



TOWN OF
VICTORIA PARK



Special Council Meeting



WE'RE OPEN
VIC PARK

Please be advised that an **Special Council Meeting** will be held at **5:00 PM** on **Tuesday 31 August 2021** in the **Council Chambers**, Administration Centre at 99 Shepperton Road, Victoria Park.

Mr Anthony Vuleta – Chief Executive Officer
26 August 2021

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1 Declaration of opening

Acknowledgement of Country

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

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 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 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 youngka baalapiny Noongar birdiya wer moort nidja boodja.

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

2 Announcements from the Presiding Member

2.1 Recording and live streaming of proceedings

In accordance with clause 39 of the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*, as the Presiding Member, I hereby give my permission for the administration to record proceedings of this meeting.

This meeting is also being live streamed on the Town's website. By being present at this meeting, members of the public consent to the possibility that their image and voice may be live streamed to public. Recordings are also made available on the Town's website following the meeting.

2.2 Public question time and public statement time

As this is a Special Council Meeting, any public questions or statements must relate to the business of the agenda.

There are guidelines that need to be adhered to in our Council meetings and during question and statement time people speaking are not to personalise any questions, or statements about Elected Members, or staff or use any possible defamatory remarks.

In accordance with clause 40 of the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*, a person addressing the Council shall extend due courtesy and respect to the Council and the processes under which it operates and shall comply with any direction by the presiding member.

A person present at or observing a meeting shall not create a disturbance at a meeting, by interrupting or interfering with the proceedings, whether by expressing approval or dissent, by conversing or by any other means.

When the presiding member speaks during public question time or public statement time any person then speaking, is to immediately stop and every person present is to preserve strict silence so that the presiding member may be heard without interruption.

2.3 No adverse reflection

In accordance with clause 56 of the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*, both Elected Members and the public when speaking are not to reflect adversely on the character or actions of Elected Members or employees.

2.4 Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019

All meetings of the Council, committees and the electors are to be conducted in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*.

3 Attendance

Mayor

Ms Karen Vernon

Banksia Ward

Cr Claire Anderson
Cr Ronhhda Potter
Cr Wilfred Hendriks
Cr Luana Lisandro

Jarraah Ward

Deputy Mayor Bronwyn Ife
Cr Vicki Potter
Cr Brian Oliver
Cr Jesvin Karimi

Chief Executive Officer

Mr Anthony Vuleta

A/Chief Operations Officer

Chief Financial Officer

Chief Community Planner

Mr Michael Cole
Ms Natalie Martin Goode

Manager Development Services

Governance

Mr Robert Cruickshank

Secretary

Public liaison

Ms Alison Podmore

3.1 Apologies

3.2 Approved leave of absence

4 Declarations of interest

Declarations of interest are to be made in writing prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Declaration of financial interests

A declaration under this section requires that the nature of the interest must be disclosed. Consequently, a member who has made a declaration must not preside, participate in, or be present during any discussion or decision-making procedure relating to the matter the subject of the declaration. An employee is required to disclose their financial interest and if required to do so by the Council must disclose the extent of the interest. Employees are required to disclose their financial interests where they are required to present verbal or written reports to the Council. Employees can continue to provide advice to the Council in the decision-making process if they have disclosed their interest.

Declaration of proximity interest

Elected members (in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Local Government [Rules of Conduct] Regulations 2007) and employees (in accordance with the Code of Conduct) are to declare an interest in a matter if the matter concerns: a) a proposed change to a planning scheme affecting land that adjoins the person's land; b) a proposed change to the zoning or use of land that adjoins the person's land; or c) a proposed development (as defined in section 5.63(5)) of land that adjoins the persons' land.

Land, the proposed land adjoins a person's land if: a) the proposal land, not being a thoroughfare, has a common boundary with the person's land; b) the proposal land, or any part of it, is directly across a thoroughfare from, the person's land; or c) the proposal land is that part of a thoroughfare that has a common boundary with the person's land. A person's land is a reference to any land owned by the person or in which the person has any estate or interest.

