

## COS Agenda – Meeting 24 Feb 2016

### FESTIVAL AND EVENTS SUPPORT SCHEME

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement for proposed funding of \$75,000 .

The Festival and Event Support Scheme (FESS) was introduced in 2007 to provide an equitable funding allocation for events held within the shire via an agreed set of criteria. Prior to the introduction of the FESS, only four events were supported by Council:

1. Birregurra Weekend Festival
2. Spirit of Christmas
3. KANA
4. Apollo Bay Music Festival.

In response to a number of new events being successfully implemented and funding requests from event organisers Council developed the FESS, a fair and transparent process for all events to be assessed for funding by Council. **Since the introduction of the FESS, Council has funded over 65 different events.**

The FESS has been **operating for eight years and has been successful in developing and supporting existing and new events. However almost every year the FESS is oversubscribed, with the same events applying for and receiving funds.** This results in limited scope for developing new events and there is no financial security for new and existing events to receive the same amount of funding each year

In the 2015-2016 round of FESS funding the following events received funding for 2016- 2017 via resolution of Council on 24 June 2015: Seed Funding - Apollo Bay Australia Day Community Picnic \$2,000 - Eat Local Month \$2,000 - Sustainable Living Day Gellibrand \$1,000 - Youth Council Homelessness Awareness Sleepout \$4,000 \$9,000 Sponsorship - Amy's Gran Fondo \$1,000 - Apollo Bay Seafood Festival \$5,000 - Birregurra Easter Arts at the Homestead \$2,000 - Birregurra Festival and Art Show \$5,000 - Birregurra School Choir at Birregurra Festival \$1,500 - Chase the Dog \$1,000 - Colac City Bands Carols by Candlelight \$5,000 - Colac Garden & Lifestyle Expo \$1,500 - Colac Kana Festival \$5,000 - Colac Orchid Annual Show \$500 - Colac Otway Wood Design Exhibition \$2,500 - Forrest Festival \$2,000 - Forrest SoupFest \$4,000 - Gellibrand Blues and Blueberry Festival \$4,000 - Good Friday Family Fun Day & Market \$1,000 - Great Ocean Road Marathon \$2,500 - Hunt for the Golden Gumboot \$2,000 - Odyssey Mountain Bike Event \$2,500 - Run Forrest \$2,500 - Warm Winter Words \$3,000 - Warrion Flower Show \$1,000 \$54,500 **TOTAL \$63,500**

The allocation of funding was based on funding for 2 years (2015-2016 and 2016-2017) per the Advisory Committee minutes of 3 June 2015 and Council resolution of 25 February 2015. The above events will receive funding for 2016-2017 provided they have submitted all the required paperwork for their event, including an acquittal form, and subject to budget endorsement by Council. Funding requests for One Off Events will need to be sought for 2016-2017 following the relevant processes in the FESS Guidelines.

## **Proposal**

Council support for the revised FESS process on 25 February 2015 allows for Sponsorship and Seed funding to be allocated for 2 years. The Sponsorship and Seed funding allocated in June 2015 allowed for 25 events to receive sponsorship and seed funding in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. The allocated sponsorship and seed funding totals \$63,500 and allows \$11,500 to be available for One Off and new event funding based on a proposed total of \$75,000 as allocated in 2015/2016 and subject to budget approval. It is recommended that the current FESS process should be commenced based on the above to allow for further funding allocations to be confirmed through Council by June 2016.

**Financial and Other Resource Implications** The proposed funding allocation for the 2016-2017 FESS program is \$75,000, however this is subject to budget deliberations. This program contributes significantly to many events across the Shire. Without this funding a number of the community events will cease to operate. It is important to offer this scheme, as limited funding opportunities exist at a State or Federal level.

## **Risk Management & Compliance Issues**

Specific risk management and compliance issues embedded within each event application are assessed on their individual merit.

- Applications will open on Monday 21 March 2016
- Direct database mail out to all event organisers and community groups
- Advertising in local media, all council publications and through the council Facebook page
- Community Information sessions will be held on Monday 11 April 2016 in Colac and Wednesday 13 April 2016 in Apollo Bay in conjunction with the Community Funding information sessions
- Council Officers will be available to meet with individual applicants as required to provide further assistance with applications

## **Implementation**

The proposed timelines for the implementation of FESS are:

- FESS Applications open Monday 21 March 2016
- Community Information Session – Colac Monday 11 April 2016
- Community Information Session – Apollo Bay Wednesday 13 April 2016
- FESS Applications close Friday 29 April 2016
- Applications assessed by council officers May/June 2016
- Council Assessment Meeting June 2016 Council Report endorsed at Council meeting June 2016
- Civic Reception July 2016

**Conclusion** The annual FESS program is highly valued by the event organisers, evidenced by the number of applications received each year. The dedicated funding of festivals and events by Council has resulted in a broad range of community managed events that otherwise would not be staged within the Shire. Since 2007 the number of events funded by Council annually has increased from four (4) to over thirty five (35).

