



TOWN OF  
VICTORIA PARK

## Policy Committee Minutes – 27 July 2020



**WE'RE OPEN**  
**VIC PARK**

Please be advised that a **Policy Committee** meeting was held at **5:30 pm** on **Monday 27 July 2020** in the **Council Chambers**, Administration Centre at 99 Shepperton Road, Victoria Park.

**Mayor Karen Vernon – Acting Presiding Member**  
29 July 2020

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# 1 Declaration of opening

In the absence of the Presiding Member and the Deputy Presiding Member, the Chief Community Planner, Ms Natalie Martin Goode, opened the meeting at 5.34pm.

The Chief Community Planner, Ms Natalie Martin Goode, gave permission for the meeting to be recorded for minuting purposes only.

## **Acknowledgement of Country (by Presiding Member)**

I am not a Nyungar woman, I am a non-Indigenous woman. I am honoured to be standing on Whadjuk - Nyungar country on the banks of the Swan River.

*Ngany yoowart Noongar yorga, ngany wadjella yorga. Ngany djerapiny Wadjak – Noongar boodja-k yaakiny, nidja bilya bardook.*

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and respect past, present and emerging leaders, their continuing cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land, which continues to be important today.

*Ngany kaaditj Noongar moort keny kaadak nidja Wadjak Noongar boodja. Ngany kaaditj nidja Noongar birdiya – koora, ye-ye, boorda, baalapiny moorditj Noongar kaaditjin, moort, wer boodja ye-ye.*

I thank them for the contribution made to life in the Town of Victoria Park and to this region.

*Ngany youngka baalapiny Noongar birdiya wer moort nidja boodja.*

## **2 Attendance**

**Mayor** Mayor Karen Vernon (Acting Presiding Member)

**Banksia Ward**  
Cr Wilfred Hendriks  
Cr Claire Anderson  
Cr Ronhhda Potter  
Cr Luana Lisandro

**Jarrah Ward**  
Cr Jesvin Karimi  
Deputy Mayor Bronwyn Ife

**Chief Community Planner** Ms Natalie Martin Goode  
**Chief Financial Officer** Mr Michael Cole

**Governance Advisor - Compliance** Mr Liam O'Neill

**Secretary** Mr Liam O'Neill

### **2.1 Apologies**

**Jarrah Ward** Cr Brian Oliver (Presiding Member)  
**Chief Executive Officer** Mr Anthony Vuleta

### **2.2 Approved leave of absence**

**Jarrah Ward** Cr Vicki Potter (Deputy Presiding Member)

### **2.3 Election of Acting Presiding Member**

In the absence of the Presiding Member and Deputy Presiding Member, the Chief Community Planner, Ms Natalie Martin Goode called for nominations.

A nomination for Acting Presiding Member was received from Mayor Karen Vernon.

The Chief Community Planner, Ms Natalie Martin Goode declared Mayor Karen Vernon elected unopposed as Acting Presiding Member.

### 3 Declarations of interest

#### Declaration of financial interest

Nil.

#### Declaration of proximity interest

Nil.

#### Declaration of interest affecting impartiality

Nil.

### 4 Confirmation of minutes

#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION:

**Moved:** Cr Ronhhda Potter

**Seconded:** Cr Claire Anderson

That the Policy Committee confirms the minutes of the Policy Committee held on 29 June 2020.

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronhhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

### 5 Presentations

Nil.

### 6 Method of dealing with agenda business

#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION:

**Moved:** Cr Bronwyn Ife

**Seconded:** Cr Jesvin Karimi

That Policy Committee in accordance with clause 58 of the *Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019* suspends clause 50 - Speaking twice of the *Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019* for the duration of the meeting.

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronhhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

## 7 Reports

### 7.1 Review of Policy 002 Appeals against Town policy

<b>Location</b>	Town-wide
<b>Reporting officer</b>	Liam O'Neill
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Danielle Uniza
<b>Voting requirement</b>	Simple majority
<b>Attachments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Policy 002 Review of decisions Clean Copy [U82Z] [7.1.1 - 2 pages]</li><li>2. Policy 002 Review of decisions Tracked Changes [6QWN] [7.1.2 - 2 pages]</li><li>3. Policy 002 Appeals against Town policy [7.1.3 - 2 pages]</li></ol>

#### Recommendation

That the Policy Committee recommends that Council:

1. Adopts Policy 002 Review of decisions as at attachment 1; and
2. Repeals Policy 002 Appeals against Town policy as at attachment 3.

