

General Policy

Burke Shire Council

Business Innovation Scheme Policy



BURKE SHIRE
Council

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1. Purpose

Burke Shire Council has developed this policy to support new or expanding businesses suitable to the local environment and community of the Burke Shire. The scheme aims to provide targeted assistance that will result in employment and investment opportunities. The scheme incorporates the offsetting of some costs associated with establishing a new business which may include, but is not limited to, rates, permits, rent and fee concessions. The scheme is aimed at creating healthy, sustainable, strong and growing businesses in the Shire.

2. Scope

Applicants must be establishing or growing a business within the Shire's boundary that directly benefits the Shire by way of service provision and job creation. The applicant must be able to provide a business plan, business proposal, evidence of a fully developed business idea or other and complete an application form.

Nothing in the policy shall imply or suggest that the Council is under any obligation to provide any incentive to any applicant unless it meets the criteria for approval.

3. Date of Policy

This Policy will commence from the date adopted by Council.

4. Definitions

Eligible applicants	<p>Eligible applicants are those that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are developing proposed business within the Burke Shire Council boundary • have a registered Australian Business Number (ABN) • are establishing a business that directly benefits the Shire • provides a product or service not already provided for or which adds value to or significantly expands upon product or services in the Shire • does not owe monies to Council.
Economic Benefit to the shire	<p>The economic benefit to the Shire will be assessed against the following business opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide employment opportunities • be sustainable • generate economic activity • be innovative and entrepreneurial • improve the viability and vitality of our shire • provide a service or product not already available locally

5. Policy Provisions

As detailed above Burke Shire Council has developed this policy to support new or expanding businesses in the Shire.

A business plan, proposal, evidence of a fully developed idea or other must be submitted along with an application form for all requests for assistance under this scheme. The application form can be downloaded from the Council website (www.burke.qld.gov.au).

The Business Plan should include such details as; company principals, nature of the business, SWOT analysis and financial analysis. A template of a business plan can be found at: www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/planning/turn-into-business/business-plan.

Council will carry out an assessment of the application based on the set criteria and a written recommendation will be forwarded to the Council for consideration.

5.1 Guiding Principles

- All applications will be considered on merit and must pass the economic benefit test as described in this policy;
- The scheme does not provide retrospective funding;
- Assistance under the scheme is not 'as of right' assistance;
- This assistance scheme is a once off form of assistance and limited to one application per business for the life of that business.
- Funding may be subject to the applicant repaying any cash grant within a period of six (6) months or such further time as Council may agree to under the circumstances, from the date of completion; and
- Funding is subject to the attainment of Council and other regulatory approvals

5.2 Assessment Criteria

The CEO, Director Engineering Services, Finance & Technology Manager and Economic Development Manager will assess applications for assistance under this scheme and shall consider any application on a case-by-case basis and interpret the policy accordingly. This will then be referred to Council for a decision.

The assessment will be based on an economic benefit test which includes:

- The number of jobs that the business will create at specific timelines (initial business development, 6 months and 12 months)
- The proposed business is not to the detriment of existing businesses in the Shire
- Have no significant negative environmental impacts on the community or other environmental standards (e.g., pollution, hazardous waste or noise).
- The business is innovative and utilises new ideas
- The requested support provides value for money to the Shire
- The proposal will provide economic benefits for the Shire
- The business will reduce the level of expenditure outside of the Shire by local residents.

- The business will increase the expenditure in the Shire from those living outside the Shire.

5.3 Financial Assistance Available

The grant amount is dependent on each individual situation and is to be determined by Council.

Minimum Level of Assistance - Council has agreed that all eligible business will, in addition to other incentives as may be agreed to as undermentioned, be entitled to a base level of assistance in the form of \$500 (ex GST) comprising of either cash and/or in-kind assistance with Council licenses and/or fees.

Rate Concessions - will be considered to new businesses on an individual project basis and will be based on employment outcomes. Concessions will be considered for a maximum of 50% of rates and for a maximum of 3 years.

Rate concessions will only be considered for commercial and industrial rated properties.

Permits and Fees: Council may consider reimbursing permit costs for eligible businesses.

Rural Community Incentives - In recognition of the special needs of outlying communities, Council may provide assistance to support businesses located in those communities where the venture will generate increased economic benefit. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Rent Subsidy - this form of assistance (for a maximum of 6 months) is to support eligible new businesses, where the provision of the subsidy removes a particular constraint to the development of the business. Businesses that wish to expand into or utilise unused Council property will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. Council will consider transfer of Council land at nil cost or at a concession on valuation.

Other financial incentives – depending on the economic benefit provided by the development, Council may determine that other support is appropriate, this may include in-kind works or support to provide infrastructure, waiver of planning infrastructure charges or similar benefit at Council's discretion. Eligibility to receive this type of assistance is to be determined on a case by case basis.

5.4 Other

By accepting the assistance from Council, the recipient agrees to submit a report to Council such as a progress report or acquittal within 12 months. The 12-month reporting will include a statement of expenditure with copies of invoices and supporting documentation of the expenditure provided. A penalty for not providing a progress report or acquittal at 12 months would result in an automatic requirement to refund any monies, or assistance provided by Council. A repayment agreement can be entered into to facilitate the payback schedule.

Payment can only take place when a tax invoice has been submitted.

Should the business proposal as outlined in the application be deferred or withdrawn all assistance provided by Council must be reimbursed in full within 12 months from the date of application.

The applicant may be required to pay back the funding over a six (6) month period or a further period as decided by Council from time to time after the date of completion of the assistance period. A repayment agreement will be entered into to facilitate they payback schedule.

6. Key Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Mayor	To lead councillors in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy.
CEO	To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy.
Directors	To communicate, implement and comply with this policy.
Managers and Supervisors	To implement this policy and related procedures.
All Council staff	To comply with this policy and consider its implications for related projects and programs.

7. Related Documents

Legislation/Regulations	Awards	BSC Policies	Procedures
Local Government Act 2009			

8. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related documents are amended or replaced
2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of council

Notwithstanding the above, this policy is to be reviewed bi-annually.