

Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund

Meeting Date: Thursday, 23 February, 2023
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

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Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Confirmation of Minutes**
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3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Reports**
 - MR23.1 SALT Ministries - Safe Shelter Shoalhaven - Expenditure of Mayoral Relief Fund 4
 - MR23.2 Mayoral Relief Fund - Transfer residual monies from the 2019 Currowan bush fires 7
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5. **General Business**

Membership

Clr Findley – Chairperson
All Councillors
Chief Executive Officer or nominee
Director City Performance
Mr Matthew Reeves
Mr Peter Dover
Mr Adam Carney

Quorum – Three (3)

Purpose

The fund has been established and maintained as a public fund for the relief of persons in Australia who are in necessitous circumstances and it is intended that the public be invited to contribute to the fund.

A person will be in necessitous circumstances where his or her financial resources are insufficient to obtain all that is necessary, not only for a bare existence, but for a modest standard of living in the Australian community.

Necessitous circumstances may result from a disaster caused by flood, fire, drought, tempest or other calamity.

Delegated Authority

The management of the fund is vested in the Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund Committee. Rules have been adopted by Council.

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN CITY MAYOR'S RELIEF FUND

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 16 August 2022
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 5.08pm

The following members were present:

Mayor Amanda Findley - Chairperson
Clr John Kotlash - Remotely
Clr Matthew Norris
Clr Paul Ell - Remotely
Clr Evan Christen
Clr Patricia White
Clr John Wells
Clr Greg Watson - Remotely
Clr Mark Kitchener
Clr Tonia Gray
Mr Peter Dover - SALT
Mr Stephen Dunshea - Chief Executive Officer
Mr Kevin Voegt - Director City Performance

Others present:
Mr Michael Paine – Community Connections
Ms Debra Webb – Reporting and Controls Manager
Ms Sara McMahon – Business Assurance & Risk Manager
Mr Johnathon Hill – Rural Fire Service

The Mayor opened the meeting and gave an acknowledgement to Country.

Apologies / Leave of Absence

No apologies were received from members.

Note: Robert Horner – Executive Manager and Jane Lewis – Director City Lifestyles are apologies for this meeting.

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (Clr White / Clr Watson)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund held on Monday 20 September 2021 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declarations of Interest

Nil

REPORTS

MR22.1 Mayors Relief Fund Financial Statements to 30 June 2022

HPERM Ref:
D22/279125

The Mayor addressed the meeting and advised that it is noted in the report that there are leftover funds (equity) in the Mayors Relief Fund (MRF) budget. The Mayor also noted that she is aware of a few people who were impacted by the Currowan fire who have only recently received their recommendations from their insurance companies, so there may be reason for them to call on the fund for some assistance going forward.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Financial Statements to 30 June 2022 for the Mayor's Relief Fund be received for information.

RESOLVED (Clr Norris / Clr Wells)

That the Financial Statements to 30 June 2022 for the Mayor's Relief Fund be received for information.

CARRIED

MR22.2 Mayors Relief Fund Policy

HPERM Ref:
D22/279735

Ms Sara McMahon – Business Assurance and Risk Manager addressed the meeting and highlighted the amendments that have been made in the Policy, noting the following:

- 3.2
 - Provision for Salt Care Shoalhaven Membership
 - Removal of Shoalhaven Minister's Fraternal
- 3.8 – Provision for EFT payments as well as cheque
- 3.11 – Provision for the approval of payment of up to \$500 by way of gift card for more urgent assistance.

The Mayor suggested that the MRF be able to co-opt membership as needed if there were a specific group relating to a particular disaster, for example Treading Lightly.

Ms McMahon raised the question regarding voting rights for the Co-opted members.

Clr Watson raised a question whether the rules (policy) need to be registered with the Chief Secretaries Department given this is a charitable trust?

Ms McMahon responded and advised that she would take that on notice and seek advice.

Mr Stephen Dunshea suggested that additional (non-voting) membership be co-opted by invitation of the Chairperson on an as required basis for advice only.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Council:

1. Adopt the Mayors Relief Fund Rules (Policy) with the highlighted amendments as **attached** to the report.
2. Acknowledge that the Shoalhaven Minister's Fraternal is no longer operational and appoint a representative from SALT as a member of the Shoalhaven City Mayors Relief Fund.