#### Purpose

To review Policy 002 Appeals against Town policy.

#### In brief

- Council Policy 002 was adopted at an undetermined date, likely having been carried forward from the City of Perth.
- No individual review appears to have been conducted of the Policy and no recent appeal lodged under this policy can be found.
- The current policy is unclear on how or for what purpose it would be utilised, however having a policy for the review of decisions is considered valuable, as it demonstrates the Council's commitment to accountability through procedural fairness.
- A new version of the policy has been drafted to make clear the ability to seek a review of decisions made under council policies.

#### Background

1. Policy 002 Appeal of Town Policy was adopted at an unknown time prior to 1999. While the policy lists an adoption day in September 1999, this was the adoption of the first policy manual of the Town. This manual incorporated policy brought from the City of Perth. Since 1999 it does not appear that a substantive review or changes have occurred to the policy. An examination of the Town's record management system also indicates that no 'appeal against a policy' has been submitted.
2. The other three councils that formed part of the old City of Perth do not maintain this policy.
3. The current policy sets out that a person may submit an appeal against a policy. However, if they do not meet the definition of a person in the policy, they may only submit an appeal against the wording, not the intent, of the policy.

4. People have the right to seek review of decisions, orders or other use of the Town powers under various forms of legislation. These include review by the State Ombudsman, State Administrative Tribunal or through a court.
5. A number of Town policies provide for the Town to make decisions that may affect a person's rights or property. This includes as examples:
  - (a)Erection of directional signs;
  - (b)Determining if someone is experiencing financial hardship;
  - (c)Refusing the removal of a street tree;
6. Some of these policies provide for review of those decisions, some do not.

## Strategic alignment

Civic Leadership	
Strategic outcome	Intended public value outcome or impact
CL08 - Visionary civic leadership with sound and accountable governance that reflects objective decision-making.	Demonstration of accountability and probity through the application of principles of natural justice, which include procedural fairness.

## Engagement

Internal engagement	
Stakeholder	Comments
Development Services	Development services was consulted in relation to establishing that this policy does not apply to statutory appeals and was confirmed that it did not previously apply for planning matters.

## Legal compliance

[Section 2.7 of the Local Government Act 1995](#)

## Risk management consideration

Risk impact category	Risk event description	Consequence rating	Likelihood rating	Overall risk level score	Council's risk appetite	Risk treatment option and rationale for actions
Financial	Not applicable				Low	
Environmental	Not applicable				Medium	
Health and safety	Not applicable				Low	

Infrastructure / ICT systems/ utilities	Not applicable					Medium
Legislative compliance	Not applicable					Low
Reputation	Members of the public feel aggrieved by a decision of the Town made under a policy.	Minor	Possible	Medium	Low	Treat risk by adoption of a policy providing for internal review of decisions made under a policy.
Service delivery	Not applicable					Medium

## Financial implications

<b>Current budget impact</b>	Sufficient funds exist within the annual budget to address this recommendation.
<b>Future budget impact</b>	Not applicable.

## Analysis

7. In reviewing this policy, two courses of action were identified. To either repeal the policy or revise the policy.
8. A repeal of the policy is a low risk response, given the absence of any appeal having been submitted, and repeal of the policy by other Councils it is unlikely to affect any person.
9. The recommended course of action is to adopt a revised policy that provides for the review of officer decisions made under policies of Council. This does not include local planning policies (which are governed under planning legislation) or other decisions made under other laws which may establish different review systems. Likewise, if it is a decision of a panel, committee or working group, as there is no supervisor in the conventional sense, the policy would not apply.
10. This proposed revised policy establishes that every request for review of a decision should be referred to, and determined by, the immediate supervisor of the original decision-maker. A request for review will be submitted in a form determined by the CEO, which could include an electronic form. It is intended that the Town will respond to these requests within 20 working days. There will also be only 20 working days from being told of the original decision to apply for the review.
11. The proposed policy reflects the good governance principle of procedural fairness by ensuring people have access to a means of review of administrative decisions.

