

PURPOSE OF THIS PROTOCOL

- The primary purpose of this protocol is to facilitate subsidised bus hire for eligible Wollondilly based community groups, empowering them to actively participate in a wide range of activities.
- By subsidising group vehicle hire costs, Council aims to remove financial barriers and empower community groups to engage in community events and activities, fostering a sense of belonging and strengthening social connections.
- This protocol serves as a comprehensive guide for council staff, transport providers, and the community, outlining the procedures to access the subsidy program including eligibility criteria, available transport providers, and approved activities.

Always read this protocol in conjunction with the Related Procedures identified below.

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| PROTOCOL STATEMENT | Wollondilly Shire Council aims to support local community groups to foster community participation, social connectedness and overall inclusion and accessibility. This protocol serves as a comprehensive guide for council staff, transport providers, and the community, outlining the procedures to access the subsidy program including eligibility criteria, available transport providers, and approved activities. |
| SCOPE | Officers, Employees, Community, Contractors |
| RELATED PROCEDURES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIL |
| RELATED DOCUMENTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Strategic Plan • Disability Inclusion Action Plan • Record Information Management Policy • Approved Third Party Transport Providers & Fleet Information • Financial Assistance Framework |
| COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Act 1993 • State Records Act 1998 • Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act |
| PROTOCOL OWNER | Manager Community Services |

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| FIRST ENDORSEMENT DATE | 25 May 1986 Previously titled "Community Bus Protocol" |
| LAST ENDORSEMENT DATE | 29 May 2023 |
| REVIEW CYCLE | Every 3 years unless legislative requirement differs |
| NEXT REVIEW DATE | 29 May 2026 |
| AMENDMENT DATE (Endorsement not required) | Nil |

1. PRINCIPLES

The development of this protocol was guided by a set of values and principles of community development, which aim to achieve the following:

- 1.1 Enhance community participation by enabling community groups to engage in a wider range of activities, fostering social connections, community cohesion, and a sense of belonging.
- 1.2 Promote local participation by providing access to local events and activities by offering reliable, safe and accessible group transport, contributing to a vibrant and inclusive community.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

| ROLE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|-----------------|---|
| CEO | Shall ensure the day to day risk management activities of Council are mitigated. |
| DIRECTOR | Shall ensure policies and protocols are adhered and ensure sufficient resources are provided. |
| MANAGER | Management principles for the subsidy are adhered to through proper training and consultation with staff. |

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| | Shall ensure prompt action is taken to address deficiencies, errors or omissions that may be identified through the implementation of this program. |
| STAFF | Shall ensure data recorded and records generated are filed appropriately in Content Manager. Shall ensure communication with all stakeholders is timely, transparent and effective. |
| CONTRACTORS | Shall abide by Transport Provider Service Agreement |

3. ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY GROUPS

- 3.1 Only Not-for-Profit Community Groups based in Wollondilly will be considered to be eligible through this subsidy program.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of each community group to contact Council to ensure they are deemed eligible to access the subsidy program.
- 3.3 Council will maintain a confidential register of eligible community groups that will only be made available to approved transport providers and relevant Council staff.

4. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 Eligible activities include attending local activities and events, community outings, or other activities that promote social connectedness and promote health and wellbeing.
- 4.2 The subsidy program is only available for day trip bookings.
- 4.3 To be eligible to receive the subsidy, each booking requires a minimum of five individuals to be in attendance.
- 4.4 The subsidy program is not available to sporting clubs or school groups unless it is for the purpose of representing Wollondilly in a regional, state or national competition.
- 4.5 The subsidy program is not available to any person or group for personal or family purposes.
- 4.6 The subsidy program is not available for trips to the snowfields.
- 4.7 The subsidy program is not available for any 'party' activities such as 'bucks parties', 'hens parties' or 'brewery and winery' tours.
- 4.8 The subsidy program is not available for activities that are 'for profit' making purposes.

5. TRANSPORT PROVIDERS

- 5.1 Community Groups will only be eligible for the subsidy when using approved transport providers outlined in the supporting document '*Approved Third Party Transport Providers & Fleet Information*'.
- 5.2 The Transport Providers have been carefully selected to ensure reliable, safe and accessible group transport options.
- 5.3 Transport Providers may provide community groups with the option to book a vehicle with or without a driver. Fleet information and available options are outlined in the supporting document '*Approved Third Party Transport Providers & Fleet Information*'.
- 5.4 It is the responsibility of the transport providers to maintain the validity of mandatory registration, insurance and licencing; and provide Council with valid certificates of currency.

6. FINANCIAL COMMITMENT & BOOKING

- 6.1 Council agrees to provide a subsidy of up to \$500 towards the value of each booking for eligible community groups.
- 6.2 Council agrees to provide the subsidy directly to the transport provider for payment of a booking.
- 6.3 Community Groups will be responsible for all other payments to the transport provider above the \$500 subsidy.
- 6.4 It is the responsibility of the community group to book any usage through the transport provider directly.
- 6.5 The booking agreement is between the transport provider and community group.
- 6.6 It is the Transport Providers responsibility to coordinate with the community group in the event of any cancellation. In the event of a cancellation, Council, at its discretion, is not liable for any payments and is not responsible to provide any alternative arrangements.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 It is the transport provider and community groups responsibility to actively work to identify and address potential risks to ensure the safety of all passengers and drivers.
- 7.2 If the community group is providing their own driver for the booking, it is the responsibility of the transport provider and community group to ensure that anyone

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involved in driving the vehicle hold the appropriate drivers' licences, accreditation and satisfactory driving history.

- 7.3 It is the driver's responsibility to ensure the safe loading and unloading of passengers and operation of any hoists.
- 7.4 Council will not assume any liability regarding any service provision between the transport provider and the community group.



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