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A horizontal bar composed of 20 vertical rectangular segments in various colors including shades of pink, purple, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red.

Councillor Discretionary Funds Policy (Councillor Bids)

Councillor Discretionary Funds Policy

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1. Scope

- 1.1 This Policy applies to all requests for the allocation of funds to Councillor sponsored projects for minor works and projects through the City of Ryde- Councillor Discretionary Fund or otherwise known as “Councillor Bids.”

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This Councillor Discretionary Funds Policy provides a framework for the allocation of funding for discretionary projects for Councillor sponsored projects. The allocation of funds to Councillors for discretionary projects is regularly reviewed and may be discontinued due to Council’s funding priorities and availabilities.
- 2.2 In addition, this policy is to provide guidance to ensure that administration of discretionary funding is separate and distinct from Council’s Community Grants and Charitable Donations Policies and the discretionary funding administration is consistent with Council corporate priorities; and complies with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Regulation 2021.

Term	Meaning
<i>City of Ryde Discretionary Fund</i>	The allocation nominally made to each Councillor in the financial budget of the City of Ryde for the purposes of this policy and subject to the requirements of this policy.

3. Funding Applications and Guiding Principles

- 3.1 The following principles guide Council’s administration of discretionary funding:
- Good governance – decision making is undertaken in the public interest; processes are effective and efficient, and feedback and evaluation mechanisms ensure opportunities for improvement are identified and addressed.
 - Transparency and fairness – processes are transparent, applications are assessed objectively against eligibility criteria and any conflicts of interest are addressed and declared.
 - Access and equity – documents, resources and application forms are publicly available, easy to access and understand, and provide all necessary information in a clear and concise manner.
- 3.2 Applications for the City of Ryde Councillor Discretionary Fund must demonstrate benefit to the residents of the City of Ryde. Fund applications can be allocated to minor works or projects and will supplement Council’s existing capital works program and maintenance program.
- 3.3 Discretionary projects, once approved, are implemented by the City of Ryde rather than in the name of individual Councillor/s. Any public recognition or acknowledgement of the project will be in the name of the City of Ryde. As such, no funding or projects will be approved for political purposes.

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- 3.4 Funding will be made available through the Office of the Chief Executive. The amount of funds allocated annually and will be determined by Council through its annual Draft Budget cycle.
- 3.5 Currently the nominal funding allocation is \$50,000 per Councillor. The project funding cap per financial year is \$200,000 per ward, which amounts to a total allocation of \$600,000. Councillors may agree to combine individual ward allocations to the total annual funding cap of \$600,000.
- 3.6 Funds are only able to be utilised within the financial year in which they are allocated, carryover of unspent funds to the following financial year is not permitted.

4. Applications for Minor Works or Projects

- 4.1 Councillors can apply for funding using the prescribed form (*Appendix A*) which must be lodged to Council with sufficient notice prior to the Council meeting for which the application is to be considered. Business Assurance and Governance can provide guidance regarding application submission timing.
- 4.2 Council's General Manager Business and Operations will coordinate the assessment and conformance to the objectives of the Discretionary Fund and that the project is ancillary and consistent with the operating plans of Council.
- 4.3 Following review and consideration of applications by the City of Ryde staff to determine feasibility, resourcing and cost, the Chief Executive Officer will provide a report to an Ordinary Meeting of Council as soon as practicable outlining the details of any lawful applications that conform as being ancillary to and not in conflict with Council's strategies.
- 4.4 Councillors will then be able vote to approve via resolution for project requests they wish to support and have an opportunity to contribute from their funding allocation, should the project request exceed the \$50,000 provided to each individual Councillor. Multiple Councillors can nominate to support the same request for funding and Councillors may collaborate across Wards for community benefit, however the maximum amount a proposed funds project may receive in the financial year is limited to the aggregate of the nominal total annual fund allocation.
- 4.5 Each funding Application report to Council will detail the following:
 - o Name and location of project / purpose of funding;
 - o Amount of funding required;
 - o The evaluation undertaken by Council staff and the net benefit to the City of Ryde;
 - o The consistency of the proposal with the works identified in Council's adopted Operational Plan and future Capital Works Programs;
 - o The Councillor who has requested the funding (including any additional amounts contributed from other Councillor's discretionary fund); and
 - o The balance of funds remaining for the specific Councillor and Ward.