## Relevant documents

Not applicable.



## COMMITTEE RESOLUTION:

**Moved:** Mayor Karen Vernon

**Seconded:** Cr Jesvin Karimi

That the Policy Committee recommends that Council:

1. Adopts Policy 002 Review of decisions as at attachment 1; and
2. Repeals Policy 002 Appeals against Town policy as at attachment 3.

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronhhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

## 7.2 Review of Policy 023 - Provision of Information and Services - Elected Members

<b>Location</b>	Town-wide
<b>Reporting officer</b>	Amy Noon
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Anthony Vuleta
<b>Voting requirement</b>	Simple majority
<b>Attachments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Current Policy 023 Provision of Information and Services - Elected Members [7.2.1 - 4 pages]</li><li>2. Proposed Policy 023 - Provision of Information and Services - Elected Members [7.2.2 - 5 pages]</li></ol>

### Recommendation

That the Policy Committee recommends that Council:

1. Repeals existing Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members, as at attachment 1.
2. Adopts amended Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members, as at attachment 2.

### Purpose

To adopt changes to Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members.

### In brief

- A review of Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members was required by the policy work plan, adopted by Council in April 2020.
- Council provided feedback on the effectiveness of communication between the Town and elected members. This feedback has informed proposed changes.
- Changes to the policy are recommended to strengthen the integrity of the decision-making process, by clarifying and improving processes for requesting and providing information and services.
- The proposed changes cover when the policy applies, limitations on requests for information, how breaches of the policy are to be handled, how confidentiality will be maintained and when verbal requests and provision of information is permitted.

### Background

1. At its meeting on 21 April 2020, Council adopted a work plan to complete the review of a number of policies. Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services was one of the policies identified for review.
2. This policy was originally adopted by Council in May 2019 to set direction regarding appropriate methods of providing information to elected members. It also sought to preserve the integrity of the decision-making process by committing to consistency and equity in the provision of information and services to elected members. The policy was informed through engagement with elected members and Town employees and developed with the aim of solving concerns raised at the time.
3. The policy was amended in September 2019 to:

- a. require that requests be sent to the Chief Executive Officer
  - b. emphasise the need for requests to be relevant to elected members' functions under the Act
  - c. change the timeframe for responses
  - d. include a process for rejecting requests
  - e. add the requirement for records to be kept.
4. The policy was amended in April 2020 to align the description of what a concept forum is with Policy 051 – Agenda Briefing Forum, Concept Forum and workshops.
  5. To inform this review, elected members were surveyed about communication effectiveness. The majority of elected members indicated that they were satisfied with communication between the Town and elected members, satisfied with the process for handling requests and that communication between the Town and elected members has improved since the introduction of this policy.
  6. Opportunities for further improvement were identified through the survey, with some elected members believing that the policy is only somewhat effective in guiding how requests from elected members should be dealt with. This could be related to views that there is currently a moderate – high level of operational requests being sent by elected members.
  7. The majority of elected members indicated that they are satisfied with the proactive communication provided to them by the Town, that they are kept fairly well informed and an adequate amount of information is provided.

## Strategic alignment

Civic Leadership	
Strategic outcome	Intended public value outcome or impact
CL01 – Everyone receives appropriate information in the most efficient and effective way for them	This policy sets agreed methods that are informed by those receiving the information.
CL07 - People have positive exchanges with the Town that inspires confidence in the information and the timely service provided.	The policy includes timeframes for providing information and initiates a process that ensures elected members receive the information they need.
CL08 - Visionary civic leadership with sound and accountable governance that reflects objective decision-making.	The proposed changes strengthen the governance of the Town. They provide further clarity about the role of elected members and the Town.