Declaration of interest affecting impartiality

Elected members (in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Local Government [Rules of Conduct] Regulations 2007) and employees (in accordance with the Code of Conduct) are required to declare any interest that may affect their impartiality in considering a matter. This declaration does not restrict any right to participate in or be present during the decision-making process. The Elected Member/employee is also encouraged to disclose the nature of the interest.

5 Public question time

5.1 Response to previous public questions taken on notice at (insert previous meeting details)

5.2 Public question time

6 Public statement time

7 Presentations

7.1 Petitions

7.2 Presentations

7.3 Deputations

8 Method of dealing with agenda business

9 Chief Executive Officer reports

10 Chief Community Planner reports

11 Chief Operations Officer reports

12 Chief Financial Officer reports

13 Committee Reports

13.1 Draft Policy 117 Business Grants

Location	Town-wide
Reporting officer	Place Leader (Strategic Planning)
Responsible officer	Manager Place Planning
Voting requirement	Simple majority
Attachments	{attachment-list-do-not-remove}

Recommendation from the Policy Committee:

That Council adopts Policy 117 Business Grants as attached; subject to:

1. Remove the words 'Auspice organisation; Incorporated organisation; Small business; and Medium Business' from policy definitions.
2. Insert a new clause 13 – Ineligibility criteria as follows:

“The Business Grants will not support recurrent operational funding, including but not limited to, wages, salaries or administrative overheads.”
3. Insert a new clause 14 – Ineligibility criteria as follows:
 - a. "Applicants must not lobby, seek to influence or canvass the decision-making of elected members or employees, in relation to their applications other than by way of an authorised presentation and/or deputation at a Council meeting. Any applicant who does so will have their application rejected."
 - b. That all remaining clauses be renumbered accordingly.
4. Amend existing Clause 17 to read as follows:

"The Town will convene a panel to assess all applications received, which will:

 - a. consist of at least three suitably qualified and experienced people, none of whom shall be elected members, appointed by the Chief Executive Officer;
 - b. assess grant applications against the requirements and Assessment Criteria set out in this policy; and
 - c. provide recommendations of which grant applications should be accepted or rejected to the Council."
5. Delete existing clause 23 and substitute as follows:

“The final decision whether a grant application is to be approved or rejected will be made by Council following receipt of a recommendation from the assessment panel.”

Purpose

For Council to adopt a policy framework for an ongoing Town of Victoria Park Business Grants program in support of the Town's Economic Development Strategy.

In brief

- At its meeting of 18 August 2020, Council adopted Policy 121 COVID-19 Business Grants which establishes the Town's inaugural business grants program. The program is a COVID-19 recovery project, funded by the COVID-19 recovery fund, and has supported several local businesses under two categories - the Economic Development Grant, which provides up to \$8,000 for strategic projects with broad economic and business benefits, and the Small Business Resilience Grant, \$1,000 micro-grants to help individual small businesses with COVID-19 recovery initiatives.
- Policy 121 COVID-19 Business Grants includes a sunset clause and will be revoked in September 2021. This is in keeping with the conclusion of COVID-19 Business Grant funding from the COVID-19 recovery fund.
- Feedback received from staff, elected members and the Business Advisory Group indicates that there is interest in an ongoing, non-COVID-19 related business grants program. This program could potentially support a broad range of economic development objectives and needs, both under the Town's Economic Development Strategy and broader strategic program.
- Policy 117 Business Grants provides an overarching policy to establish a highly flexible business grants program, with project objectives and grant categories being reviewed on an annual basis in response to current trends and needs. The policy does not obligate Council to deliver the program every year, acknowledging that availability of grants will be in accordance with availability of budget.

Background

1. Under Policy 001 Policy management and development, a policy response was identified as required to meet:
 - the Town's strategic objectives
 - community need or expectation.
2. The Economic Development Strategy: Pathways to Growth 2018-2023 (the "EDS") provides several pathways to build on local identity and develop a diverse and resilient local economy. Pathway 4 focuses on supporting innovation and entrepreneurship and Pathway 5 focuses on creating an enabling business environment. While the EDS does not specifically include business grants in its recommendations, such a program can be crafted as a strong tool to deliver EDS actions such as:
 - a) 4.3 Enable strategic interaction with start-ups, entrepreneurs and innovators to leverage and promote entrepreneurial thinking within Council.
 - b) 4.5 Actively develop the regional innovation ecosystem's capacity to nurture businesses, artists, creatives and innovators and generate economic growth in key industry sectors.
 - c) 5.7 Build the reputation of the Town as a great place for investment by identifying and promoting its business success stories.
 - d) Various actions in Pathway 6 and Pathway 7 targeting high-value industry sectors and high-value precincts, such as 7.11 Explore and promote programs to help businesses integrate technology into the retail and hospitality offering and 7.18 Implement a Shopfront Improvement Grant scheme.

3. The Town's inaugural business grants program was launched in 2020 as a COVID-19 recovery project. The project specifically targeted building resilience and invigorating the local economy during the pandemic recovery phase. Funding of the program is finite under the COVID-19 recovery fund and the governing Policy 121 COVID-19 Business Grants will be revoked in September 2021. In total there were 28 Small Business Grant applications submitted, with 13 of these awarded a grant. A total of 14 Economic Development Grants applications were submitted, with seven awarded a grant. For more detailed information on the individual applications, see pages 3 and 4 of the EDS Quarterly Reporting from the July OCM which is attached.
4. A small internal review was undertaken to assess the efficacy of the COVID-19 Business Grants program and make recommendations for a future ongoing program of business grants. During this process, the business grants concept was discussed at a meeting of the Town's Business Advisory Group ("BAG"). The BAG was largely supportive of a business grants program.
5. In addition to discussion with the BAG, the review considered feedback from staff involved in the program and case studies of business grant policy frameworks from other local governments. Engagement with individual recipients of COVID-19 Business Grants was not included as many of these projects are still ongoing.
6. The review of the COVID-19 Business Grants program identified four key themes relevant to any future program:
 - a) *Flexibility* – Policy 121 was developed for a very specific purpose in a unique context. As the recovery phase has progressed, it has become apparent that some of the policy requirements have become outdated or are overly limiting on new and interesting ideas. For example, the program attempts to prevent Small Business Resilience Grants being used for "standard operating costs", a term which is defined in the policy. This has led to some confusion for applicants who want to use a grant for costs such as marketing, disbursements and staff hours where these are necessary to support a specific recovery or resilience project. More broadly, as the recovery phase has progressed, the Policy 121 conceptualisation of 'recovery' for small businesses has not evolved.
 - b) *Ambivalence or stagnation of grant themes* – broad themes for grants can provide flexibility to applicants but can also create confusion or uncertainty. For COVID-19 Business Grants, staff observed that some applicants or potential applicants were uncertain what was meant by terms such as "recovery" and "resilience". Policy 121 themes were at the same time, both overly restrictive and too abstract. Feedback received from the community via the BAG or informal conversations with staff indicates that business prefer clear, specific grant themes so that they can quickly determine their level of interest and relevance. Similar issues have been observed by Councils running "innovation" business grants, where there is a need to clearly define innovation without unduly limiting potential grant projects.
 - c) *Resourcing impacts* – running the COVID-19 Business Grants program required substantial staff hours and resourcing, this must be considered in the planning stages of any future program. In particular, the Small Business Resilience Grants have required substantial staff hours with limited uptake, and the value-point of these grants must be considered. Micro-grants should not be dismissed entirely but should only be utilised where there is a very specific and significant need.
 - d) *Information and access* – the Town have administered community grants for many years and has a well-established suite of informational tools and processes as well as a highly-informed target market. However, the target market for COVID-19 Business Grants is not generally highly experienced with a program of this nature and this was reflected in the application paperwork received and overall program uptake. Further consideration should be given to how the program is marketed and the informational tools provided to potential applications, including specific consideration of the Town's substantial culturally and linguistically diverse business community. Improved informational and

educational tools may also assist in reducing the administrative burden if applicants are better positioned to complete paperwork and deliver projects with minimal staff assistance.

