree City Council (GTCC) may apply this Financial Hardship Policy.

2 Policy Statement

GTCC recognises there are cases of genuine financial hardship requiring respect and compassion in special circumstances. Those experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to enter a payment arrangement that ensures regular payment of rates and charges. Debt recovery is a last resort.

3 Principles

This policy guides the assessment of hardship applications applying the principles of social justice, fairness, integrity, appropriate confidentiality, and compliance with relevant statutory requirements.

Merit based consideration is also given when rate payers, whose income is adversely affected by one off events such as Natural Disasters, are unable to make immediate payment of rates due.

4 Scope

This policy applies to all ratepayers experiencing hardship and wishing to apply for rate relief.

5 References and related documents

- NSW Local Government Act 1993
- NSW Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- Financial Hardship Procedure (Rates and Charges Relief)
- Financial Hardship Relief Application form
- Debt Recovery Policy

6 Attachments

Financial Hardship Relief Application form

7 Review Date

Within four years

8 Responsible Officer

Senior Leader Finance

Policy

Donations

1 Background

This policy provides a framework for provision of donations by Greater Taree City Council (GTCC) to not for profit organisations and community groups.

2 Policy Statement

2.1 Processes and decision-making in relation to making of donations is consistent, equitable and transparent in accordance with guidelines that are reviewed on an annual basis.

2.2 The donations budget allocations are distributed in accordance with the following categories:

Discretionary component	Community capacity building and development
Non discretionary component	Rates subsidy to groups identified in Appendix A
Fixed component	Provision of an annual donation, of the nominated amount , to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Head Surf Life Saving Club (\$5,000) • Crowdy Head Surf Life Saving Club (\$5,000) • Old Bar Surf Life Saving Club (\$5,000) • Taree Volunteer Rescue Association (\$3,000) • Taree City Band (\$6,400)
In kind <i>Nil Budget</i>	Waiving or reducing Council fees or charges which results in lost income to Council but provides a gain to the recipient.

2.3 Discretionary donations made by GTCC to community organisations aim to meet at least one of the following objectives:

- a) Facilitate the establishment of new, innovative projects and services that align with the Manning Valley Community Plan and Delivery Program.
- b) Develop existing community projects and services that build capacity to enhance the lives of those living in Greater Taree.

- c) Demonstrate a shared contribution to community projects and services, by the applicant and Council.
- d) Support 'not for profit' organisations and community based groups that provide a service to meet a demonstrated need within the community, where alternate funding can not be sought.

2.4 All applications made through the donations policy will be assessed by a panel of Councillors appointed by Council for a period of two years.

Where necessary, advice may be sought from relevant Council Advisory Committees as part of the annual assessment of applications.

2.5 The Panel will annually review and confirm the Guidelines that support this policy.

3 Principles

3.1 Values and principles

The following values and principles guide the implementation of this policy:

- Equity – all eligible recipients have equal opportunity to apply for donations.
- Value for money – obtaining the best mix of services to meet the community's needs with available funding and selecting the mix of resources that delivers the best possible outcomes.
- Transparency and integrity– funds are assessed and allocated transparently to recipient projects that demonstrate integrity in their delivery.
- Capacity building and community ownership – recognition that the best outcomes can be achieved through building upon the skills and assets that already exist in the community; and meaningful empowerment of the people to fulfill community desires and aspirations.
- Sustainability – that community infrastructure is built, developed and maintained in a way that ensures long term viability and minimal impact on Council's ongoing maintenance budget.
- Consistency - funding administration procedures should be consistent within programs, across individual Council sections and as new funding programs evolve.
- Collaboration – the best outcomes can be achieved for people and the community through collaboration between Council, Council departments, community groups and organisations, business and individuals.
- Probity – funding administration must be conducted with integrity, honesty and scrutiny.

4 Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to donations and in kind support made by Greater Taree City Council to eligible 'not for profit' organisations and community groups.
- 4.2 Individuals and commercial organisations are ineligible for a donation under this policy.
- 4.3 This policy does not include sponsorship.

5 References and related documents

- 5.1 Donations guidelines
- 5.2 Donations application form

6 Definitions

- 6.1 Donation – A cash contribution or equivalent to for a specified purpose.
- 6.2 In kind support – is the donation of goods or services, time or expertise. This could be, but is not limited to, services or goods provided for which GTCC would normally receive revenue.
- 6.3 Not for profit organisation –an organisation whose income, assets and surplus funds is used to achieve its purpose and objectives and is not distributed to members, owners or shareholders while it is operating and ceases to operate. The legal status of these organisations may include incorporated associations, companies limited by guarantee, charities and co-operatives.
- 6.4 Community based groups – is a group with a clear purpose and objectives, however may not have progressed to the point of having legal status. The group must be open, be managed by a committee, maintain up to date financial records and contribute in a positive way to the wellbeing of Greater Taree residents.
- 6.5 Eligible organisations – not for profit organisations and community based groups that operate and deliver activities in the Greater Taree local government areas.
- 6.6 Ineligible organisations – are individuals and commercial organisations.

7 Attachments

- 7.1 List of eligible organisations for rates subsidy

8 Review Date

Every two years

9 Responsible Officer

Senior Leader Governance

ATTACHMENT 1 - List of eligible organisations for rates subsidy

Public Halls

- Bobin School of Arts Hall
- Bulga Soldiers Memorial Hall
- Burrell Creek Hall
- Caffreys Flat Public Hall
- Coopernook School of Arts Hall
- Cundletown Soldiers Memorial Hall
- Hannam Vale Hall
- Harrington Memorial Hall
- Killabakh Community Hall
- Krambach School of Arts Hall
- Lansdowne School of Arts Hall
- Marlee Public Hall
- Mitchell's Island School of Arts Hall
- Mondrook Hall
- Moorah Creek Hall
- Mount George School of Arts Hall
- Old Bar Soldiers Memorial Hall
- Oxley Island School of Arts Hall
- Tinonee Schools of Arts Hall
- Upper Lansdowne Memorial Hall
- Wherrol Flat Hall

Community Organisations

- Manning District Bowhunters
- Manning Media Coop Ltd
- Manning River Canoe Club
- Manning River Rowing Club
- Manning River Sailing Club
- Old Bar Community Pre School
- Oxley Island Pony Club
- Snugglepot Day Care Centre
- Taree Arts Council
- Taree Tennis Club
- Wingham and District Pre School

Surf Life Saving Clubs

- Black Head
- Crowdy Head