## Engagement

Internal engagement	
Stakeholder	Comments
Elected members	<p>Six elected members provided their views by completing the communication effectiveness survey.</p> <p>The proposed policy was put on the Councillor Portal for feedback. Feedback was received in relation to contacting the executive and requests on behalf of community members when they are not satisfied with responses received from the Town.</p>

C-Suite and Managers	C-Suite and Managers were provided the proposed policy for comment. Some indicated their support for the changes and some minor changes were made due to the feedback provided.
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## Legal compliance

[Section 2.7 of the Local Government Act 1995](#)

[Section 2.8 of the Local Government Act 1995](#)

[Section 2.9 of the Local Government Act 1995](#)

[Section 2.10 of the Local Government Act 1995](#)

[Section 5.92 of the Local Government Act 1995](#)

[Regulation 10 of the Local Government \(Rules of Conduct\) Regulations 2007](#)

## Risk management consideration

Risk impact category	Risk event description	Consequence rating	Likelihood rating	Overall risk level score	Council's risk appetite	Risk treatment option and rationale for actions
Financial	Not applicable.				Low	
Environmental	Not applicable.				Medium	
Health and safety	Not applicable.				Low	
Infrastructure/ICT systems/utilities	Not applicable.				Medium	
Legislative compliance	Consistent and equitable information may not be provided to all elected members, affecting the integrity of the decision-making process.	Insignificant	Possible	Low	Low	TREAT the risk by adopting the proposed changes to the policy.
Reputation	Not applicable.				Low	
Service delivery	Not applicable.				Medium	

## Financial implications

<b>Current budget impact</b>	Sufficient funds exist within the annual budget to address this recommendation.
<b>Future budget impact</b>	Not applicable.

## Analysis

8. Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members was reviewed, as required by the policy work plan set by Council.
9. During the review, the structure of the policy was altered so that the information contained was easier to follow and digest.
10. Changes are also proposed to strengthen the consistency and equity in the provision of information and services to elected members. These changes are explained in the table below and cover when the policy applies, limitations on requests for information, how breaches of the policy are to be handled, how confidentiality will be maintained and when verbal requests and provision of information is permitted.
11. The changes also further align the policy to the role and functions of elected members, as outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Clause	Proposed	Reason
<b>Policy objective</b> This policy is to identify the process and expectations for the provision of information and services to elected members when performing their role, outlined in Section 2.10 in the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .	Add that the policy applies to elected members when performing their role, outlined in Sections 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10 in the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .	To make it clear that the policy only applies when elected members are performing their role, as outlined in the Act, and not when they are interacting with the Town as a ratepayer, business owner or member of a community group.
<b>Clause 5</b> To ensure consistency and integrity in the way requests from elected members are dealt with, requests for information are limited to information that is relevant to the performance of elected members' functions	Add the section of the Act that outlines elected member functions.	To reference elected members' functions in the Act.

<p>under Sections 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10 of the Local Government Act 1995.</p>	
<p><b>Clause 6</b> Elected members will make every endeavor to obtain information that is already publicly available before making a request.</p>	<p>Remove reference to the website, customer service officers and the administration email address.</p> <p>To simplify the intention of the clause, that elected members don't use formal channels to request information they already have access to.</p>
<p><b>Clause 11</b> To assist with maintaining a shared understanding, elected members shall report any breaches of this policy to the Chief Executive Officer to be addressed.</p>	<p>Add clause.</p> <p>To provide a formal, agreed avenue for elected members to communicate their concerns and work together to maintain a process that follows the agreed policy.</p>
<p><b>Clause 13</b> In line with Section 2.10 of the Local Government Act 1995, the role of elected members is to represent and facilitate communication with the community as a whole. It is not the role of elected members to request information on behalf of a single elector, ratepayer or resident of the district in accordance with both the Act and this policy. Requests of this nature will be rejected in accordance with clause 14 and are to be dealt with through the general customer service request processes.</p>	<p>Add clause.</p> <p>The addition of this clause seeks to address concerns from both the elected members and Town about the amount of operational requests being made, which is contrary to the role of an elected member. When an elected member uses this policy to address the concerns of a single elector, ratepayer or resident, these are generally operational in nature. Examples of these include parking issues in a particular street, the need for repairs to infrastructure, waste management complaints, and planning or building matters. Items of this nature should be reported by calling or emailing customer relations, or through the Town's website. This can also be done by residents and ratepayer themselves.</p>
<p><b>Clause 14 (b)</b> The Chief Executive Officer may reject a</p>	<p>Add clause.</p> <p>To provide more clarity around what information can be requested and provided.</p>