7. Overall, the review of the program concluded that a Business Grants program has benefit to the Town's business community and is consistent with the EDS but must be carefully formulated to provide specific benefits while not stifling creativity or failing to respond to changing priorities and conditions. A new Council policy to guide an ongoing Business Grants program has therefore been developed.

Strategic alignment

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 Business Grants program can support local businesses or projects that deliver local economic development benefits. The program can both target these strategic outcomes directly and create a broader environment of business vibrancy.

Engagement

Internal engagement	
Stakeholder	Comments
Economic Development (Place Planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two informal workshops were held: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workshop 1 focused on experiences with the COVID-19 Business Grants program, Policy 121, and broad ideas for future programs ○ Workshop 2 focused on Draft Policy 117 Business Grants • Staff were invited to complete a short survey on the COVID-19 Business Grants Program • Staff were invited to provide feedback on Draft Policy 117 Business Grants
Place Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff were invited to complete a short survey and/or provide feedback on their experiences with the COVID-19 Business Grants program • Staff were invited to provide feedback on Draft Policy 117 Business Grants
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff were invited to complete a short survey and/or provide feedback on their experiences with the COVID-19 Business Grants program • Staff were invited to provide feedback on Draft Policy 117 Business Grants
Business Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff were invited to complete a short survey and/or provide feedback on their experiences with the COVID-19 Business Grants program • Staff were invited to provide feedback on Draft Policy 117 Business Grants
Business Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members were invited to provide feedback on the COVID-19 Business Grants program and their views on a future program at a BAG meeting

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	Business Grants program is over or under-funded.	Insignificant	Possible	Low	Low	TREAT risk by reviewing the program annually and utilising learnings in the budget planning process.
	Successful projects/recipients fail to deliver the project or expected economic benefit.	Minor	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; review program annually. ACCEPT that a range of unforeseen factors may limit project success.
	Businesses become overly reliant on grant funding.					TREAT risk by including conditions within the policy around future funding and project eligibility.
Environmental	Not applicable				Medium	
Health and safety	Not applicable				Low	
Infrastructure/ ICT systems/ utilities	Not applicable				Medium	

Legislative compliance	Not applicable					Low	
Reputation	Community perceives that business grants are administered unfairly or inefficiently.	Minor	Rare	Low	Low	AVOID the risk by preparing a management practice, communication tools and engagement strategy to demonstrate the program is being well managed; ensuring appropriate resourcing to enable efficient management of the program.	
	Delivery of grant projects is unsuccessful or triggers events that could reflect badly on the Town.	Minor	Unlikely	Low	Low	TREAT the risk through preparing a management practice and establishing strong guideline's for the Town's role in projects.	
	Community does not understand the benefit of a business grants program or how to access the program.	Insignificant	Possible	Low	Low	TREAT the risk through preparing informational tools and communication strategy.	
Service delivery	Administration of business grants exceeds staff capacity.	Minor	Likely	Moderate	Medium	TREAT the risk through considering resourcing at all stages of program planning and budget planning. ACCEPT the risk if administration needs exceed staff capacity.	

Financial implications

Current budget impact	Sufficient funds exist within the annual budget to address this recommendation.
Future budget impact	Adoption of Draft Policy 117 Business Grants does not obligate the Council to fund and run a business grants process, however, it does create a reasonable expectation for such a program. Place Planning is advocating for a budget of \$80,000 in the 2021/22 annual budget. This is consistent with the budget allocated from the COVID-19 Recovery funds in 2020/21, of which \$51,120 (ex GST) was awarded to seven Economic Development Grant recipients, and \$10,506 (ex GST) was awarded to twelve Small Business Recovery Grant recipients. The amount allocated to business grants will be reviewed each year.