RECOMMENDATION (Clr White / Clr Norris)

That Council:

1. Adopt the Mayors Relief Fund Rules (Policy) with the highlighted amendments as **attached** to the report.
2. Acknowledge that the Shoalhaven Minister's Fraternal is no longer operational and appoint a representative from SALT as a member of the Shoalhaven City Mayors Relief Fund.
3. Include the provision for co-opting (non-voting) members by invitation of the Chairperson for advice only.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS**MR22.3 Additional Item - Appeal - Support Homelessness in the Shoalhaven**

Clr Wells raised whether some kind of support for rough sleepers could be provided.

Peter Dover - SALT advised that there is a significant number of people and families on their waiting list.

The Mayor suggested running an appeal for rough sleepers.

Mr Michael Paine suggested that this be raised at the next Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven (HTS) meeting of 1 September 2022 to seek their feedback and thoughts on how this appeal may roll out.

The Mayor responded and requested that Mr Paine submit a report to the Business Paper for the next HTS meeting.

RESOLVED (Clr White / Clr Christen)

That:

1. Council conduct an appeal to support services for the homeless in the Shoalhaven including:
 - a. Establish an online platform for receiving funds
 - b. A communications plan
 - c. Formulating a process for distribution of funds
2. The appeal (in part 1) be raised at the next Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven meeting scheduled for 1 September to seek their feedback & thoughts on how this appeal may roll out.
3. A further report to the Mayors Relief Fund be received outlining how the funds will be expended.

CARRIED

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5.39pm.

Mayor Amanda Findley
CHAIRPERSON

MR23.1 SALT Ministries - Safe Shelter Shoalhaven - Expenditure of Mayoral Relief Fund

HPERM Ref: D23/8008

Department: Business Assurance & Risk

Approver: Kevin Voegt, Director - City Performance

Attachments: 1. Letter Requesting Emergency Funding - Safe Shelter Shoalhaven - SALT Ministries [↓](#)

Reason for Report

In accordance with the Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund Rules, *Accounts shall be presented and passed for payment at a meeting of the Committee, provided that in case of emergency the Chairperson and Secretary, after consulting as many members as possible, may authorise a payment and submit it to the next meeting of the Committee for confirmation.* This report is submitted to confirm the expenditure of funds in emergency.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund Committee confirm the expenditure of \$20,000 to SALT Ministries to continue the operation of the Safe Shelter Shoalhaven as an immediate and interim step to allow the shelter to remain open for four weeks while more funding and support was sought from the State and Federal Governments.

Options

1. As recommended

Implications: the funds will be reconciled and confirmed by the Committee

2. An alternative recommendation

Implications: unknown

Background

On the 19 October 2022, the Mayor received an urgent request from SALT Ministries (attached) advising of the closure of the Safe Shelter Shoalhaven due to lack of funding.

As an immediate and interim step to keep the shelter open for four weeks while more funding and support was sought from the State and Federal Government, support and committee consensus was then sought to release \$20,000 from the Mayors Relief Fund due to the current homelessness and housing crisis.

Policy Implications

The Rules of the Committee state:

Accounts shall be presented and passed for payment at a meeting of the Committee, provided that in case of emergency the Chairperson and Secretary, after consulting as many members as possible, may authorise a payment and submit it to the next meeting of the Committee for confirmation. All accounts shall be paid by EFT or cheque.

The management of the fund shall be vested in the Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund Committee. Membership of the committee shall consist of:

MR23.1

- *The Mayor of the Shoalhaven City Council (Chairperson)*
- *The CEO of the Shoalhaven City Council (or his nominee) to act as Secretary*

This was deemed to be an emergency case as SALT Ministries advised of the closure of the Safe Shelter Shoalhaven due to lack of funding further impacted by the current homelessness and housing crisis.

Consensus was sought from the Mayor via email 19 October 2022 to all Councillors, CEO and CEO's Nominee (Kevin Voegt), and SES Member – Adam Carney and RFS Member – Jonathon Hill. It was noted that Peter Dover from SALT Ministries was unable to vote on the matter due to the conflict of interest.

There were no votes registered against and 10 votes received in favour. It was determined consensus was reached and in accordance with the rules being, *after consulting as many members as possible*, as the email was also followed up with phone calls and SMS messages to those who had not yet responded.

Financial Implications

The balance of the fund was \$107,000 of which \$70,000 was funding accumulated prior to the 2019/20 bushfire relief donation campaign. The pre-bushfire funds were accessed for this immediate relief.