<p>request for information if the request: (b) is considered to be of a nature outlined in clauses 12 and 13 of this policy.</p>	
<p><b>Clause 15</b> If an elected members' request for information is rejected in accordance with clause 14, the Chief Executive Officer shall provide written reasons for the rejection within two working days. These reasons are to be communicated to all elected members to provide transparency and maintain a shared understanding.</p>	<p>Add that reasons for rejecting a request will be provided to all elected members.</p> <p>To give all elected members the opportunity to see the nature of requests that have been rejected, to help maintain a shared understanding.</p>
<p><b>Clause 18</b> Identifying personal information related to any electors, ratepayers or residents of the district included by an elected member in a request will be redacted if a response is to be sent to all elected members.</p>	<p>Add clause.</p> <p>To formalise the process of removing any identifying personal information to protect the identity of individuals.</p>
<p><b>Clauses 19 and 20</b> <i>Permitted verbal requests and provision of information</i></p> <p>Verbal communication with staff, in person or by phone, is not to occur without approval from the Chief Executive Officer, except in the following circumstances:</p> <p>a) preparing for a</p>	<p>Add clauses.</p> <p>To formalise and clarify permitted verbal interaction between Town employees and elected members. This will assist with preserving the integrity of the decision-making process, by being consistent and ensuring equity in the provision of information and services to all elected members. It will further help encourage all involved to interact in ways that are appropriate for their roles and functions.</p>

<p>concept forum presentation</p> <p>b) gaining support or information to assist in representing the Town on an external body or committee</p> <p>c) an event briefing when representing the Town in an official capacity</p> <p>d) a media briefing when representing the Town in an official capacity</p> <p>e) requesting a service outlined in the Town's Customer Service Charter through customer service channels</p> <p>f) seeking clarification on a request made in writing</p> <p>Any requests for information or services as a result of verbal communication, that fall outside of the exemptions in clause 19, must be put in writing, as outlined in clause 7 of this policy.</p>	
<p><b>Clause 21</b> <i>Concept forum</i> Complex matters in which feedback or input is sought from elected members to help guide an officer report that will be presented for an eventual Council decision.</p>	<p>Change the words consensus outcome to feedback or input.</p> <p>To emphasise that concept forums are not decision-making forums and should be used as an engagement method to seek feedback and views from elected members, to inform recommendations to Council.</p>

12. Following the adoption of an amended policy, an internal practice will be developed and approved by the Chief Executive Officer, to further strengthen the consistency of how the policy is applied.



## Relevant documents

[Policy 001 – Policy management and development](#)

### COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

1. The Committee discussed the need for advice relating to declarations of interest to be explicitly stated in the policy.

2. The Committee discussed the wording of proposed Clause 13 and the need to change this to allow elected members to communicate with the Town on behalf of single electors, ratepayers and residents of the district.

### AMENDMENT:

**Moved:** Cr Luana Lisandro

**Seconded:** Cr Ronhhda Potter

That point 2 of the recommendation be amended to read:

2. Adopts amended Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members, as at attachment 2, subject to the following amendments:

a) That Clause 23(a) be amended to read:

*a) general governance advice including declarations of interest.*

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronhhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

#### Reason:

If elected members have any enquiries about declarations or gifts, advice can be received.

## AMENDMENT:

**Moved:** Mayor Karen Vernon

**Seconded:** Cr Jesvin Karimi

That point 2 of the recommendation be amended to read:

2. Adopts amended Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members, as at attachment 2, subject to the following amendments:

b) That Clause 13 be amended to read:

*13. In line with Section 2.10 of the Local Government Act 1995, the role of elected members is to represent and facilitate communication with the community as a whole.*

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronnhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

### Reason:

The other sentences in the proposed clause are restrictive of the role of an elected member and there are adequate controls in clause 14 for the Chief Executive Officer to deal with any requests that are contrary to the policy.

## COMMITTEE RESOLUTION:

**Moved:** Cr Wilfred Hendriks

**Seconded:** Cr Claire Anderson

That the Policy Committee recommends that Council:

1. Repeals existing Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members, as at attachment 1.
2. Adopts amended Policy 023 – Provision of Information and Services – Elected Members, as at attachment 2, subject to the following amendments:

a) That Clause 23(a) be amended to read:

*a) general governance advice including declarations of interest.*

b) That Clause 13 be amended to read:

*13. In line with Section 2.10 of the Local Government Act 1995, the role of elected members is to represent and facilitate communication with the community as a whole.*

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronnhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

## 7.3 Adoption of Policy 121 Covid-19 Business Grants

<b>Location</b>	Town-wide
<b>Reporting officer</b>	Carly Pidco
<b>Responsible officer</b>	David Doy
<b>Voting requirement</b>	Simple majority
<b>Attachments</b>	1. Draft Policy 121 Covid-19 Business Grants - Final Update for Policy Committee 200720 [7.3.1 - 6 pages]

### Recommendation

That the Policy Committee recommends that Council adopts Policy 121 Covid-19 Business Grants as at attachment 1.

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt Draft Policy 121 Covid-19 Business Grants, which will establish a grants program specifically targeted at local businesses to assist in Covid-19 recovery.

### In brief

- At its meeting of 16 July 2020, the Covid-19 Response Working Group (CRWG) endorsed the inclusion of a Covid-19 business grants program as a project in the Covid-19 Action Plan (CAP) which is currently being finalised.
- Draft Policy 121 Covid-19 Business Grants (the Draft Policy) establishes guidelines for this business grants program. It includes two grants categories, one being micro-grants to help small businesses improve resilience, and the second being for larger projects that have broad economic and business benefits.
- The Draft Policy has been drafted as a separate policy to the Town's existing Policy 114 Community Funding so that it can be easily managed as a recovery initiative focused on business.

### Background

1. Under Policy 001 Policy management and development, a policy response was identified as required in order 'to meet the Town's strategic objectives'.
2. The Town is currently in the process of planning the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. To guide recovery process, the Town has adopted the "Restart VicPark" strategy which lays out the broad process for preparing a CAP and a series of strategic objectives for recovery.
3. At its meeting of 16 July 2020, the Covid-19 Response Working Group (CRWG) endorsed a Covid-19 Business Grants program as a suitable project for inclusion in the CAP. The program is consistent with the following Restart VicPark objectives:
  - R1.3: Support a community-led approach to allow recovery to start from sideways and bottom-up;
  - R2.1: Invest in the local economy by creating new opportunities;
  - R2.2: Make it easy for local businesses to adapt and evolve; and
  - T2.1: Look after the stability of our local economy.

4. To ensure that the Covid-19 Business Grants program is delivered in a fair, consistent and transparent manner, it is necessary to introduce the Draft Policy to guide the program.

## Strategic alignment

Civic Leadership	
Strategic outcome	Intended public value outcome or impact
CL06 - Finances are managed appropriately, sustainably and transparently for the benefit of the community.	The Policy guides the grants program, particularly the assessment of applications. The Policy provides a concise, transparent framework for the awarding of Town funds to private parties as grants to aid Covid-19 recovery.

Economic	
Strategic outcome	Intended public value outcome or impact
EC01 - A desirable place for commerce and tourism that supports equity, diverse local employment and entrepreneurship.	The grants program is intended to help local small businesses build their resilience and support delivery of programs with broad benefits for the local business community. The program encourages businesses to innovate in adapting to and recovering from the effects of Covid-19.

Social	
Strategic outcome	Intended public value outcome or impact
S03 - An empowered community with a sense of pride, safety and belonging.	The grants program provides funding directly to local businesses to make positive changes or deliver projects with local benefits.

## Engagement

Internal engagement	
Stakeholder	Comments
CRWG	CRWG has provided general support for a Covid-19 Business Grants program and some guidance on the key concepts.
Governance	Governance has provided advice on the policy approach and feedback on the draft policy document.
Economic Recovery Taskforce (ERT)	The policy concepts were discussed at an ERT meeting and the draft policy document circulated to ERT members for feedback.
Place Planning, Community Development	The draft policy document was circulated to several staff from these teams who have experience with grants and community funding initiatives for feedback.