## **Recommendation(s)**

That Council:

1. Confirms the second year allocation of Sponsorship and Seed Funding in accordance with the allocation in 2015/2016 which totals \$63,500.
2. Commences implementation of Council's Festival and Events Support Scheme 2016-2017 for One Off and new event funding in accordance with:
  - a. The guidelines and application forms including the proposed processes and timelines, and
  - b. Based on proposed funding of \$11,500 for these categories for a total of \$75 000 combined with the allocated Sponsorship and Seed Funding.

## **COMMUNITY FUNDING PROGRAM**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement for the proposed funding and implementation process to be made available to community clubs and organisations through the 2016/2017 Council Community Funding Program.

### **Background**

Council has provided financial assistance to a broad range of community organisations and clubs through specific funding programs for many years. Over this time the program has typically provided funding assistance to improve community facilities, purchase essential equipment items, conduct community projects and to hire COPACC for community activities.

Emerging trends in requests for financial assistance and changes in community needs have resulted in changes to the nature of requests for funding, however the criteria for the funding program has remained the same.

Due to the increasing growth and demand for events, there was a need to develop a transparent and fair program to support the allocation of funding for events. This resulted in the Festival and Event Support Scheme which commenced in 2007/2008.

A total program review was undertaken prior to the 2012/13 financial year of the Council Community Funding Program resulting in the development of a new funding category entitled "Small Equipment and Training".

The program currently comprises of four categories:

- Recreation Facilities
- Community Projects
- Small Equipment and Training
- COPACC Hire Assistance Fund

In 2015/16 a total of \$145,000 was made available to the community across the four categories.

Over the past year, the following trends have been identified within the specific program categories:

#### *Community Projects*

- Delivery of a diverse range of projects demonstrating community interest and support for increased participation, or new initiatives e.g. Apollo Bay Community

website – major upgrade of the website; Birregurra Motor Enthusiasts Club – club members restoration of a 1927 bus; Colac and District Historical Society – development of historic map and digitisation of the sale poster; Wye to Wongarra Landcare – Wye community sustainable vegetation project.

#### *Recreation Facilities*

- Evidence of significant works to be undertaken on Council owned and other facilities e.g. Alvie Football Netball Club – new storage shed; Beeac Community Centre – new toilets and ceiling fans; Birregurra Bowling Club – purchase of a new commercial dishwasher; City United Cricket Club – purchase of a lawn turf roller and a roller for the pitch covers; Colac Table Tennis Association – purchase of two high quality competition table tennis tables; Cororooke Tennis Club – purchase of new umpire chairs; Warrion Recreation Reserve – painting of the pavilion.

#### *COPACC*

- Successful applicants continue to hold culturally important events at COPACC such as school productions and youth based events which each attract hundreds of people.
- Each of the funded events held at COPACC assist in supporting and nurturing creativity within our community and boost social connectedness. These events are largely supported by volunteers. Applicants report they remain reliant on this funding in order to hold these events. Applicant acquittals show these events contribute to the economy of the Colac Otway Shire.

#### *Small Equipment and Training*

- Following its successful introduction in 2012/13, this category has proved extremely popular, resulting in the purchase of small equipment and training for 31 projects for the 2015/16 Program, e.g. Apollo Bay Sailing Club – safety training and purchase of equipment; Birregurra Community Arts Group – purchase of two PA speakers, microphones and stands; Colac Braves Baseball Club – purchase of club honour boards; Colac Legacy Club – purchase of a computer and document shredder; Red Rock Regional Theatre and Gallery – purchase of roller blinds for the reception area; Western Eagles Football Club – purchase of new junior helmets.

- There continues to be an increase in the number of applications received in this category compared to previous years.

Over many years the Community Funding Program has proved to be an important and well received funding program providing much needed financial support to community groups.

Many applicants report that they could not achieve project outcomes without Council support through the Community Funding Program.

#### **Issues / Options**

The Council Community Funding Program was reviewed internally in order to better respond to current community trends particularly within the sport, recreation and the arts sectors within the Shire. Minor changes have been made to assist with program administration, which are detailed below.

