



Strathbogie
shire

**COMMUNITY PLANNING
PROGRAM
GUIDELINES**

July 2017

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INTRODUCTION

Strathbogie Shire Council defines 'community planning' as locality based planning which occurs through an established set of processes.

Council aims to assist and strengthen our communities to help them become more environmentally and socially sustainable, foster a sense of community spirit and pride and increase residents involvement in community life.

Community planning is about enabling communities to identify, find solutions and implement projects that address social, environmental, health and wellbeing, infrastructure, cultural and economic goals, issues and opportunities.

Council believes that local communities are best at identifying and resolving local issues and that building 'community capacity' is essential to developing vibrant healthy communities. The approach to community planning in Strathbogie Shire is that planning is not done by Council for its communities but by communities themselves.

1. COMMUNITY

1.1 Community Planning Reference Groups*

**In these Guidelines the name Community Planning Reference Groups refers to all groups who have an agreement with council under the Community Planning Program (eg CPRG, CAG or other).*

Groups may continue to be referred to as "Action Group" should they wish.

Community planning will be undertaken by Community Planning Reference Groups. Community Planning Reference Groups represent the community through a democratic process of open, community planning sessions.

The key responsibility of the Committee is to provide feedback and advice to Council on the following objectives:

- Represent the community through a democratic process of open, community planning sessions and the development of a Community Plan.
- Implement actions which are identified in the Community Plan which strengthen and develop communities.
- Advocate on behalf of the community to other government agencies for appropriate funding for initiatives identified by communities.
- Balancing the present and future interests of all Shire residents and visitors.

1.2 Council

Community Planning is an important way of Council getting to know the communities in Strathbogie Shire and what is important to residents. By building capacity within communities through the Community Planning Reference Groups, Council can work in partnership and assist communities to get what they required.

Council has undertaken the following commitments to:

- Support local communities through a partnership approach
- Contribute funding to community planning initiatives directly through Council's community planning grants and through Council's budgetary process
- Provide Community Planning Reference Groups with direct access to Council to discuss issues of concern at least twice per year, or as agreed, and provide direct assistance with planning for projects that demonstrate broad community benefits
- Facilitate combined Community Planning Reference Group meetings at least once per year or as agreed, to share best practice, ideas and discuss issues relevant to community planning

2. PLANNING

2.1 Community Planning

A Community Plan informs decision-making on strategies and actions of the community and actions and initiatives may evolve to allow new or alternative outcomes which are clearly linked to the community plan. The development of a community plan provides clarity of purpose for discussions with Council about issues the community has identified. Community Plans are submitted to Council for endorsement, and these provide information to Council when developing its strategic plans.

Council encourages community plans to develop a range of projects including large-scale and more complex projects that may be staged over a longer period of time. The key is for Council and the community to work together on those that require strategic planning and/or significant funding.

If your Community Planning Reference Group requires assistance with community consultation strategies please contact Council for assistance.

2.2 The Community Plan

Every four years, Community Planning Reference Groups undertake community consultation to come together to identify and select priorities for their community to include in their Community Plan.

The development of the community plan is through engagement with the local community. The Community Planning Reference Groups identify the key stakeholders and then plan and implement the method to consult with their community. The draft community plan is exhibited for comment and feedback. Pending exhibition and comment the community plan is finalised by Community Planning Reference Groups. The Community Plan is then presented to Council for endorsement.

2.3 The Annual Action Plan

Given that the Community Plan is developed every four year Council requires Community Planning Reference Groups to summarise their Actions for each year in an Annual Action Plan. This document provides a focus for the years Actions and highlights the activities and events on which Grant funding will be spent.

A template has been developed to assist with formatting of the Annual Action Plan. This is available at www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au

3. FUNDING

3.1 Who can apply?

To receive funds through the Community Planning Program, Community Planning Reference Groups need to:

- Have a Council endorsed and supported Community Plan for that community;
- Undertake a project that is detailed or prioritised within the community plan; and
- Undertake the allocation of funds to projects within the boundaries of the Shire of Strathbogie.

3.2 How may the Grants be used?

Community Planning Program grants may be used for the following:

- undertaking a prioritised project or initiative from the Annual Action Plan
- up to \$1,000 per annum for administration costs
- up to \$1,000 per annum for township Christmas decorations
- funds may also be used for the community engagement activities undertaken when reviewing the Community Plan
- allocations may be used as seed funding for State and Federal Government grants and may be held by Community Planning Reference Group for a maximum period of two years
- funds cannot be used for any other organisation's ongoing maintenance expenses, including salaries, telephone, electricity etc

3.3 Allocation of Funds

In 2017/2018 existing levels of funding will be maintained.

Council will assess its level of support for community projects in accordance with its funding priorities. Projects not identified in the community plan will not be funded.

In addition:

- Allocation to Community Planning Reference Groups will be based on submitted Community Plans and population;
- Community Planning Reference Groups will be individually notified of their proposed allocation when Council has drafted their budget; and

- Final notification will be made individually to each Reference Group once the budget has been approved and adopted by Council.

3.4 Application for Funding

All applications for funding must be completed online through the SmartyGrants portal on our website (www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au).

To apply for funding:

- Complete the Application online and include all attachments requested
- Applications must be received by Council by the specified date in the notification letter
- Acquittals for larger projects spanning more than one financial year can be negotiated with Council prior to commencement

3.5 Approval Process

Once submissions have been assessed and approved, the Reference Group will receive Funding Terms and Conditions from Council.

