5.1 OUTCOME OF ADVERTISING - REVOCATION OF POLICY NO. 7.6.9 - HERITAGE ASSISTANCE FUND

Attachments: **Nil**

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council REVOKES Policy No. 7.6.9 – Heritage Assistance Fund pursuant to Section 2.7 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and clause 5.8 of the City of Vincent's Policy Development and Review Policy.

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

For Council to consider the proposed revocation of Policy No. 7.6.9 – Heritage Assistance Fund (Policy).

DELEGATION:

Section 2.7 of the *Local Government Act 1995* sets out the role of Council as being to 'determine the local government's policies'.

In accordance with Clause 5.8 of the City's Policy Review and Development Policy, Council approval is required for the revocation of a policy.

BACKGROUND:

Policy No. 7.6.9 – Heritage Assistance Fund

The Policy outlines financial support available through the Heritage Assistance Fund (HAF) for owners of heritage-listed places undertaking conservation works.

At its meeting on 13 February 2024 Council resolved to prepare a notice of revocation of the Policy for the purpose of community consultation.

Objections were received during the consultation period which meant that Council was required to consider these before the Policy could be revoked.

At its meeting on 18 June 2024, Council considered the objections and resolved for the revocation of the Policy to be considered as part of a review of the City's Community Funding Policy:

Council DOES NOT SUPPORT the REVOCATION of Policy No 7.6.9 Heritage Assistance Fund, included as Attachment 9 and REQUESTS Administration presents a report to Council in December 2024 on the revocation of Policy No 7.6.9 Heritage Assistance Fund, as part of the Community Funding Policy review.

Review of Community Funding Policy

The Community Funding Policy outlines various community funding opportunities that are available from the City, including the HAF. It also provides for details relating to the funding criteria.

A review of the Community Funding Policy was approved by Council for the purposes of community consultation at its meeting on 10 December 2024.

The outcome of consultation and consideration of the amended Community Funding Policy is a separate item on this Council Meeting agenda.

DETAILS:

Policy No.7.6.9 Heritage Assistance Fund

In accordance the City's Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy, the proposed revocation of the Policy was advertised for a period of 28 days between 4 March 2024 and 1 April 2024.

Consultation occurred in the following ways:

- Notices published on the City's website, the City's social media, and at the City's Administration building and Library and Local History Centre.
- A notice published in the 9 March 2024 issue of the Perth Voice.
- Letters distributed to owners and occupiers of all heritage places.

At the conclusion of the consultation period a total of four submissions were received in relation to the Policy. The key issues raised in these objections were:

- The revocation of the Policy would result in a loss of heritage assistance to owners of heritage places; and
- The management of heritage grants should be guided by a policy that specifies requirements, provides limits on works that are covered, identifies obligations of property owners and indicates level of funding that will be covered.

A summary of these submissions and Administration's responses were included in Attachment 1 of the 18 June 2024 Council Meeting Agenda. Administration's comments on these submissions remain unchanged.

Community Funding Policy

Community consultation on the amended Community Funding Policy occurred between 28 January 2025 and 18 February 2025. One submission was received which related to the proposed revocation of the Policy.

This submission reiterated concerns that were raised in the original consultation for the revocation of the Policy including:

- The HAF should continue to be managed by a Council Policy to ensure that clear guidance and criteria are available so that applications are treated consistently.
- Funding should only be provided to heritage listed places that are classified as either Management Category 1 or 2.

Administration's comments on these concerns are provided in the Comments section below.