## Legal compliance

[Section 2.7 of the Local Government Act 1995](#)

### Risk management consideration

Risk impact category	Risk event description	Consequence rating	Likelihood rating	Overall risk level score	Council's risk appetite	Risk treatment option and rationale for actions
Financial	Successful projects fail to deliver the expected benefit	Insignificant	Unlikely	Low	Low	TREAT risk through preparing a Management Practice to guide project delivery, including a robust acquittals process; utilise a cross-functional panel for grants assessment to thoroughly consider likelihood of project success ACCEPT that a range of unforeseen factors may limit project success
Environmental	Not applicable				Medium	
Health and safety	Not applicable				Low	
Infrastructure/ ICT systems/ utilities	Not applicable				Medium	
Legislative compliance	Not applicable				Low	
Reputation	Delivery of grants projects is unsuccessful or triggers events that could reflect badly on the Town	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Low	TREAT the risk through preparing a Management Practice and establishing strong guidelines for the Town's role in projects

Reputation	Demand for “Small Business Resilience” grants exceeds availability of funding, causing frustration for businesses or negative feedback	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Low	TREAT the risk through preparing clear guidelines and communications on how the program is managed (“first in, first served” assessment). Ongoing review of the program delivery.
Service delivery	Administration of grants program requires more staff resources than anticipated	Minor	Possible	Medium	Medium	TREAT the risk through thorough cross-functional project planning to maximise efficiency in delivery. ACCEPT the risk if volume of applications received exceeds planned capacity.

## Financial implications

<b>Current budget impact</b>	Sufficient funds do not exist within the annual budget. There is currently no funding available. It is proposed that funding will be acquired through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covid-19 Recovery Funds - \$91,500.00</li> </ul>
<b>Future budget impact</b>	Not applicable.

## Analysis

- The rationale for the clauses in the Draft Policy is outlined below and should be read in conjunction with the Draft Policy which is contained in Attachment 1.

Clause	Proposed	Reason
1 to 4	See attached	These clauses provide basic parameters for administration of Covid-19 Business Grants.
5 to 6	See attached	These clauses provide basic eligibility and ineligibility requirements for applicants. These clauses are largely consistent with those for Community Funding.

7 to 14	See attached	These clauses outline the basic standards for the Town to assess applications for grants.
15 to 16	See attached	These clauses outline the basic requirements for recipients to acquit grants
17 to 22	See attached	These clauses provide specific aims and criteria for the Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants category.
23 to 27	See attached	These clauses provide specific aims and criteria for the Covid-19 Economic Development Grants category.
28	See attached	Clause 28 is a sunset clause, that will automatically revoke the policy 12 months from its intended launch. This is included because the program is intended to be a specific Covid-19 recovery action, rather than an ongoing program. This clause can be reviewed and the life of the policy extended if necessary.

6. A Council Policy and associated Management Practice should guide the delivery of the Covid-19 Business Grants program endorsed by the CRWG. This could potentially be achieved through amendments to the existing Policy 114 Community Funding or through the adoption of a new, separate policy. The latter approach is recommended as it clearly establishes the grants program as a temporary Covid-19 recovery initiative, with a simple sunset clause and the ability to tailor general provisions to the unique needs of the program.
7. The Policy establishes two categories of Covid-19 Business Grants – Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants and Covid-19 Economic Development Grants.
8. Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants are micro-grants intended to provide responsive, readily accessible support to local small businesses as they adapt to the impacts of the pandemic. Funding of up to \$1,000 can be given to projects that help small business adapt and build resilience – these grants are not to be used for standard operational costs, and only local small businesses are eligible to apply. Building resilience will benefit the individual business and the broader local economy in the long-term.
9. Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants will be awarded on an open, ongoing basis for as long as funds are available. Applicants that meet the eligibility criteria will be awarded funds in the order of receipt. This approach is recommended for two reasons – firstly, it makes the timing of application swifter and more flexible for business. Successful applicants can potentially receive funding within weeks of the program launching and applications can continue to be submitted when businesses are ready. Secondly, this approach removes the need for administration to assess the merit of applications that are potentially very similar from similarly deserving businesses. This makes the entire process simpler and objective for all parties.
10. Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants will be implemented in a similar manner to the Town's CCTV Partnership Program, with funds being provided as a reimbursement. This is both to ensure accountability for the Town when distributing funds with minimal assessment criteria, and to allow