## **Review Process of the 2015/2016 Council Community Funding Program**

Feedback from staff who participated in an in-house review of the program resulted in the following recommendations:

- Council owned and managed facilities will need to continue to meet all compliance requirements. Depending on the project, compliance requirements may be required to be completed for projects across all funding categories (with the exception of small equipment purchases).
- Improvements to the grant application process for 2015/2016 included the introduction of a writable PDF version of the funding application form. This simplified the process for those who chose to submit their applications electronically and will continue for the 2016/2017 funding program.
- The Guidelines for the Community Funding Program has been re-organised to flow better and to remove any duplicated information, thus making it clearer for applicants.
- Removal of the \$10,000 total project cost limit for the Recreation Facilities and Community Projects categories. The guidelines and application forms for the Recreation Facility and Community Projects categories still state that a dollar for dollar contribution to a maximum Council allocation of \$5,000 applies; and that projects with a total project cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000 will be considered on a case by case basis. The slight change in the wording reflects rising costs associated with project delivery and materials, but doesn't exclude an application because it is over the \$10,000 total project cost limit if applying the matching contribution.
- The application forms for the Recreation Facilities and Community Projects categories remain the same. However for the 2016/2017 program, one application form for both categories has been developed with a tick box for the two separate categories at the top of the first page of the application form.
- COPACC Assistance category – clarification on what the funding can be used for with the inclusion of the following wording. "Applicants may apply for up to 50% of the cost of room hire at COPACC. The grant does not apply to costs related to: cleaning, box office fees, security, catering, piano tunes and labour charges. Room hires for the Auditorium and Civic Hall include standard lighting".
- COPACC Assistance category – requests for funding has been capped to \$4,000. This is due to the total allocation for the category being \$10,000 and for the 2015/16 funding program, the category had \$20,000 worth of requests for funding.
- Information sessions – Details of the Festival and Event Support Scheme will also be presented at Community Funding Program information sessions proposed for April.

Target groups for funding programs are frequently the same and this will eliminate the need for two separate sessions.

The funding allocation will be considered as part of the 2016/2017 Budget process.

Proposed funding allocations for 2016/2017 Council Community Funding Program remain

the same as 2015/16:

(15/16) (16/17)

- Community Projects \$40,000 \$40,000
- Recreation Facilities \$95,000 \$95,000
- COPACC Assistance \$10,000 \$10,000

For the 2016/2017 Community Funding Program it is proposed that the amounts available under the program remain the same as the 2015/2016 program. The small equipment and training funding category will be taken from the above allocations, excluding the COPACC Assistance category.

The proposed timelines for the Council Community Funding Program for 2016/2017 are as follows:

Applications open Monday 21 March 2016

Applications close Friday 29 April 2016

Submissions evaluated May – June 2016

Notification of funding at Civic Reception July 2016

Project completion, evaluation forms returned - by May 2017

The attached guidelines and application forms for the 2016/2017 Community Funding Program have been amended to reflect the above changes.

There are four options for Council's consideration:

1. Commence implementation of the Council Community Funding Program in accordance with:
  - a. The revised guidelines and application forms including the proposed processes and timelines; and
  - b. The current funding levels to remain the same.
2. Further review the 2016/2017 Council Community Funding Program and propose alternative program options to Council for further consideration.
3. Wait for outcomes of the 2016/2017 Council budget and commence funding programs in July 2016 in accordance with:
  - a. The revised guidelines and application forms including the proposed processes and amended timelines; and
  - b. The current funding levels to remain the same.
4. Not support/continue the program.

## **Proposal**

**It is recommended that Council supports Option 1**

**It is recommended that Council allocate \$145,000 in the 2016/17 budget for the Council Community Grant Program, subject to Council's normal budgetary process.**

The program contributes significantly to many community projects across the Shire. Specifically in 2015/2016, \$45,340 was allocated through the Community Projects category to support 12 projects which resulted in \$109,994 of estimated project value.

The Small Equipment and Training category allocated funding of \$24,670 resulting in the delivery of 31 projects worth \$60,859 of estimated project value. An amount of \$68,964 was allocated to Recreation Facilities and resulted in 24 project improvement works to the estimated value of \$163,656. The COPACC Hire Assistance funding allocation of \$10,676 resulted in 10 performances and exhibitions with an estimated total value of \$183,113.

## **Conclusion**

Council's Community Funding Program allocation in 2015/2016 resulted in community projects, facility improvements, exhibitions and performances with a total estimated value in excess of \$517,622.

