

5.10. DOUGLAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FUNDING

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council makes a grant in the amount of \$5,000.00 to the Douglas Chamber Commerce for operational assistance.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Douglas Chamber of Commerce (DCC) is an important industry association within the Douglas Shire. Members include business across the Shire. The DCC needs urgent operational funding in order to continue its promotional activities. It is recommended that funds be used from Council's Grants Program in order to support the activities of the DCC.

BACKGROUND

The DCC undertakes activities to promote the Shire, to advocate for its members, and to support businesses through education and training. While the DCC has made past applications through Council's Grants Program, the Program criteria do not cover general operational needs. With low membership fees to encourage maximum business participation, the DCC requires modest assistance for its core activities. Therefore, an exception is sought in order to provide the funding.

COMMENT

The DCC provides critical support to the business community with a focus on small business. Small businesses are facing a challenging environment and the DCC is undertaking activities to promote the local economy. While Council is currently assisting the DCC with the upcoming Business Expo, further support is required.

Council's Grants Program does not provide for operational funding of general activities; however, funds are currently available that could be used to assist the DCC. Therefore, an exception is sought to provide a \$5,000.00 grant to the DCC to enable continued operational activity.

PROPOSAL

The recommendation is for Council to provide the DCC with a \$5,000.00 grant from its Grants Program.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The direct cost is \$5,000.00 which can be sourced from Council's Grants Program. There are no other indirect costs or resource implications.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

While this is an exception to Council's Grants Program, it can be justified by the wide function that the DCC plays within the Douglas Shire's economy in supporting businesses.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- Economic:** The DCC plays an important role in supporting businesses.
- Environmental:** Nil
- Social:** Business support is important to the social well-being of the Shire.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 2 - Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth

A robust economy is at the heart of a thriving community and enables investment in environmental protection. While our remoteness is a key attribute, it also presents challenges for attracting new business and investment. We must also meet the challenges of fierce competition in the tourism sector. Council will partner with industry to build, diversify and promote the Douglas economy. Council will design and deliver infrastructure, strategies and services that support the local economy and businesses.

Goal 2 - We will work with partners to promote the Shire as the World's leading sustainable tropical destination and encourage business investment.

Goal 3 - We will develop strategies that seek to diversify the Shire's economic base.

Operational Plan 2019-2020 Actions:

This report does not relate to a specific Operational Plan initiative.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

- Advocate** Council makes representation on behalf of the community on important issues, funding opportunities, projects and programs. Council will use its influence to seek the best outcomes for the community.
- Funder** Council often partly funds services, events or community organisations through grants, donations, subsidies and in-kind support. Council will apply robust governance to ensure that such funding is fair and appropriate.

CONSULTATION

Internal: Nil

External: Nil other than discussions with DCC.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There was no community engagement for this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil