



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

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GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL

Advocacy and External Grants Policy

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1. TITLE

Advocacy and External Grants Policy

2. OBJECTIVES

This policy sets out how Glen Eira City Council (**Council**) undertakes advocacy and grant activities in performing its role and functions. It ensures that these functions:

- comply with relevant Council strategies, plans and statutory obligations
- provide clear and demonstrable community benefit
- are transparent, coordinated and based on evidence
- support Council's long term financial and organisational objectives.

3. BACKGROUND

Council advocates on behalf of the Glen Eira community and seeks external grant funding to secure investment for services, programs and infrastructure that are not fully funded by Council. These activities strengthen collaborative partnerships with the Victorian and Australian Governments and help Council respond to emerging needs and deliver long term commitments.

The *Council Plan 2025–2029* sets the strategic objectives for advocacy and collaborative partnerships. The Plan highlights the need for a coordinated, evidence-based approach and clear communication of Council's priorities.

This work is guided by Council's *Financial Sustainability Strategy*, shaped by extensive community engagement and focused on protecting essential services, supporting vulnerable residents, and making fair, transparent and future-focused decisions.

This policy outlines how Council undertakes advocacy and assesses grant opportunities in a consistent and accountable way.

4. SCOPE

This Policy applies to:

- all advocacy planning, priority setting and activities undertaken by Council and Council officers
- all external grant opportunities, including their identification, assessment, prioritisation, decision making, due diligence and governance.

This Policy does not apply Council's *Community Grants Program*, which is covered under a separate policy and framework.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

Council uses advocacy and external grants to advance its strategic priorities and deliver community benefit. This Policy sets a clear, risk-based framework that guides how Council plans, assesses and governs advocacy and grant activity, and ensures coordinated oversight where required.

6. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
The Act	Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
Advocacy	Council speaking or acting on behalf of the Glen Eira community to influence public policy, funding and decisions made by governments, agencies and other external decision-makers.
Advocacy activities	Activities that support Council's advocacy objectives, which may include submissions, policy statements, grant seeking, strategic collaborative partnerships, communications campaigns, and direct engagement with Members of Parliament, political candidates and stakeholders.
Council Plan	A four-year strategic plan required under the Act, outlining Council's priorities and intended outcomes.
Glen Eira Community Vision 2040	Glen Eira's long-term vision developed through deliberative engagement.
Grant	Monetary or in-kind external funding allocated to Council by another body (usually the Victorian or Australian Governments) to contribute to services, programs, infrastructure or other initiatives.
Government	Refers to the Australian or Victorian Governments.
Mid-tier Grants	Grants of moderate scale, risk or stakeholder impact that support strategic or service outcomes and involve internal or external collaboration.
Operational Advocacy	Routine, lower-intensity advocacy that supports day-to-day service delivery or operational outcomes.
Opportunistic Advocacy	Rapid, responsive advocacy that leverages time-limited opportunities aligned with Council priorities.
Opportunistic Grants	Grants pursued in response to time-limited or emerging opportunities where accelerated processes are required due to external deadlines.
Philanthropic Advocacy	Advocacy aimed at securing philanthropic support to enhance or complement Council services and community outcomes.
Strategic Advocacy	Long-term, high-impact advocacy that advances Council's top strategic priorities and seeks to influence policy, funding or system-level change.

Term	Meaning
Strategic Grants	Grants of significant scale, complexity or public visibility that advance Council’s highest strategic priorities and carry material reputational, financial or governance risk. These grants often involve multi-partner or cross-government collaboration and require coordinated oversight
Strategies	Long-term strategic documents guiding Council’s direction, including frameworks, masterplans, roadmaps and action plans.
Targeted Advocacy	Focused advocacy to influence specific decisions, policies or outcomes, without a broad public campaign.
Targeted Grants	Grants of low organisational risk with clear strategic alignment and defined outcomes. These grants are typically program-specific and managed within existing frameworks.

7. POLICY

PART A — ADVOCACY

7.1 Advocacy approach

Council will take a strategic, proactive and community informed approach to advocacy. Advocacy must be:

- evidence based
- forward looking
- collaborative partnership focused
- inclusive
- coordinated across the organisation
- transparent and accountable.

Council will collaborate with community organisations, peak bodies, industry bodies and other governments to strengthen advocacy outcomes where possible, in line with the principles of the Act, while maintaining political neutrality.

Council will communicate advocacy priorities clearly to support alignment and shared understanding among collaborative partners.

7.2 Advocacy reporting and review

Advocacy activities will be monitored and reported to Council regularly. Council will review its advocacy priorities at least annually in line with the budget cycle, annual action planning and ongoing community engagement. Its advocacy priorities will be informed by:

- community and stakeholder engagement
- data, research and evidence

- alignment with strategic plans and financial commitments
- emerging opportunities and challenges
- intergovernmental policy trends.

