

**Submission  
No 7**

**INQUIRY INTO INTEGRITY, EFFICACY AND VALUE FOR  
MONEY OF NSW GOVERNMENT GRANT PROGRAMS**

**Organisation:** Bathurst Regional Council

**Date Received:** 17 August 2020

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Public Accountability Committee  
Parliament of New South Wales

To Whom it May Concern,

**Inquiry into the integrity, efficiency and value for money of NSW Government grant programs**

Council notes the Public Accountability Committee review into the NSW Government grant process and wishes to provide the following commentary;

1. Council is supportive of the current range of funding programs. This Council has received funding for a wide range of projects including;
  - (i) Aerodrome Expansion – Restart NSW
  - (ii) Industrial Estate Development – Growing Local
  - (iii) Regional Growth – Environment Tourism: Mount Panorama Boardwalk
  - (iv) Regional Cultural Fund (Round 2) – Museum Archives/ Collections facility
  - (v) Regional Sports Infrastructure – Rugby Fields and Carpark
  - (vi) Floodplain Management Grants – Perthville levee Stage II
  - (vii) Regional Flagship Funding – Sustainable Living Expo, Bathurst Winter Festival and Inland Sea of Sound
  - (viii) Safe and Secure Water Program – Winburndale Dam
  - (ix) Stronger Country Communities Fund – Various projects include; Freeman Park, Kelso Community Hub, Riding for Disabled, Basketball Stadium, Meals on Wheels, Historical Buildings.
  - (x) Heritage Near Me – Kings Parade Interpretation
  - (xi) Social Housing Community Improve Fund – Kelso Community Hub
  - (xii) NSW Environmental Trust: Restoration & Rehabilitation – Bathurst Brick Pits Wetland enhancement

As can be seen the range of grants cover social, environmental, infrastructure, economic development and cultural needs amongst others.

2. Council has also been recently in receipt of \$20 million of State funding to address the critical water issues impacting the Bathurst region due to the drought.

The funding provided has assisted Council on delivering the Bathurst 2040 Community Strategic Plan. Council would like to see some streamlining of the process in regard to

administration. The 'red tape' is at times frustrating for not only Council but also the relevant government agency overseeing the program.

3. Council would commend the continuation of the ability to use Council labour where appropriate, noting this is currently allowed in the majority of State Government funding programs.
4. Council when dealing with programs such as the Stronger Country Communities Fund, liaises with its local member to get additional community feedback. This process has worked well. Council would not support the local member having 'veto' powers on grant applications.

It is critical that local input is a primary factor in any decision-making on grant allocations. Not all matters are as 'clear cut' as some people may consider. Council's and local members represent their communities and develop/adopt or, provide input into community strategic plans that reflect their community needs. It is critical this facet of grant programs remains.

Trusting this assists the Committee in its' deliberations.

Yours faithfully

D J Sherley  
**GENERAL MANAGER**