## **VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT'S "REGIONAL STATEMENT" AND GREAT SOUTH COAST MEMBERSHIP**

### **Purpose**

To note the Victorian Government's "Regional Statement" and consider the Council's future membership on the Great South Coast Group following the reorientation of the State's administrative arrangements in south west Victoria.

### **Background**

Late last year, the Victorian Government released a "Regional Statement" which has two main features. Firstly it outlines commitments in economic and social development and confirms that the broader regional development programs will continue to apply across the State.

Secondly it outlines a reconfiguration of regional policy development and program implementation across the State.

Under the Bracks government the range of different government departments' administrative regions were synchronized in 2005 so that for instance a regional police commander would have the same administrative region and could therefore work on a coordinated approach to shared problems or issues as, for example, the corresponding regional director of the education department. This was a significant reform as over many decades various government departments had created many and conflicting administrative regions that hindered cross agency solution development.

Under this earlier reform, the state was divided up into eight administrative regions overseen by a Regional Managers Forum that included regional directors of agencies sharing new synchronised boundaries. Those Forums included Council CEO's and were chaired by a State Departmental Secretary. There were three metropolitan forums and five regional forums. Under this model regional Victoria was divided into very large regions. Colac Otway Shire was part of the Barwon South West region which ran from Geelong to the South Australian border.

During 2015, the State government conducted a review of these forums and regional development activities more generally. The recently released Regional Statement incorporates the outcomes of that review. The Statement outlines a modified approach to regional development where the five rural Regional Managers Forums will be replaced by nine Regional Partnerships Victorian Regional Partnership Areas.

Colac Otway is now included within the Barwon partnership region which also includes Greater Geelong, Surf Coast and Queenscliff. Under the new regional arrangements, the Regional Partnerships will commence from 1 July 2016 and the Regional Managers Forums will cease at that time. The Regional Partnerships will report directly to a Cabinet Ministerial subcommittee and will be responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of regional priority projects at the State level.

According to State Government, the key features of the new Regional Partnerships model include:

1. Working at a smaller scale than RMFs to better respond to place-based priorities;
2. Creating a new channel direct into the decision making processes of government – through the newly established Rural and Regional Sub-Committee of Cabinet;
3. Broadening representation for community and business groups
4. Driving whole of government policy coverage – to address complex cross-portfolio issues;
5. Enhanced community engagement.

In relation to the Barwon region, the Regional Statement notes; “The Barwon region is home to Victoria’s second largest city, Geelong, and includes unique landscapes such as the Great Ocean Road, the Otway forests, marine protected areas and rich inland agricultural districts.”

Collaboration between the education and health sectors is demonstrated by Epworth HealthCare and Deakin University working in partnership to deliver Epworth Geelong: a state-of-the-art acute and rehabilitation private hospital for the region that will integrate healthcare with teaching and research. The region has a diverse economy, supported by interstate road and rail links Avalon Airport and the Port of Geelong. Geelong has a strong advanced manufacturing and processing sector with competitive strengths in biotechnology, ICT and carbon fibre.

### **Next steps in Barwon**

With a population of over a quarter of a million people and growing, the Barwon region has identified priorities to address a number of environmental, demographic, social and economic challenges.

The Government will work with the region to meet these challenges and achieve its objectives, including:

- Tackling disadvantage in Corio and Norlane, two of the most disadvantaged postcodes in Victoria;
- Refocusing the economy to accommodate growth through employment opportunities like the 150 new jobs at the Disability Care national headquarters and structural adjustment impacts in the region from closures such as the Point Henry smelter and the Ford manufacturing plant; and
- Supporting the important role advanced manufacturing will play in the local economy through cutting edge projects such as ManuFuture.

Manufacturing has been and will continue to be a significant sector of the Barwon economy.

The diversity of the manufacturing and processing sector is represented by food, automotive, textiles, metal production, petroleum, chemicals, timber and engineering.

The Greater Geelong area is growing at a rapid pace due to its economy being in a favourable transition stage. Leveraging off the presence of its higher education

and research institutions, the area is increasing its capabilities in knowledge-intensive industries such as Bio Technology, ICT and Carbon Fibre.

### **Opportunities**

- Expansion of Avalon Airport as an international passenger and freight facility
- development of a north-south transit corridor linking Armstrong Creek with Torquay and Geelong
- Development of the Port of Geelong and the Geelong Marine Industry Precinct
- New investment in biotechnology
- Development of affordable residential land at Torquay, Armstrong Creek and Bannockburn
- Greater emphasis on primary care as the population ages.

