



9 December 2014

Ms Margaret Cattanach  
Team Leader Community Connections  
Community Services  
Sunshine Coast Council  
Locked Bag 72  
Sunshine Coast Mail Centre, QLD 4560

Dear Margaret

#### **2014 COMMUNITY GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIP FUNDING REVIEW**

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Community Grants Program and Community Partnership Funding Program Review Report last week.

This report forms part of the overall funding review for the 2014 Community Grants and Community Partnership Funding program.

As part of the review, I was asked to analyse the document in terms of two key questions as follows:

##### **1. Is the analysis representative of the findings?**

Yes, the analysis is representative of the findings. In some instances after further assessment, additional insights were included within the review document.

Best practice methodology was followed including; internal/ external stakeholder consultation, data analysis of program effectiveness as well as regional benchmarking of South East Queensland local government authorities (albeit limited in nature because of the variance in funding allocations).

In my 15 years of experience working in the community, I have found that grantmakers struggle with monitoring and evaluation, particularly in shifting the focus from outputs to outcomes and impacts. My observation is that Sunshine Coast Council, through doing this review will be better placed to achieve this change. This knowledge will drive an improved understanding of the funding

impact and effectiveness. Furthermore, the 2015 operational review can incorporate these new findings. With enhanced system refinements, Council will be better positioned to capture key data and improve funding impact even further.

**2. Are the options thorough? Are there any additional options that have been missed?**

There are several funding options open to Council but the identified ones are the most optimal mix in light of community and internal feedback.

One of the key issues I noted was the concern about providing operational funding and over-reliance on Council to maintain day to day operations by community groups. Whilst I appreciate the concern, the data does not appear to reflect any funding over-reliance.

As identified in the report, building the community's fundraising capabilities is an important strategy for mitigating this risk. The new fundraising technologies also offer multiple avenues open to community groups.

Communities around the country often speak about a desire for Grantmakers to provide operational funding. The Australian Institute of Grants Management's annual grantseekers survey also supports this position whereby 65% of grantseekers supported this concept in the 2012 survey. Community groups report that a small amount of operational support allows them to focus on valuable project work without having to worry about how the insurance or the electricity bill is going to be paid. My experience supports this argument.

Few grantmakers in Australia provide operational funding and Sunshine Coast Council is to be commended in its thinking.

Thank you for the opportunity of reviewing your document.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Kate Caldecott in blue ink.

**Kate Caldecott**  
**Managing Director**