

Waiver Requests from Community Groups

TO	Mercury Bay Community Board
FROM	Cathy Klouwens - Mercury Bay Community Development Officer
DATE	12 January 2015
SUBJECT	Waiver Requests from Community Groups

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides information to the Mercury Bay Community Board about requests for waivers of Council fees made by not for profit community groups in the Mercury Bay Area.

The report seeks to:

- establish a formal process for groups in the Mercury Bay to request waivers of fees
- establish an agreed criteria to consider waiver requests
- establish an agreed maximum annual budget for waiver contributions
- consider current requests for waiver of fees from community groups.

2 Background

The objectives of Community Board grant funding and waivers for community groups are to:

- encourage and support local community services, activities and events
- support not for profit community organisations which have a positive impact on the community.
- recognise, support and enhance volunteer effort in the community
- recognise, support and enhance community diversity and aspirations

The Mercury Bay Community Board receives requests for waivers of Council fees regularly throughout the year. Currently there is no central database recording these requests and the outcome. Requests for these waivers include the following categories:

Categories for Waiver Requests:

- **Reserve concession fee** - charged for officer administration costs to book the use of a specific reserve(s). The cost to the applicant is \$54. This is administered by the Mercury Bay Area office team.
- **Food and liquor license fees** - charged for officer administration and inspection time to ensure food and health safety standards are being met. The cost to the applicant to cover fees for liquor license, and food stalls is \$60-\$210. This is administered through the Community Environment team.
- **Council owned facility fees** - sports ground, town hall, meeting rooms - charged for officer administration costs to secure a booking for the use of facilities. The cost to the applicant for the:
 - Town Hall - fees range between \$6-\$14 hour and \$99-\$233 for the full day
 - Mercury Bay Multi Sport Park - fees range \$30 - \$300
 - These fees are administered by the Mercury Bay Area office team.
- **Building Consent fees** - processing and assessing plans and documents as well as conducting inspections to ensure that building consent conditions and relevant legislation is complied with. Fees for consents range from \$484 - up to and over

\$4,000 (inspection and lodgement fees additional). These are administered by the Governance, Planning and Strategy team.

3 Issue

The Mercury Bay Community Board receives a significant number of requests from not for profit community groups requesting a waiver of fees to support their events and activities.

The process, criteria and budget to enable these requests to be considered needs to be reviewed and agreed by the Community Board.

4 Discussion

4.1: Proposed Process for Not-For-Profit Groups to request Waivers of Fees

Formal request for a waiver - requests for the waiver of fees are often made without a formal request by groups. It is proposed that all requests for waiver of fees is made formally in writing to the Area Manager at the time the event, concession or building application is made. It is proposed that if there is no formal request made then the request will not be considered. The concession and event application form will be updated to indicate this.

Establishing a register - all requests for waiver of fees will be logged into a register. This will enable the ongoing record of decisions made regarding the request, and contributions that Council has made to community groups and community activities over a financial year.

Delegated Authority - the Area Manager or delegated representative has the delegation to waiver fees relating to reserve concessions, food and liquor license and council facility fees. The Mercury Bay Community Board is delegated to consider requests for waivers relating to Council costs including building consents costs.

4.2 Criteria for Considering Future Requests for Waivers

To provide continuity and transparency in the decision making process it is proposed that the following criteria are used to consider requests for waiver of fees.

Proposed Criteria to Consider Requests for Waivers of Fees for Community Groups:

It is proposed that the same criterion which applies for Community Board Grant funding is used as a guideline when considering requests for waiver of fees as follows:

1. Financial assistance will only be available for locally recognised organisations within the Thames-Coromandel District Mercury Bay Ward area whose principal functions and/or activities are of a community (not-for-profit) nature.
2. Preference will be given, but not limited to, organisations that are registered as an Incorporated Society or Charitable Trust.
3. Applications will be considered on a) merit b) benefit to the community c) contribution to the achievement of Council Outcomes, and/or contribution to the achievement of Community Board priorities d) total cost of the project, event or funding request and proportion of funding requested as a % of total cost. .
4. Evidence of other fund raising undertaken and commitment of reasonable percentage of own funds to the project or initiative must be provided.
5. The responsibility of Central Government towards organisations will be taken into account when considering waiver of fees for a project that the organisation may already have received funding from Central Government.
6. All requests for waivers must be made in writing at the time the application for use of the facility, reserve or building consent is lodged.

7. All applications must declare any conflict of interest that may exist with the Council, if relevant (for example, if a Councillor, Community Board member or staff member is a Trustee of the Incorporated Society or Trust).
8. All successful applicants must acknowledge the support of the Thames-Coromandel District Council on any correspondence, advertising or other publicity material.
9. Only one waiver per organisation, per event/activity, will be available in any financial year.
10. For events consideration to be given to the viability of the event as a whole and fundraising efforts already shown.

4.3 Request for Waiver of Fees Budget

A budget code for Social Development Mercury Bay - Waiver of Costs has been established. Any request for waivers that are approved within this budget code are recovered out of Mercury Bay retained earnings.

5 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Mercury Bay Community Board:

1. Receives the report.
2. Agrees to use the proposed process and criteria to consider requests for waivers of fees for community groups.
3. The Community Board agrees that a maximum amount of \$10,000 be available annually to be considered for waiver of fees for community groups
4. Nominates a Community Board member to consider waiver requests for District fees.
5. Considers current request to waiver cost from community groups.