18/10/2022

Mayor Amanda Findley
Shoalhaven City Council
Bridge Road
Nowra NSW 2541

Dear Amanda,

Safe Shelter Shoalhaven has closed its doors today after being operating for 5 years in the Shoalhaven. In that time, we have given out over 16 000 beds to over 850 families and individuals, including men, women, and children, who would otherwise be sleeping rough. Over 243 volunteers from our community have helped to keep the shelter open over the years, along with the support of many local businesses.

Salt Care requests emergency funding of \$20,000.00 to keep the doors of the Shelter open for the next 4 weeks while we negotiate with the NSW State Government for future funding.

We appreciate all that Shoalhaven City Council has done and we thank you!

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Peter Dover'.

Peter Dover
Founder & CEO

MR23.2 Mayoral Relief Fund - Transfer residual monies from the 2019 Currowan bush fires

HPERM Ref: D23/54130

Department: Finance

Approver: Kevin Voegt, Director - City Performance

Reason for Report

MR21.3 20 September 2021 item 4 resolved to retain the balance of the Currowan bushfire fund for 18 months. At the completion of that 18 months any residual monies were to be transferred to the general balance of the Mayor's Relief Fund.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Committee confirm the transfer of \$25,261.76 to The Mayoral Relief Fund BL 13955 from the following funds consistent with MR21.3:

- a. Mayors Relief Fund 2019 Fires BL 13853 \$25,036.09
- b. Mayors Drought Relief BL 13597 \$225.67

Options

1. Transfer residual monies to the general balance of the Mayors Relief Fund as per MR21.3

Implications: Nil

2. An alternative recommendation

Implications: unknown

Background

Please refer to the following minute (MR21.3) from the meeting of the Shoalhaven City Mayors Relief Fund, held on 20 September 2023 and the table shown below outlining account balances.

That the Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund Committee:

1. *Endorse that individuals who have received no assistance or partial assistance from the Shoalhaven Mayoral Relief Fund, be back paid any amounts that they may have missed out on.*
2. *Provide \$1000 towards the headstone for John Butler of Yatte Yattah who passed away in the Currowan Bushfire, to be funded from the residual funds that were not raised through the Currowan Bushfire Appeal.*
3. *Endorse a disbursement of \$1000 per person to the 12 identified renters who were living in properties that were destroyed in the Currowan bushfire.*
4. *Retain the balance of the Currowan Bushfire funding for 18 months for any outstanding matters in the community relating to the Currowan fire, and any residual monies at the completion of that 18 months be transferred to the general balance of the Mayor's Relief Fund.*

Mayor's Relief Fund Accounts		Balance	Comments
BL 13597	Mayor's Drought Relief Fund	\$ 225.67	Last transaction 22/04/2020 donation
BL 13853	Mayor's Relief Fund 2019 Fires	\$ 25,036.09	Last transaction 02/08/2022 EFT Payment to replace cancelled cheque for Lygiah Fowler
BL 13955	Mayor's Relief Fund General	\$ 51,410.09	Mayor's Relief Fund monthly bank account interest deposited into this account - last transaction 21/10/2022 emergency funding for Safe Shelter Salt Ministries
BL 13968	Mayor's Giving Box	\$ 3,282.37	Includes \$9.97 GiveNow Thrive Together January Donations (deposit received 7th Feb 2023)
Mayor's Relief Fund Total Balance		\$ 79,954.22	

MR23.2

MR23.3 Mayoral Relief Fund For Homelessness Proposal

HPERM Ref: D23/11430

Department: Community Connections

Approver: Jane Lewis, Director - City Lifestyles

Reason for Report

This reason for this report is to seek the final approval of the Mayoral Relief Fund appeal and funding allocation pathways by the Mayoral Relief Fund Committee

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Mayoral Relief Fund Committee:

1. Receive an update on the Mayoral Relief Fund Appeal for Homelessness as detailed in the report.
2. Endorse the proposed Mayoral Relief Fund Appeal campaign and allocation of funds being:
 - a. The first \$15,000 of the funds raised will be allocated towards the creation of 500 crisis 'care packs'.
 - b. Any funds over \$15,000 (and up to \$40,000) will be distributed evenly to provide crisis/relief support to community members in need.
 - c. After the first \$40,000 of funds raised are allocated, further funds will be available to service providers throughout Shoalhaven via an EOI process for relief/crisis initiatives.