businesses to progress projects while waiting for the outcome of their application – the Draft Policy does not state that retrospective applications are ineligible, unlike Policy 114 Community Funding. It is possible for businesses to commence the project after having their application assessed, where cashflow or project timing issues require this.

11. Covid-19 Economic Development Grants are larger grants of up to \$8,000 for projects that deliver a broader, more strategic economic benefit. Applications can be accepted from businesses, incorporated associations or individuals/groups under an auspice organisation. These broader criteria contemplate potential applications from bodies wanting to deliver a project with clear economic benefits but who do not fall within the Draft Policy's definition of a small or medium business (eg Chamber of Commerce, business networking groups, an informal collaboration of employees or experts). The project must still clearly demonstrate a benefit for business and the economy within the Town of Victoria Park.
12. Covid-19 Economic Development Grants will be assessed and administered through a similar process to other community grants, with advertised funding rounds and a panel assessing applications on a competitive basis. This approach reflects the higher value and associated higher expected benefits/return for this grant category.
13. It is recommended that the Council adopt the Draft Policy without a public comment period. This is so that the proposed grants program can commence and ultimately deliver assistance to the business community as soon as possible. The Local Government Act does not set mandatory statutory advertising requirements for Council policies.
14. A Management Practice will be prepared to support administration of the Covid-19 Business Grants program. In keeping with Policy 001 Policy Management, this Management Practice will be approved by the CEO and finalised prior to the launch of the Covid-19 Business Grants program.
15. Funding for the grants program is proposed to come from the proposed Covid-19 recovery funding. At the time of preparing this report, the 2020/21 budget has not been finalised and the exact allocation of this funding is not confirmed. However, the Draft Policy does not place any budget obligations on the Council and the details of program funding can be managed as the budget is finalised.

## Relevant documents

[Covid-19 Response Strategy - Restart VicPark](#)

[Policy 114 Community Funding](#)

### COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

Elected members were advised of the need for the policy to be changed to include that applicants that have received a COVID-19 business resilience grant in the previous 12 months are ineligible.

### AMENDMENT:

**Moved:** Mayor Karen Vernon

**Seconded:** Cr Jesvin Karimi

That the motion be amended to read:

That the Policy Committee recommends that Council adopts Policy 121 Covid-19 Business Grants as at attachment 1, subject to the following amendment:

a) That Clause 6(e) be added to the policy to read:

*e) The applicant has received a COVID-19 small business resilience grant in the previous 12*



months.

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronhhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

**Reason:**

So that businesses aren't applying for multiple grants.

**COMMITTEE RESOLUTION:**

**Moved:** Cr Bronwyn Ife

**Seconded:** Cr Luana Lisandro

That the Policy Committee recommends that Council adopts Policy 121 Covid-19 Business Grants as at attachment 1, subject to the following amendment:

a) That Clause 6(e) be added to the policy to read:

*e) The applicant has received a COVID-19 small business resilience grant in the previous 12 months.*

**CARRIED (7 - 0)**

**For:** Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Ronhhda Potter, Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Luana Lisandro, Cr Wilfred Hendriks, Cr Bronwyn Ife, Cr Jesvin Karimi

**Against:** nil

**8 Motion of which previous notice has been given**

Nil.

**9 Meeting closed to the public**

**9.1 Matters for which the meeting may be closed**

Nil.

**9.2 Public reading of resolutions which may be made public**

Nil.

**10 Closure**

There being no further business, Mayor Karen Vernon closed the meeting at 6.08pm.

I confirm these minutes to be true and accurate record of the proceedings of the Committee.

Signed: .....  
.....

Dated this: ..... Day of: ..... 2020