Analysis

8. Following the internal review of the COVID-19 Business Grants program, draft Policy 117 Business Grants has been developed to address review findings and establish an ongoing business grants program in support of the EDS. Development of a new policy is preferable to a review of the existing Policy 121 COVID-19 Business Grants policy as the latter and its programs remain current until September 2021, and the existing provisions should be retained until the operation of the program concludes. The highly specific approach of Policy 121 conflicts with the broad, flexible approach of draft Policy 117 and it is difficult to reconcile these two approaches within a single policy.
9. A number of policy and program approaches from other local governments were considered through the review. The City of Perth model was found to be highly advantageous in addressing the issues identified in the review, particularly in relation to flexibility and ambivalence or stagnation of themes. The City of Perth model utilises a brief, generic policy to establish the fundamentals of the grant program. The policy does not attempt to establish specific program themes or grant categories. Instead, these are regularly reviewed and published in the City's grants information pack. This approach allows the City to be highly nimble and efficient in the delivery of its grant programs, responding to changing priorities as they arise, as observed with its ability to swiftly establish a COVID-19 response grants program. The 2019/20 and 2020/21 information packs are attached to this report to demonstrate the breadth of potential programs that can be delivered under the same overarching policy.
10. Draft Policy 117 Business Grants has been based on the City of Perth approach. The ongoing review of the business grants program will be broadly undertaken as follows (timings are by financial year):
 - a) Staff will review the previous year's themes and provide summary information to elected members (Target timeframe – late Q3).
 - b) Elected members will provide guidance on strategic objectives, target themes, audiences and categories, and broad funding allocation. The strategic direction should primarily reflect the EDS but can also draw on needs or actions in other adopted Council strategies where there is mutual benefit. For example, a shopfront improvement grant program could also meet heritage preservation or Economic Development Program objectives; or an accessibility building works grant program can also meet Disability Access and Inclusion Plan objectives. (Target timeframe – late Q3 to early Q4).
 - c) Staff will prepare information packs, any program-specific assessment criteria, and media collateral to deliver the program in keeping with the strategic direction set by elected members (Target timeframe – Q4).

- d) Staff will include business grants in the budget advocacy process, reviewed to accommodate the scope envisioned (Target Timeframe – Q3/Q4).
 - e) Launch of the new information packs, website content and business grants program (Target Timeframe – Q1).
11. This process will be outlined in a management practice to support draft Policy 117, which staff will prepare following elected member consideration of the draft policy.
 12. This approach has the advantage of being highly flexible to changing needs and priorities. This might include urgent and unforeseen needs that arise outside of the review process (similar to the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery effort), where the Town is able to quickly adapt or broaden the program pending availability of budget and elected member support. It also provides a simple process for the grant objectives to be changed each year, if desirable, without the need for amending the Council policy. The approach offers a sound balance of flexibility and structure.
 13. A summary of the draft Policy 117 Business Grants components is provided below.

Clause	Reason
Administration of Business Grants, clauses 1-6	These clauses are largely taken from Policy 121. They establish the program and Town’s reporting requirements. Notably, clause 2 states that the Council may review program funding or suspend the program if funding is not available.
Conflicts of Interest, clauses 7-10	These clauses are standard clauses largely taken from Policy 121.
Eligibility, clauses 11-12	These clauses establish the basic eligibility requirements for any business grants recipient. These are broad requirements, largely taken from Policy 121 and similar to the community grants program eligibility requirements, intended to protect the Town’s reputational and financial interests.
Business Grants Categories and Assessment Criteria, clauses 13-15	<p>Clauses 13 and 14 establish the basic requirements for annual review of the program categories and assessment criteria, in keeping with the description provided in this report.</p> <p>Clause 15 provides a series of basic assessment criteria that will apply to any program delivered under draft Policy 117. These include theme-specific criteria to be identified during the annual review process, and general criteria intended to ensure that projects funded by the program are consistent with the EDS and likely to succeed in delivering an economic benefit.</p>
Approval Process, clauses 16-23	These clauses provide the most basic requirements for assessing and approving a business grant, which remain unchanged regardless of the strategic themes or categories. These are largely taken from Policy 121. These clauses are intended to facilitate ongoing transparency and consistency in the assessment process. The future management practice will augment these requirements with additional guidance for staff on routine administration of the program.

