



BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND ATTRACTION POLICY

Policy Number	C19A	Directorate	Development Services
Council Item No.	E	Department	Strategic Planning and Development
Council Adoption Date	June 2014	Primary Author	Ken Fraser
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POLICY OBJECTIVE

To provide a framework to assist the facilitation of new business development and to build the local economy. To add strategic weight to economic development proposals within the Shire by providing guidance and formalising Council's approach to business investment and attraction.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Section 3C of the Local Government Act 1989 defines the primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions.

To achieve this objective the Act defines a number of facilitating objectives that are relevant to this policy:

- to promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;
- to promote appropriate business and employment opportunities;
- to ensure transparency and accountability in Council decision making.

DEFINITION

Nil

POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to sustainable economic development and as a result aims to attract new businesses to the Shire. This is a key element of Council's Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. New and expanding businesses help to provide additional economic growth, employment and new services to the community.

Council acknowledges a significant role and responsibility in utilising its resources to provide an appropriate environment for the private and public sector to generate local economic development, wealth and employment opportunities.

In facilitating local economic development Council may provide assistance to encourage strategic and major development within South Gippsland, where it can be demonstrated that such development provides significant benefit to the community.

South Gippsland Shire Council encourages strategic, sustainable business investment that will support ongoing prosperity, high value employment, career development opportunities for residents and promote further investment.



This Policy supports the implementation of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

Council's Role in Promoting Business Investment

Council will:

Use its powers and influence to provide and advocate for:

- Sufficient supply of suitably zoned land for commercial, industrial, agricultural and residential purposes;
- High quality transport, telecommunications, energy, waste and water infrastructure;
- A skilled and flexible workforce;
- Increased population.

Provide a positive climate to encourage business development through:

- Facilitation and assistance with new investment through its Economic Development and Tourism team.
- Provision of efficient approvals and regulatory services.
- Support for coordination and facilitation of proposed 'Projects of Local Significance'.

Assistance available

Council provides a range of services to assist business development, including:

1. Support with development approvals processes;
2. Identification of development sites;
3. Infrastructure co-ordination;
4. Relocation and expansion advice and support;
5. Links to government, business and employment support programs;
6. Introductions to other businesses, authorities and organisations within the Shire;
7. Assistance and advice with obtaining Government grants;
8. Access to statistical and general information;
9. Access to a range of local networks and contacts;
10. Access to business workshops and seminars;
11. Access to feasibility studies.

Projects of Local Significance

The Chief Executive Officer may declare a 'Project of Local Significance' due to its ability to provide significant economic impact.

A "Project of Local Significance" is a project, which in the opinion of Council may have one or more of the following attributes:



1. Is a large employer or has the potential to be a significant employer;
2. Has a strong supply base or economic links in the local area;
3. Competes with the outside market i.e. outside South Gippsland;
4. Has a long-term commitment to South Gippsland and is able to operate and grow in a profitable and viable manner;
5. Is an exporter or has export potential and/or the ability to replace imports to the region;
6. Will have significant flow on effects to existing businesses or the potential to lead to further business activity or investment;
7. Will add to the diversity of the Shire's economic base;
8. Will add value to the existing primary production of the Shire;
9. Is a major retail operation, particularly in areas not currently available;
10. Is a significant tourism business such as major accommodation, conference venue or attraction;
11. Will introduce new technology or infrastructure such as new telecommunications;
12. Will add services to the community such as Government offices, health and education services or in areas that are currently lacking either functionally or geographically.

Where a proposal is declared to be a 'Project of Local Significance', Council will appoint:

- a Council Liaison Officer for the project and
- an internal project coordination team;
- Coordinate the timing of the approvals processes.

Council is prepared to negotiate with developers and businesses on a case-by-case basis in relation to development support that may be offered, however Council will generally not provide direct financial assistance to a business.

The level of support which may be offered by Council will be related to the level of benefit the community will derive from the investment.

Any proponent may request a formal briefing to Council regarding their proposal.

Transparency

Generally Council will disclose any assistance provided to a proponent after the final negotiations have concluded and Council has made its final decision.

A proponent may submit a request for consideration by Council that information relating to the proposal remain confidential due to reasons of "Commercial-in-Confidence".

The provision of support/assistance will not limit, prejudice or in any way fetter Council's proper exercise of its statutory responsibilities and discretions.



RISK ASSESSMENT

The intention of the policy is to minimise risk to Council and the community and provide clear direction for facilitating business investment. Proposals will be assessed individually to ascertain their level of risk.

IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

- The Policy will be implemented in conjunction with Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. It is an element of the Strategy's Action Plan and will be included in reporting on outcomes from the Strategy.
- The Policy will be publically available on Council's Website.
- Businesses seeking to invest will be informed of the Policy.
- Other Council Departments will be made aware of the Policy.
- The Manager Strategic Planning and Development is responsible for implementing and updating this policy.
- The Policy will be reviewed by July 2019.