



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Dear Councillors

Your attendance is hereby requested at the Special Meeting of Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Southern Downs Regional Council, 64 Fitzroy Street, Warwick on **Tuesday, 14 January 2020 at 9:00AM.**

Notice is hereby given of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

Jane Stroud

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

10 January 2020

ORDER OF BUSINESS:


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1. **ATTENDANCE**
2. **APOLOGIES**
3. **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

4. CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

4.1 Drought Communities Programme - Extension

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Special Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 14 January 2020
	Governance, Risk And Land Coordinator Manager Corporate and Commercial Services	ECM Function No/s: 12.5

Recommendation

THAT Council endorse the submission of the following funding applications under the Drought Communities Program - Extension:

1. Community Infrastructure Projects - \$600,000, offered through three streams:
 - Directly funded projects for community organisations that were unsuccessful under Council's previous Drought Community Program which was open to expressions of interest in 2019. These projects will allow regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to halls, amenities, clubhouses etc.
 - High priority community infrastructure projects identified from the regional Urban Design Frameworks and endorsed Streetscape projects.
 - Expressions of interest from regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to community facilities including halls, clubhouses etc.
2. Shade structures in Council parks in rural villages - \$200,000.
3. Water carting - supply and delivery of potable water to rural landowners - \$200,000.

Background Information

On 7 November 2019, the Australian Government committed to provide an additional \$1 million each to 122 drought-affected Councils under the Drought Community Program – Extension. These measures are designed to provide an immediate economic stimulus to drought affected communities. This latest extension increases the total funding value of \$250 million for this funding Program.

Funding of up to 100 per cent of eligible project costs is available to eligible Councils for local infrastructure projects and other drought relief activities. Each project must meet at least one of the following project requirements:

- lead to the employment of locals
- contribute to the economic activity of communities/regions
- lead to the retention of businesses, services and facilities

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include:

- repairs, maintenance, upgrading or building new community facilities
- repairs, maintenance, upgrades, construction and fit-out of community spaces
- employing local contractors to undertake repairs and maintenance

- holding events
- undertaking other drought relief activities (including water carting for human consumption) that benefit the community
- development of an Adverse Event Plan

Each project is required to be a minimum of \$25,000. Council can submit applications for funding under the Program any time from now and if approved, the projects must be completed by 31 December 2020.

Report

At the General Meeting held on 18 December 2019, Council considered potential projects for submission under the Australian Government's Drought Community Program – Extension. Council subsequently resolved:

THAT Council endorse the submission of the following funding applications under the Drought Communities Extension Program:

- *Community Halls - \$100,000*
- *Shade Structures for Parks in Regional Villages - \$100,000*
- *Water Tank Rebates for Rural Landowners (not connected to any reticulated water supply) - \$700,000*
- *Debit Cards for eligible residents (to be spent with businesses within the Southern Downs region) - \$100,000*

Following the General Meeting, Council staff were advised by the Federal Government Department (AusIndustry) that water tank rebates for rural landowners and debit cards for eligible residents are not eligible projects. The Mayor and Council staff advocated strongly to the Federal Government and AusIndustry to re-consider the decision to deem the water tanks and debit cards ineligible. However the Department advised that there is no discretion in the interpretation of the Programme Guidelines. Council will continue to progress discussions with the Federal Government for funding of a rural water tank rebate scheme through other avenues.

Following consultation with AusIndustry, the following projects are now proposed to be submitted under the Drought Community Program – Extension:

1. Community Infrastructure Projects - \$600,000, offered through three streams:
 - Directly funded projects for community organisations that were unsuccessful under Council's previous Drought Community Program which was open to expressions of interest in 2019. These projects will allow regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to halls, amenities, clubhouses etc.
 - High priority community infrastructure projects identified from the regional Urban Design Frameworks and endorsed Streetscape projects.
 - Expressions of interest from regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to community facilities including halls, clubhouses etc.
2. Shade structures in Council parks in rural villages - \$200,000.
3. Water carting - supply and delivery of potable water to rural landowners - \$200,000.

Budget Implications

\$1,000,000 funded through the Federal Governments Drought Communities Program – Extension. No financial contribution is required of Council.