### **Challenges**

- Need for long-term transport and infrastructure planning to support growth and enhance livability
- Clarifying the role of Geelong as a regional hub
- Local planning to ensure small towns are linked to the benefits of growth
- Dealing with entrenched disadvantage.

### **G21 - Geelong Regional Alliance Regional Growth Plan**

The G21 Region Alliance comprises a variety of independent organisations including the four municipalities within the Barwon Region plus Golden Plains, businesses and community organisations. The G21 Regional Growth Plan is one of eight regional growth plans across Victoria. It provides a broad direction for regional land use and development as well as high level planning frameworks and the means to implement the strategic land use and infrastructure directions that are set out in the Regional Strategic Plans.”

The reorientation of the State’s administrative arrangements in south west Victoria and the inclusion of Colac Otway Shire in the Barwon region rather than the Great South Coast region has prompted the opportunity for Council to review the current dual membership of both G21 and the Great South Coast group.

### **G21 Alliance Membership**

Council has been a member of the G21 Regional Alliance since 2003. The advantage gained through this membership has been the advocacy for projects of significant importance and funding of programmes. Membership is considered to have significant value to Colac Otway Shire.

At the Council meeting in January 2016 Council resolved to extend its membership on G21.

### **Great South Coast Group Membership**

The Great South Coast Group Inc. is a formal alliance of government, business and the community. The Great South Coast Group is comprised of the Shires of Glenelg, Southern Grampians, Moyne, Corangamite, Colac Otway and the City of Warrnambool. Charged with responsibility for delivering the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan, the group also aims to give voice to regional issues and concern.

The Group’s primary functions are:

- Advocacy
- Strategic Planning
- Bringing together disparate groups and individuals to work on common goals
- Support to deliver projects that benefit the region

GSC membership is \$30,000 per annum. As is the case with G21, each year

### **Proposal**

In 2012 Council resolved to continue its relationship with the Great South Coast for a four year period.

Given the changes to State government policy and the reconfiguration of State government regional administration it is appropriate that Council considers whether to continue its ongoing membership in the Great South Coast Group.

Financial and Other Resource

### **Implications**

Ceasing Councils membership on the Great South Coast would realise an annual budget saving of \$30,000 pa. It would also signal a change in strategy for Council. The strong networks and relationships with the members are highly beneficial and if Council wishes to cease its GSC membership, it is highly desirable that the connections particularly with the Councils in the region be retained. Towards this, a CEO network will be pursued to ensure joint advocacy and strategy development opportunities are still realized on a needs be basis.

### **Conclusion**

Whilst the value of Councils participation in the Great South Coast is considerable, the reality of the financial pressures that Council is facing relating to funding cuts, cost shifting, declining government grants and the introduction of rate capping coupled with the changes to the state regional boundaries mean that it is appropriate to consider whether on balance, ongoing membership of this group is sustainable.

**It is recommended that Council cease its membership of the Great South Coast Group effective from 1 July 2016.**

## **REVIEW OF ELECTION COSTS**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the costs for the 2016 Local Government elections and highlight the increase from 2012 and issues associated with the increase.

### **Background**

The Local Government elections are to be held on 22 October 2016.

The Local Government Amendment (Improved Governance) Act 2015 was recently passed by the Victorian Parliament, establishing the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) as the statutory election service provider to the local government sector.

**The Local Government Act 1989 requires that a general election of Councillors must be held every four years on the fourth Saturday in October.**

The previous process was through the tender process however the 2016 general election is legislated through the recent amendment as the VEC the sole provider. Costs associated with holding the general elections in 2012 were \$128,068.00.

On 11 December 2015 Council received the final election service plan and outline of costs for the 2016 general elections from the VEC with the costs summarised as:

Communications campaign \$12,292.19  
Returning officers costs \$90,399.71  
Scrutiny and Count of Ballot papers \$16,715.09  
Printing of ballot material \$7,677.24  
Mail processing \$1726.38  
Postage \$33,305.24  
List of non-voters \$276.05  
Merging of voters lists \$675.60  
Administrative costs \$5,674.67  
Total: \$168,742.17  
GST \$16,874.22  
**Grand total \$185,616.39**

**Recommendation(s)**

That Council:

1. Propose a motion to State Council to be held on Friday 13 May 2016 that: 'The Municipal Association of Victoria lobby the State Government to review the electoral costs for the 2016 Local Government General Elections given the current economic climate that Councils face as they manage the one third increase in general election costs whilst implementing rate capping legislation'.
2. Support the use of the building space currently occupied by the Library Annex as temporary office accommodation for the Victorian Electoral Commission specifically for the conduct of the 2016 Local Government Elections.