Acquittal Terms, clauses 24-25

These clauses provide the most basic requirements for acquittal of a business grant. The future management practice will augment these requirements with additional guidance for staff on routine administration of the program.

Relevant documents

[Town of Victoria Park Economic Development Strategy: Pathways to Growth 2018-2023](#)

[Town of Victoria Park Policy 121 COVID-19 Business Grants](#)

[City of Perth Policy 18.13 Sponsorship and Grants](#)

Further considerations

14. At the 26 July 2020 meeting of the Policy Committee, a question was asked about 'closely associated persons' and the position the Town has taken on this matter in the past. The draft Business Grant Policy replicates Clause 7d of Policy 114 – Community Funding by stating that Town employees and elected members are ineligible to access the Community Funding Program. The clause seeks to deal with the ineligibility of persons closely associated with the local government, and the clarity of the clause assists the administration identify ineligible applicants during the assessment process.
15. If Council wanted to elaborate on this ineligibility criteria through the definition of a 'closely associated person' under the *Local Government Act 1995*, they could so by amending the draft Business Grants Policy to more closely reflect section 5.62(1) of the Act which states:

(1) For the purposes of this Subdivision a person is to be treated as being closely associated with a relevant person if —

(a) the person is in partnership with the relevant person; or

(b) the person is an employer of the relevant person; or

(c) the person is a beneficiary under a trust, or an object of a discretionary trust, of which the relevant person is a trustee; or

(ca) the person belongs to a class of persons that is prescribed; or

(d) the person is a body corporate —

(i) of which the relevant person is a director, secretary or executive officer; or

(ii) in which the relevant person holds shares having a total value exceeding —

(I) the prescribed amount; or

(II) the prescribed percentage of the total value of the issued share capital of the company, whichever is less; or

(e) the person is the spouse, de facto partner or child of the relevant person and is living with the relevant person; or

(ea) the relevant person is a council member and the person —

(i) gave an electoral gift to the relevant person in relation to the election at which the relevant person was last elected; or

(ii) has given an electoral gift to the relevant person since the relevant person was last elected; or

(eb) the relevant person is a council member, and the person has given a gift to which this paragraph applies to the relevant person since the relevant person was last elected; or

(ec) the relevant person is a CEO and the person has given a gift to which this paragraph applies to the relevant person since the relevant person was last employed (or appointed to act) in the position of CEO; or

(f) the person has a relationship specified in any of paragraphs (a) to (d) in respect of the relevant person's spouse or de facto partner if the spouse or de facto partner is living with the relevant person.

16. The draft Business Grants Policy is therefore capable of being amended accordingly:

12. The following ineligibility criteria apply to all Business Grants:

e. The applicant is a Town employee, Elected Member or closely associated person (as defined by the Local Government Act 1995) of a Town employee or elected member.

17. It is important for Council to consider the administration's ability to uncover and assess the information referred to in Clause 5.62(1) of the Act. The administration would need to build the characteristics of a 'closely associated person' into the grant application process via a series of self-disclosure questions rather than a reactive case by case investigative process by staff, which would be an unrealistic and potentially ineffective administrative task.