Policy Consideration

Corporate Plan 2014-2019 (Revised Edition)

4. The Economically Strong, Sustainable and Diverse Southern Downs

4.1 Identify new external revenue sources, including grants, to fund regional infrastructure and services.

4.8 Maximise private and government funding opportunities to foster both community and business growth throughout the region.

Community Engagement

Nil

Legislation/Local Law

All projects must be completed in accordance with applicable legislation, including Council's Procurement Policy.

Options

Council:


1. Endorse the submission of the following funding applications under the Drought Communities Program - Extension:
 1. Community Infrastructure Projects - \$600,000, offered through three streams:
 - Directly funded projects for community organisations that were unsuccessful under Council's previous Drought Community Program which was open to expressions of interest in 2019. These projects will allow regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to halls, amenities, clubhouses etc.
 - High priority community infrastructure projects identified from the regional Urban Design Frameworks and endorsed Streetscape projects.
 - Expressions of interest from regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to community facilities including halls, clubhouses etc.
 2. Shade structures in Council parks in rural villages - \$200,000.
 3. Water carting - supply and delivery of potable water to rural landowners - \$200,000.
2. Do not endorse the submission of the following funding applications under the Drought Communities Program - Extension:
 1. Community Infrastructure Projects - \$600,000, offered through three streams:
 - Directly funded projects for community organisations that were unsuccessful under Council's previous Drought Community Programme which was open to expressions of interest in 2019. These projects will allow regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to halls, amenities, clubhouses etc.
 - High priority community infrastructure projects identified from the regional Urban Design Frameworks and endorsed Streetscape projects.
 - Expressions of interest from regional community organisations to undertake maintenance to community facilities including halls, clubhouses etc.
 2. Shade structures in Council parks in rural villages - \$200,000.
 3. Water carting - supply and delivery of potable water to rural landowners - \$200,000.
3. Nominate alternate projects.

Attachments

Nil

4.2 Bushfire Recovery Funding

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Special Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 14 January 2020
	Governance, Risk And Land Coordinator Manager Corporate and Commercial Services	ECM Function No/s: 15.02

Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Extends its appreciation to the Federal Government for the Bushfire Recovery Funding Programme.
2. Seek feedback from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development on the eligibility of the following projects under the Bushfire Recovery Funding Programme:
 - a. Water Tank Rebates for rural landowners (not connected to any reticulated water supply).
 - b. Debit cards for eligible residents (to be spent within the Southern Downs region).

Report

On 9 January 2020, The Honourable Scott Morrison, Australian Prime Minister, announced all Local Governments affected by bushfires since August 2019 are to receive a \$1 million untied payment. Council was advised that it will receive this funding from the Department Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development and that the funding:

- Will be a once off untied payment to be spent on resilience and recovery for local government areas affected by bushfires.
- Will have as much latitude as possible, minimal guidelines and reporting.

Council is yet to receive the funding guidelines, therefore at this stage eligibility of projects cannot be confirmed. Regardless, Council staff would like to have further discussions with the Department immediately after the guidelines are released to determine if the nominated projects are eligible and expedite the projects to deliver benefits to the community as soon as possible.

Budget Implications

\$1,000,000 funded through the Federal Governments Drought Communities Programme – Extension. No financial contribution is required of Council.

Policy Consideration

Corporate Plan 2014-2019 (Revised Edition)

4. The Economically Strong, Sustainable and Diverse Southern Downs

4.1 Identify new external revenue sources, including grants, to fund regional infrastructure and services.

4.8 Maximise private and government funding opportunities to foster both community and business growth throughout the region.

Community Engagement

Nil.

Legislation/Local Law

All projects must be completed in accordance with applicable legislation, including Council's Procurement Policy.

Options

1. Extends its appreciation to the Federal Government for the Bushfire Recovery Funding Programme.
2. Seek feedback from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development on the eligibility of the following projects under the Bushfire Recovery Funding Programme:
 - a. Water Tank Rebates for rural landowners (not connected to any reticulated water supply).
 - b. Debit cards for eligible residents (to be spent within the Southern Downs region).
3. Council nominates additional projects under the Bushfire Recovery Funding Programme for feedback from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development.

Attachments

Nil