MR23.3

Options

1. The Mayoral Relief Fund Committee endorse the proposed Mayoral Relief Fund Appeal campaign and allocation of funds as detailed in the report

Implications: The Mayoral Relief Fund Committee receive the information and support the Mayoral Relief Fund Appeal for homelessness as outlined in the report

2. The Mayoral Relief Fund Committee provide an alternative recommendation

Implications: The Mayoral Relief Fund Committee do not accept the recommendation as written and provide an alternative recommendation

Background

During the Shoalhaven City Council's Mayoral Relief Fund meeting on 16 August 2022 the following resolution was made:

That:

1. *Council conduct an appeal to support services for the homeless in the Shoalhaven including:*
 - a. *Establish an online platform for receiving funds*

- The Mayoral Relief Fund
- Donation drive for Thrive Together Fair 'Care Packs'
- Call out for stallholders to get involved in the Thrive Together Fair, and
- The Thrive Together Fair event

Through the Mayoral Relief Fund and Care Pack Donation Drive community and businesses will have the option of providing monetary or goods donations.

Timeframe

The Mayoral Relief Fundraising campaign began on 30 January and will end on the 27 March 2023.

Campaign Promotion

Shoalhaven City Council's Communication and Media Team will manage the promotion of the fundraising campaign. The campaign will be promoted to community members through a media release, and social media and community radio advertising.

The HTS members are encouraged to share the media release through their website and social media channels.

In addition, a letter from the Mayor of Shoalhaven City Council will be directed towards local businesses to encourage monetary and goods donations to the appeal.

Distribution of funds

There are three proposed options for distributing funds to community following closure of the appeal. These will be contingent on the funds raised throughout the appeal and are outlined below:

Funding raised: \$15,000 or less:

The first \$15,000 of the funds raised will be allocated towards the creation of 500 crisis 'care packs' that will be given away to attendees of the Thrive Together Fair 2023 (The Fair). As high attendee numbers are expected at The Fair funds will be used to supplement the goods donations received through the 'Give Dignity This Winter' campaign and ensure that 500 dignity packs are available for distribution. Organisers will ensure methods are put in place for equitable distribution of the Care Packs to all attendees.

Funding raised: Between \$15,000 to \$40,000:

After the first \$15,000 of funds raised are allocated for the Thrive Together Fair, any funds over \$15,000 (and up to \$40,000) will be distributed evenly to provide crisis/relief support to community members in need.

Three eligible organisations representing North, Central and South Shoalhaven will be selected through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to distribute funds according to set criteria. To be eligible to receive funding these organisations must be accessible to a broad cross-section of the community.

Funding Raised: Above \$40,000:

After the first \$40,000 of funds raised are allocated, further funds will be available to service providers throughout Shoalhaven via an EOI process for relief/crisis initiatives.

Services can apply for funding for relief/crisis response initiatives outside of business-as-usual funding/service provision to provide additional support to those in need in community. Individual community members can also request funding through these service providers for relief support.

Funding allocation criteria

It is recommended that funds above \$15,000 can be used by service providers to assist community members who request support for any of the following reasons:

- Temporary/emergency accommodation including hotel rooms and showground bookings
- Rental bonds
- Emergency rent payments
- Emergency utility bills
- Grocery or food vouchers
- Assistance for rough sleepers, including tents, bedding, and clothing
- Caravan or car registration or towing
- Medical bills not subsidised under Medicare, including non-bulk billing psychiatrist appointments which may be necessary for NDIS assessments
- Transport costs, including taxi vouchers and petrol vouchers
- Repairs or replacements for essential home or vehicle needs i.e., fridges, ovens, air conditioning, washing machines, blocked drains
- Veterinarian bills

Eligibility

- Funds will be accessible to any individuals residing in the Shoalhaven LGA; many rough sleepers and people staying at Showgrounds cannot prove their residential status so will not be required to provide evidence of residential status or address
- In addition, bank and/or Centrelink statements will not be required in order to access support as these requirements can be hindrances to people in crisis
- Service providers are not required to follow their usual processes to determine need. Community who requests financial support that meets the funding allocation criteria are eligible to receive funds. Service providers are responsible for ensuring the funds are spent in a fair and equitable manner
- Individuals and households may access funding more than once, as needed

Expression of Interest

To distribute funds via options two or three, as outlined above, an EOI will be run for service providers to apply for funding.

The applications will be reviewed by a panel that will include the Mayor of Shoalhaven City Council, a Council staff member from the Community Connections Team, Governance Coordinator, and an independent panel member from the Homelessness Taskforce.

This independent panel member will not be associated with any agency that may be applying for funding through the Mayoral Relief Fund and will be required to declare any conflict-of-interest prior.

Community Engagement

Feedback has been sought from the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce service provider members and organisational representatives on how local service providers are best able to receive and distribute funding.