

NAMBUCCA SHIRE COUNCIL

Ordinary Council Meeting - 13 September 2018

LATE AGENDA

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GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

ITEM 9.10 SF2397 130918 OUTCOME OF REGIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING APPLICATIONS

AUTHOR/ENQUIRIES: Michael Coulter, General Manager

SUMMARY:

The Office of Sport has declined Council's grant applications for funding under the Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1 Council note that its applications for funding under the Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund for the Nambucca Valley Connected (Bowraville) project and the Macksville Memorial Aquatic Centre have both been rejected.**
- 2 Council advise the various volunteer groups who were involved in both applications of their rejection and that they be thanked for all of the time and assistance they provided in preparing and lodging the applications.**

OPTIONS:

There are no real options. The report is for information.

DISCUSSION:

In January 2018 the Council lodged three (3) expressions of interest for funding under this program being for Phillip Hughes Oval, the Macksville Memorial Aquatic Centre and the Nambucca Valley Connected (Bowraville) Project.

Subsequently after receiving advice from the Office of Sport in relation to the projects, in May 2018 the Council lodged funding applications for two projects, being:

1. The Nambucca Valley Connected (Bowraville) project with a request for \$2,592,000 from the State Government and with Council agreeing to contribute \$700,000,
2. The Macksville Memorial Aquatic Centre with a request for \$1,250,335 from the State Government and with the Council agreeing to contribute \$500,000.

On 10 September the Office of Sport advised Council that it had declined Council's applications for funding for both projects as per the following email.

Dear Mr Coulter

Thank you for taking the time and effort to apply for the Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund. We understand these applications often require significant resources to develop and we appreciate the effort you have made to submit the stage 2 application.

Demand for grants under the Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund has been exceptionally high. A total of \$531 million has been requested from an available funding pool of \$100 million.

I regret to inform you that on this occasion your application was unsuccessful. If you would like to speak to a member of the Office of Sport regarding your application and the reasons why it was unsuccessful, arrangements can be made for a meeting between a representative from your organisation and staff from my office. We are committed to ensuring verbal discussion to allow for feedback and to discuss whether any other NSW Government funding opportunities are available for the project.

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If you are interested, please email John Egan, Director, Facilities Strategy and Planning, Office of Sport on grantsunit@sport.nsw.gov.au to set up a suitable time.

We would like to thank you for the significant time and effort spent on your application and we look forward to arranging a discussion if you would find it helpful.

Yours sincerely

Matt Miller | Chief Executive
Office of Sport

Whilst the email mentions a total request of \$531m from an available funding pool of \$100m it should also be noted that metropolitan Councils were excluded from the program so the number of eligible councils to receive the \$100m numbered ninety four (94). Hence on average more than \$1m could have been made available to each local government area or indeed a substantial funding floor could have been set to ensure that all councils received some funding with larger councils receiving proportionately more.

The acknowledgement in the email of the significant resources and effort required to develop these grant applications is an understatement. There has been a vast commitment of time, effort and money by volunteers and the Council for no return. It has proven to be futile commitment that a small community and a Council with an equivalent full time (EFT) staff of 114 can ill afford to make.

Prior to lodging its applications the Council took advice on a number of occasions from the Office of Sport. An EOI for work at the EJ Biffin Fields in Nambucca Heads was withdrawn following their advice and subsequently the Council did not proceed with an application for the Phillip Hughes oval. Notwithstanding the two submitted applications were unsuccessful. Council wasn't even given the opportunity to reconfigure either of the applications to meet what funding might have been available.

For reasons of transparency and so that Council may better understand why it was unsuccessful, the Office of Sport has been requested to provide a list of the funded projects. On 11 September 2018 a representative of the Office of Sport advised as follows:

"In relation to the request for funded projects, the NSW Government has already announced:

- *Lismore City Council - \$4.95m – Albert Park Baseball Complex*
- *Wagga Wagga City Council - \$6.92m – Pomingalarna Multi-Sport Cycling Complex.*

I understand the Government will be making further announcements over coming weeks."

The opportunity will be taken to obtain feedback from the Office of Sport, although this feedback will be more meaningful after the Government has announced all of the successful projects. For example this Council had put forward relatively large cash co-funding offers being \$700,000 for the Bowraville project and \$500,000 for the Macksville Aquatic Centre. All up being more than 30% of the total value for both projects. The grant program required a minimum of 25% Council co-contribution for the total project cost. It will be interesting to see what co-funding was offered by councils for those projects which have been approved.

CONSULTATION:

There has been consultation with Council's Grants Officer and the Office of Sport.

All of the volunteers who have been involved in the development of both of the unsuccessful projects need to be informed of the outcome and thanked for their work.

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SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT:**Environment**

There are no implications for the environment.

Social

It would not appear that this Council's level of disadvantage in terms of its SIEFA (Socio-Economic Index for Areas) ranking counted for much in the criteria which determined the successful projects.

Economic

The applications if funded would have provided economic stimulus to the Valley and particularly in Bowraville.

Risk

The applications have been declined so there are no on-going risks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**Direct and indirect impact on current and future budgets**

There are no budgetary impacts.

Working funds – justification for urgency and cumulative impact

There is no longer a large commitment of working funds required for these projects.

Service level changes and resourcing/staff implications

The futile resourcing implications of preparing these two grant applications are discussed in the report.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no attachments for this report.