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## Retail water customer account assistance

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Corporate and Commercial (Geoff Ward)

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### Recommendation

That Council:

- a) In accordance with section 356(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* and its 'Retail Water Customer Account Assistance' policy, approve financial assistance as listed in Table 1 of this report.
- b) Receive and note the 'Retail Water Customer Account Assistance Report' will cease to be presented to Council.
- c) Receive and note that a bi-annual financial assistance information report will instead be presented to Council.

### Background

One application for financial assistance in accordance with Council's '*Retail Water Customer Account Assistance*' policy has been received. Details of the application are set out in 'Table 1' below.

With the addition of section 377 (1A) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the General Manager can now approve the granting of financial assistance without a resolution from Council. Therefore, our previous practice of presenting the applications for financial assistance for Council approval will be ceasing after this report.

Future applications for financial assistance will be determined by the General Manager under delegation dated 17 August 2022. An information report will be provided to Council bi-annually to provide the details of financial assistance granted during the periods 1 January to 30 June and 1 July to 31 December each year.

**Table 1**

<b>Section 356 (non pensioner)</b>					
Account	Date application received	Nature of leak	Original water charges due	S356 financial assistance to be approved	Adjusted water charges due after approval
11698-11000-1	25-Nov-22	Burst pipe underground between meter and roadway 30 meters downstream of water meter	\$8,516.02	\$5,345.48	\$3,170.54
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$8,516.02</b>	<b>\$5,345.48</b>	<b>\$3,170.54</b>

### Finance

The 2022/23 financial year budget allocation for applications made in accordance with the '*Retail Water Customer Account Assistance*' policy is \$25,000.

<b>2022/23 financial year budget</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>	<b><u>No. of applications</u></b>
S356 assistance approved financial year to date	\$18,728.90	6
S582 assistance approved financial year to date	\$0.00	
S582 assistance approved since last Council meeting	\$0.00	
Proposed S356 assistance approval this Council meeting	\$5,345.48	1
Proposed S582 assistance approval this Council meeting	\$0.00	
<b>Budget remaining 2022/23 financial year</b>	<b>\$925.62</b>	

### Legal

Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) allows Council to 'contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance'. Section 377(1A) allows Council to delegate to the General Manager authority to grant financial assistance provided it is (a) part of a specified program (b) included in the Operational Plan (c) the program budget does not exceed 5% of Council's income for that year, and (d) the program applies to all persons uniformly.

### Conclusion

The total value of the section 356 financial assistance equates to \$ 5,345.48 by application of Council's '*Retail Water Customer Account Assistance*' policy. It is recommended that Council grant the recommended financial assistance.