7.3 Categories of advocacy initiatives

To guide the level of investment, Council will use the following categories:

1. **Category 1: Strategic advocacy**
Requires coordinated campaigns, broad communications, and stakeholder collaboration. Directly linked to Council's top strategic priorities.
2. **Category 2: Targeted advocacy**
Focuses on meetings, submissions, representations and targeted stakeholder work. Strategic but lower public profile.
3. **Category 3: Opportunistic advocacy**
Responsive to emerging issues where alignment to strategy exists but circumstances evolve quickly.
4. **Category 4: Philanthropic advocacy**
Targets philanthropic partners to enhance or complement council services. Must align with the *Philanthropic Partnership and Sponsorship Policy*.
5. **Category 5: Operational advocacy**
Operational, lower-intensity advocacy activities that fall outside the above categories.

7.4 Assessment of advocacy opportunities

All advocacy activities, regardless of category, must be assessed to ensure alignment with Council's strategic direction, governance requirements and community outcomes.

Advocacy opportunities must be assessed against the following criteria:

- alignment with Council policies, strategies and long-term financial planning
- transparency, governance and integrity of collaborative partners
- relevance to asset management planning
- ability to bring forward or influence future projects
- potential for community benefit
- ethical, transparent and accountable decision-making, including consistency with Council values and community expectations
- potential gender and intersectional impacts, including whether the advocacy priority may affect different community members in different ways.

Council's advocacy approach is primarily proactive and strategically driven. Advocacy priorities are formally endorsed and published on an annual basis.

It is recognised that advocacy opportunities may arise outside the endorsed priorities, including in response to emerging issues or time-limited circumstances. These opportunities must be assessed against the same alignment criteria outlined above to determine their

appropriateness, risks and level of support. Where an opportunity is compelling but falls outside criteria, the matter will be referred to Council for consideration.

Council's advocacy priorities are reviewed and informed through structured, upstream processes, including consideration of strategic alignment, financial commitments, evidence and emerging issues. Consideration of gender and intersectional impacts will be proportionate to the nature of the advocacy activity.

PART B — GRANTS

7.5 Grants approach

Council will pursue external funding where opportunities:

- provide clear community benefit
- align with the Council Plan and other strategic documents
- use Council investment effectively
- offer a reasonable likelihood of success
- provide value for money
- align with relevant regional strategies
- are administratively feasible
- can be delivered within required timeframes
- support long-term sustainability
- can be delivered lawfully and in accordance with Council policies, and governance requirements.

Grant opportunities that meet multiple of these criteria will be prioritised.

7.6 Grants reporting and review

Grant opportunities will be monitored and reported to Council regularly. Council will review grant performance and compliance at least annually in line with the budget cycle, annual action planning and ongoing community engagement.

7.7 Categories of grant initiatives

Council will use a tiered model to guide decision making for external grant opportunities. The model reflects project risk, complexity, strategic priority and organisational impact.

- 1. Category 1: Strategic grants**
Significant scale, complexity or public visibility. Can involve multi-partner or cross-government collaboration.
- 2. Category 2: Mid-tier grants**
Moderate scale, risk or stakeholder impact.
- 3. Category 3: Targeted grants**
Low organisational risk and clear strategic alignment.

4. Category 4 – Opportunistic grants

Accelerated processes required due to external deadlines. Governance remains in place, but review and submission steps are streamlined.

All grants must be approved and executed in accordance with Council’s delegations.

7.8 Assessment of grant opportunities

Grant application proposals must be assessed against:

- strategic justification and alignment with Council priorities
- quality and readiness of design documentation
- cost estimates
- compliance with the Community Engagement Policy and Framework
- potential gender and intersectional impacts, including whether the project design, outcomes or delivery may have differing effects across the community
- alignment with Council values, ethical considerations and community expectations
- whole of life cost analysis and cashflow modelling
- risk assessment and mitigation planning
- procurement implications arising from successful grants, including compliance with Council’s Procurement Policy
- reporting, acquittal and compliance obligations arising from funding agreements.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles	Responsibilities
Mayor	Primary spokesperson in line with Council’s <i>Media Policy</i>
CEO	Primary operational spokesperson
Council	Endorse advocacy priorities
Executive	Endorse strategic grants
Directors	Endorse mid-tier and targeted grants

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

In developing advocacy priorities and grant applications, Council will assess:

- **strategic risk** — alignment with strategic goals. This includes consideration of unintended inequitable outcomes, where relevant, to ensure Council’s advocacy and grant activities support fair and inclusive community benefit
- **financial risk** — accuracy of cost estimates and future cost exposure
- **reputational risk** — ensuring funder due diligence, ethical conduct, and responsible decision-making when entering funding agreements, to protect Council’s integrity and public trust
- **legal and compliance risk** — compliance with relevant legislation, Council policies, delegations, contractual obligations and governance requirements

- **information and records management risk** — appropriate management, retention and transparency of records and communications associated with advocacy and grant activities.

10. LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

This policy has been assessed as being compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

In line with the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic), a Gender Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy.

11. ASSOCIATED COUNCIL DOCUMENT

- Annual Advocacy Priorities
- Philanthropic Partnership and Sponsorship Policy
- Community Engagement Policy
- Community Grants Policy
- Financial Sustainability Strategy
- Glen Eira Council Plan 2025–2029
- Glen Eira Community Vision 2040
- Grants Framework
- Media policy

12. EXTERNAL REFERENCE/RESOURCE

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

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