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- 4.6 In all Fund applications, Councillors are required to make a declaration regarding Conflicts of Interest in accordance with Council’s Code of Conduct regardless if there is or isn’t a perceived or actual conflict of interest.
- 4.7 Details of all funds awarded through the Councillor Discretionary Fund will be made available on Council’s website via the Councillor Discretionary Fund Register, including the amount of funds approved, expended and the purpose for which the funds are to be utilised and the outcome.
- 4.8 Applications for Discretionary funding of minor works or projects are separate and distinct from applications made in accordance with Council’s Community Grants and Charitable Donations Policies. An application for the same works or project cannot be made under both the Discretionary funding and Community Grants and Charitable Donations policies.
- 4.9 Eligibility for funds is restricted to works of a minor nature, examples which include but are not restricted to installation of kerb and guttering, playground equipment, street furniture or tree plantings.
- 4.10 Funds under this Policy must only be used for works that are:
- (i) for the benefit of the wider community;
 - (ii) a purpose that is consistent with Council’s adopted Operational Plan and future Capital Works Programs; and
 - (iii) in accordance with Council exercising its functions under relevant legislation, including the Local Government Act 1993.
- 4.11 Funds under this policy must not be used for works on private property.
- 4.12 The application process is as follows:
- 4.13 The Councillor submits a completed application form (*Appendix A*) via the Councillor helpdesk email (DHelp@ryde.nsw.gov.au)
- o The Councillor will receive an acknowledgement of their application from the Business Assurance & Governance team advising which General Manager their application has been forwarded to for action.
 - o The Manager Business Assurance and Governance will forward the application to the relevant General Manager for action and cc. the Chief Financial Officer with clear Council Meeting timeframes to meet.
 - o The relevant General Manager will compile a draft report to Council regarding the application that will include the benefits and lawfulness of the application.
 - o For applications which are supported for submission to Council, the Manager Business Assurance and Governance will include the matter in the next available Council Business paper agenda in a Notice of Motion format by the relevant Councillor/s.
 - o Details of all funds awarded through the Councillor Discretionary Fund will be included in the Councillor Discretionary Funding Register on Council’s website and reported in Council’s Annual Report.

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5. Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
General Manager Business and Operations	Implementation of the Fund Application in accordance with the Policy.
General Manager Business and Operations	<p>Review and consideration of Discretionary Fund applications and subsequent submissions via the Office of the Chief Executive.</p> <p>Prepare a report for consideration by Councillors to an Ordinary Meeting of Council outlining the details of any requests that conform.</p>
Manager Business Assurance and Governance	Review of all applications and advise on any probity matters relating to the proposed expenditure of discretionary funds.

6. References and Legislation

- Local Government Act 1993
- Code of Conduct – Standards of Conduct: Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Memorial Plaques and Donations of Park Furniture and Trees Policy
- Corporate Guidelines Plaque Standards

7. Attachments

Attachment A: Application Form: Councillor Discretionary Fund.

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Appendix A

Application Form: Councillor Discretionary Fund Project: Minor Works or Project

1. Councillor details	
Councillor sponsoring the application.	
Councillors in support of this Discretionary funding application (if applicable):	

2. Proposed Minor Works or Project details	
Name and location of project / purpose of funding:	
Details of funds requested:	
Attach scope of estimating the requested funding	

3. Declaration of conflict of interest and compliance	
<p>Pursuant to Chapter 14 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>, I hereby declare that regarding the above application for funds through the Councillor Discretionary Fund that I have:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> No conflict of interest (<i>whether perceived or actual</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> A pecuniary interest* <input type="checkbox"/> A significant pecuniary interest* <input type="checkbox"/> A non-significant non-pecuniary interest* </p>	
<p>*If any conflict has been declared, please provide details:</p>	
<p>I declare that this application complies with the intent and conditions of the City of Ryde Councillor Discretionary Funds Policy</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p>	

- When completed and signed, the form should be scanned with any supporting documentation to the City of Ryde Councillor helpdesk email (DHelp@ryde.nsw.gov.au).
- If there are any questions concerning the completion of the application, please contact the Manager Business Assurance and Governance at Governance@ryde.nsw.gov.au.

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