18. The below considerations with respect to the Policy Committees amendment to Clause 23 of the Business Grants Policy, which requires all grants to be presented to Council for determination, are outlined below:

- a. Having all grants determined by Council does not align with the Economic Development Strategy's (EDS) objectives/actions of reducing red tape for the local business community and will result in an extended timeframe for determination (from 30 days as outlined in the original Clause 22 to between 60 to 90 days). See Action 5.4 of the EDS which states: '*Remove unnecessary regulatory barriers, simplify application processes and actively promote improvements to the local business community.*'
- b. A lengthened assessment timeframe may result in a reputational risk for the Town (i.e. difficult to do business with/or not responsive).
- c. The Business Grants program would need to be structured into set funding rounds rather than some funding categories potentially being accessible all year round. This reduces the flexibility of the grants program and makes it more difficult for the business community to align their projects with available funding now and in the future.
- d. A process in which Council endorsement is required for grants means there is also the chance that grant categories that have been organised to respond to an emergent need or an emergency might be redundant/too late by the time Council approval is finalised.
- e. An amendment to Clause 23 would provide additional administrative reporting and coordination to what is currently undertaken, which will therefore impact on the capacity to deliver other projects

in the Economic Development Program. To understand the impact on the broader Economic Development Program, the additional time to administer all the grants through to Council for final determination is roughly the equivalent amount of time taken to prepare and deliver a business networking event. Administration would need to consider which part of the Economic Development Program would need to be reduced/removed to cater for the additional resourcing to administer the Business Grants through to Council.

19. At the 17 August 2021 OCM, Council determined to refer the Business Grants Policy back to the 23 August 2021 Policy Committee for further consideration.
20. At the 23 August 2021 Policy Committee Council requested clarification on the following matters:
 - a. clarification on time frames between receiving the business grants and the dispersing of the funds where it comes to Council for decisions;
 - b. clarification on the minimum and maximum amounts of grants considered;
 - c. clarification on the wording of clause 15(a);
 - d. clarification on whether the time frames can be minimised;
 - e. clarification on the number of categories of business grants; and
 - f. whether applications could apply for more than one category.
21. With respect to points 20a. and 20d. above the anticipated timeframes should Council approval of grants be required (identified in point 18 above) are based on the following:
 - a. A grant round must be open for at least a four-week period.
 - b. It takes 2-3 weeks to work with businesses to correct errors in the applications and then bring together the panel to assess the final applications.
 - c. It takes a minimum of a week to write a report for Council.
 - d. It takes four weeks for a report to go to Ordinary Council Meeting for a decision to be made (this includes complying with the internal review process for all reports prior to being formalised in the ABF Agenda and OCM Agenda).
 - e. It takes 2-4 weeks from the time the applications are endorsed at Council to having letters of agreement signed and invoices processed (pending business responsiveness).
 - f. It is important to note that these tasks form part of a larger body of work that staff undertake which can impact on timeframes (ie. There is not an individual staff member who is only working on grants in isolation of/or protected from other tasks).
22. With respect to 20 b) e) and f) above, a discussion ensued regarding business grant categories and how the Town would address businesses applying for funding from more than one category in a financial year. It is the Town's view that Businesses would be able to apply for multiple grant categories, but only for separate or discrete projects. A Business could not apply for multiple grant categories to service the one project.

23. The above approach aligns with the current Community Grants approach.
24. The Town's approach to dealing with multiple grant categories will be addressed in the Business Grants Policy Management Practice and also the future Terms and Conditions of future grant categories.
25. With respect to 20c), clarification on the wording was provided during Policy Committee, and related to a grant proposal that might provide a local economic impact to the Town, but actually take place outside of the Town's boundaries (ie. Training).

14 Motion of which previous notice has been given

15 Public question time

16 Public statement time

17 Meeting closed to the public

17.1 Matters for which the meeting may be closed

17.1.1 - 2020-21 Annual Review of the Chief Executive Officer contract

17.2 Public reading of resolutions which may be made public

18 Closure