The Chairperson will be required to return a signed copy of the Terms and Conditions, together with a tax invoice (inclusive of GST) for their allocation within 30 days of receipt of notification letter.

4. REPORTING

4.1 Acquittal Report

The Committee shall submit an Acquittal Report for inclusion in the Council's Annual Report. This report includes a summary of all the projects received for that year.

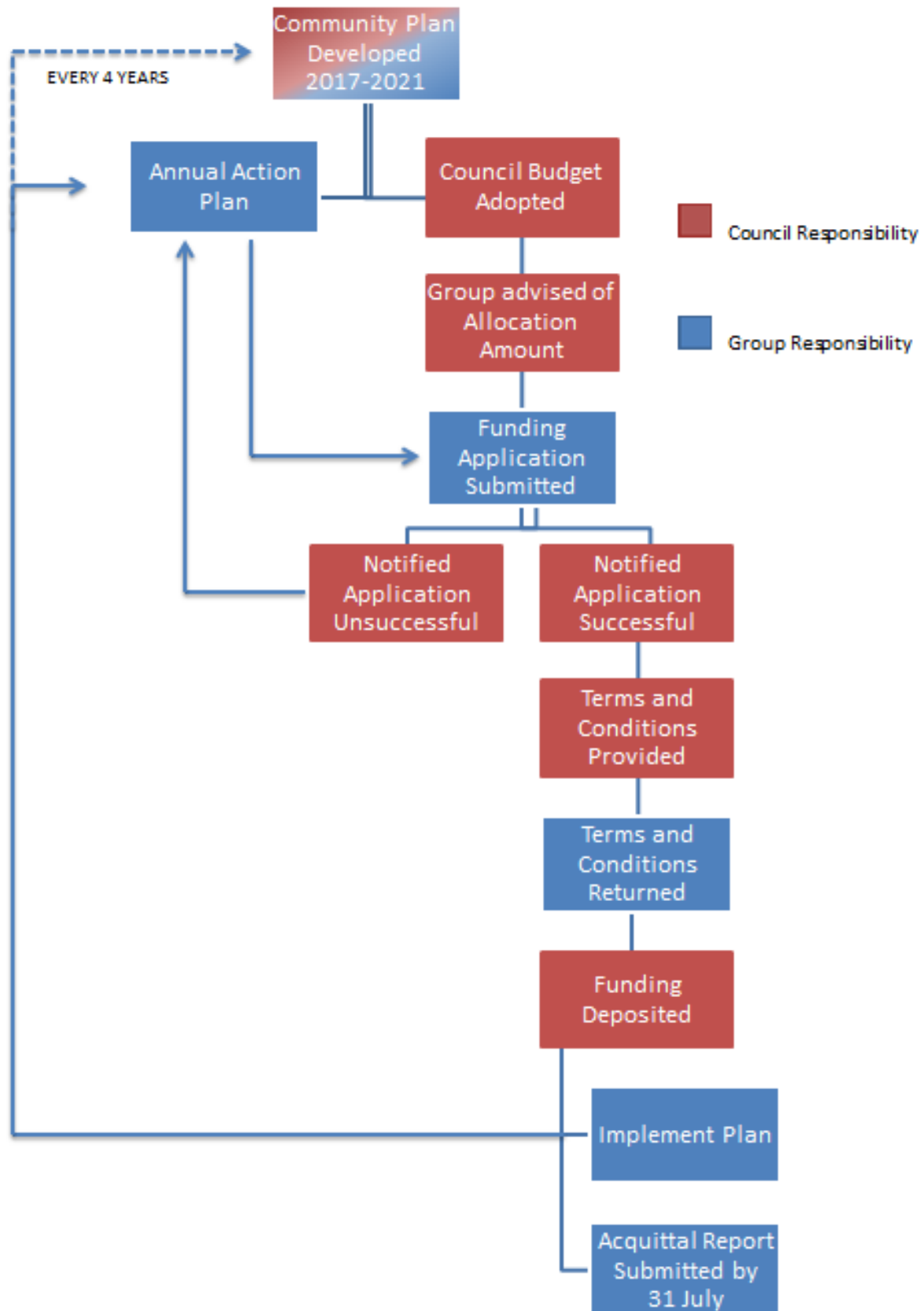
Projects/purchases must be satisfactorily completed and the reported submitted by 31 July of the next financial year in which the monies were received, unless prior written approval is granted by Council.

The Acquittal Report should show the project/s have been completed in accordance with the Funding Terms and Conditions, including photos and budget information.

Acquittals for larger projects spanning more than one financial year can be negotiated with Council prior to commencement. Allocations being used as seed funding for state or federal government grants may be held by the Community Planning Reference Groups for a maximum period of two years; larger projects may warrant an exemption

Any portion of the allocation that is not expended by the acquittal date is to be re-paid to Council by the 30 June of the acquittal year unless otherwise approved by Council to be retained.

5. SNAPSHOT OF GUIDELINES



CONTACTS

All enquiries or requests for further information about the Community Planning Program should be addressed to:

Strathbogie Shire Council

PO Box 177

EUROA VIC 3666

Phone: 03 5795 0000

Free Call 1800 065 993

Fax: 03 5795 3550

Email: info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au

All enquiries related to the online application system eg forgotten passwords please contact:

SmartyGrants

51 Stanley Street

West Melbourne, VIC 3003

Phone: 03 9320 6888

Email: service@smartygrants.com.au