



LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE POLICY

Version	Date	Resolution No	Details
1	12 December 2018	3137	New Policy

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework for the provision of funding and in-kind assistance to new and existing businesses in order to:

- ▶ Attract and assist new business to establish in the Liverpool Plains Shire;
- ▶ Support existing businesses to build business management capacity;
- ▶ Encourage and assist existing business to undertake initiatives to expand, diversify or ensure sustainability;
- ▶ Support and facilitate workforce attraction and retention initiatives;
- ▶ Facilitate and achieve sector-specific economic growth objectives in the Liverpool Plains Shire;
- ▶ Capitalise on opportunities and address identified challenges specific to industry sectors in the Liverpool Plains Shire; and
- ▶ Ensure a streamlined approach to receiving, evaluating and determining applications made under Council's Business Assistance Program known as the Liverpool Plains Enterprise Assistance Program ('LEAP').

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993

Liverpool Plains Economic Development Strategy 2017-2020

EFFECTIVE DATE AND POLICY REVIEW

The policy shall be reviewed every four years or earlier if required by legislation, Council resolution or recommendation of the General Manager. If the policy is not reviewed within this timeframe, it remains active until such time as it is reviewed or revoked by Council.

This policy comes into effect on 12 December 2018.

Signed by General Manager:

R S (Ron) van Katwyk

Date Approved:

12 December 2018

POLICY

1 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 A proposal to provide, or a request for financial assistance to eligible businesses under Council's Business Assistance Program: the Liverpool Plains Enterprise Assistance Program ('LEAP') will not be actioned, reported to Council for consideration, or decided upon unless:

- ▶ Clear and detailed information on any and all assistance proposed or requested are provided;
- ▶ Current financial statements, and where one should reasonably be available an audit opinion on those statements, are provided to assist Council in assessing the needs of the proposed/requesting beneficiary;
- ▶ An assessment of Council's capacity to provide the proposed or requested financial assistance and the impacts on its financial position if such assistance is undertaken.

2 DEFINITIONS

2.1 For the purpose of this Policy, financial assistance is taken to mean the provision of any financial benefit, including but not limited to:

- ▶ a grant of funds;
- ▶ a loan;
- ▶ subsidised costs;
- ▶ any reduction or waiving of Council's adopted fees and charges;
- ▶ any write-down or write-off of an applied rate, fee or charge;
- ▶ in the absence of a defined fee or charge, the provision of services or use of facilities at a cost below what it would otherwise be commercially provided;
- ▶ any in kind contribution such as works or infrastructure.

3 CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

3.1 All businesses applying under the Liverpool Plains Enterprise Assistance Program (LEAP) must:

- ▶ Have a registered ABN (Australian Business Number);
- ▶ Be operating within or plan to operate in the Liverpool Plains Shire;
- ▶ Address the assessment framework under the Program Guidelines;
- ▶ Complete the approved LEAP Application Form in its entirety along with all required supporting documentation;
- ▶ Not have any outstanding debt with Council or be in breach of any statutory requirements; and
- ▶ Commit to working collaboratively with Council to foster a productive and respectful relationship.

4 APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Applications under the LEAP will be assessed against the framework established under the Program guidelines;
- 4.2 All applications will be reviewed by Council's Business Advisory Group (BAG). The BAG is designed to ensure consistent and transparent advisory services and will present its recommendations for final determination at a full Council Meeting.
- 4.3 Business Advisory Group (BAG) members are required to maintain confidentiality and to comply with Council's adopted Code of Conduct.

5 ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS

- 5.1 Letters of offer for financial assistance made under LEAP will require agreement of the Applicant to provide regular progress reports to allow ongoing monitoring by Council.
- 5.2 Payment of a subsidy or provision of financial assistance may be withheld at the discretion of Council if information provided in an application is found to be incorrect or misleading in any way.
- 5.3 Council may also request the return of LEAP funds if it becomes evident that the funds have not been expended in line with the submitted application in a timely manner.
- 5.4 A funding acquittal process will also be required under the terms of any associated LEAP funding agreements by a prescribed deadline.