LEGAL/POLICY:

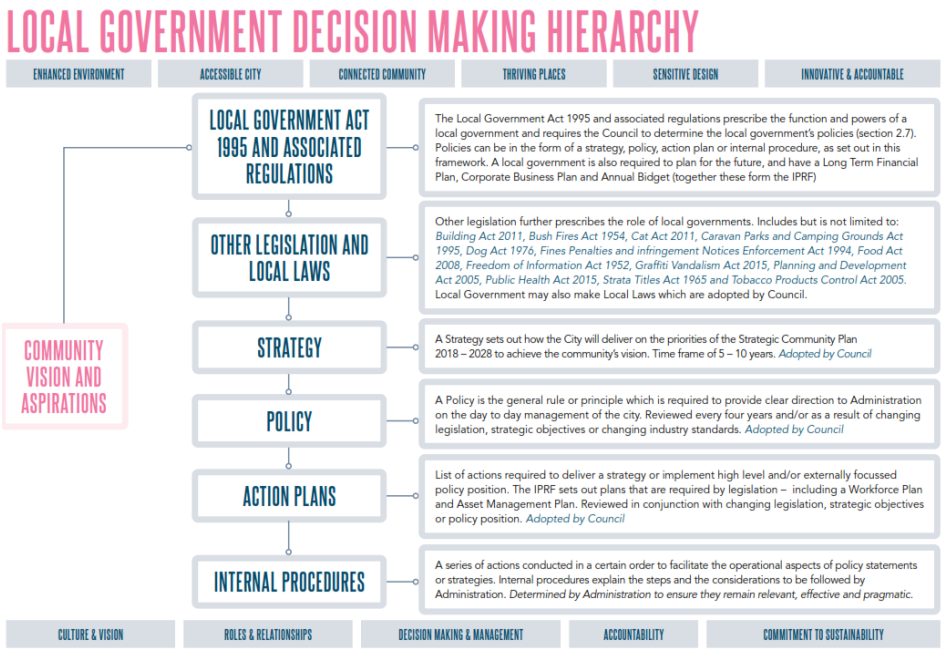
Policy Development and Review Policy

Section 2.7(2)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1995* provides Council with the power to determine policies.

The City's Policy Development and Review Policy sets out the process for the development and review of the City's policy documents.

In accordance with section 2.3 of the Policy Development and Review Policy:

The purpose of a policy is to provide a general rule or principle to guide Administration and the community on the City's decision making and advocacy.



RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Low: The proposed revocation of the Policy is low risk for Council, as heritage funding would continue through the Community Funding Policy. New external facing HAF guidelines would be available on the City's website, ensuring clear guidance for applicants.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the City's *Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032*:

Sensitive Design

Our built form character and heritage is protected and enhanced.

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

The operation of the HAF would be met through the existing operational budget and funding allocation reviewed annually as part of the City's budget preparation.

COMMENTS:

Administrations responses to the key matters raised in the consultation of the Community Funding Policy are below, and it is recommended that the Policy be revoked because:

1. *The HAF should be managed by a Council Policy, not by Administrative Guidelines*

- Continuation of HAF & Council Oversight – The HAF would continue to operate. Council would have oversight of this through the Community Funding Policy and the approval of the amount of grant funding available through the annual budget process.

- Need for Council Policy – The Policy is not necessary to be maintained for the purposes of the HAF. This is because it currently sets out the administrative process for obtaining heritage assistance funding. Administrative processes are not required to be provided for in a policy and would be addressed through separate HAF guidelines prepared by Administration.

  The Community Funding Policy establishes Council's approach to providing grant funding to heritage properties and provides clear direction to Administration through establishing eligibility criteria. This would be consistent with the purpose of a policy that is set out in the Policy Development and Review Policy.

- Supporting HAF Guidelines – These would be available on the City's website and would provide the necessary information to property owners applying for funding. This would be consistent with other grant programs provided by the City and would provide further information to supplement the Community Funding Policy criteria for property owners.

  These guidelines would be able to be amended to stay current and relevant. This would include reflecting the amount of funding available each year determined by Council without the need to amend a policy should this change.

2. HAF funding should be limited to Category 1 and 2 places only.

- Eligibility – The Community Funding Policy outlines that property owners of heritage listed properties or within heritage areas would be eligible for funding, irrespective of their category. This financial support would assist property owners in protecting and enhancing all heritage places and would be consistent with the Sensitive Design pillar of the City's Strategic Community Plan.