

# Retail Water Customer Account Assistance Information Report

*Responsible Officer: Group Manager Corporate & Commercial (Geoff Ward)*

## Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Retail Water Customer Account Assistance listed in Table 1 of this report approved in the six-month period July to December 2023 by the General Manager under delegated authority.

## Background

Two applications for financial assistance, in accordance with section 356 (1) *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act) and Council's '*Retail Water Customer Account Assistance*' policy, were received in the six-month period July to December 2023. Details of the applications are set out below:

**Table 1**

<b>Section 356 (Natural disaster relief)</b>						
Account	Date application received	Date approved	Nature of relief	Original water charges due	S356 financial assistance to be approved	Adjusted water charges due after approval
10641-11000-1	18-Jul-23	14-Aug-23	Due to the major February/March 2022 floods events, this customer used additional water to clean. Due to financial restrictions the customer was only able to clean their property in November 2022. The property is located in the identified flood affected areas and no previous flood relief has been granted for the 2022 events. The proposed credit adjustment was calculated based on the usage in the same supply period of the previous year, i.e.. 01/11/2021 to 07/02/2022. This is consistent with other customers who were affected by these flood events.	\$650.36	\$550.22	\$100.14
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$550.22</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Section 356 (Non pensioner)</b>						
Account	Date application received	Date approved	Nature of leak	Original water charges due	S356 financial assistance to be approved	Adjusted water charges due after approval
10574-10000-3	5-Sep-23	30-Aug-23	A leak was found in a poly pipe 40m from the water meter. The tree root system of a large tree had strangled the poly pipe underground causing it to rupture and resulting the leak.	\$1,925.28	\$349.32	\$1,575.96
11215-11000-5	22-Aug-23	30-Aug-23	A leak was found located under the cement slab of the house. The cause is likely due to the ground movement following the major floods event in February 2022 .	\$2,595.04	\$847.74	\$1,747.30
11157-13000-3	22-Aug-23	27-Oct-23	A leak was found in a pipe located underground in a paddock near a cattle trough. Plumber has repaired the leak and usage has returned to usual pattern.	\$11,063.40	\$7,175.97	\$3,887.43
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$15,583.72</b>	<b>\$8,373.03</b>	<b>\$7,210.69</b>

---

## Finance

The 2023/24 financial year budget allocation for applications made in accordance with the 'Retail Water Customer Account Assistance' policy is \$25,000.

<b>Budget Table S356/S582</b>		
<b>2023/24 financial year budget</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>	<b><u>No. of applications</u></b>
Natural disaster - Major Feb/Mar 22 Flood events	\$550.22	1
S356 assistance approved financial year to date	\$8,373.03	3
S582 assistance approved financial year to date	\$0.00	
S582 assistance approved since last request	\$0.00	
<b>Budget remaining 2023/24 financial year</b>	<b>\$16,076.75</b>	

## Legal

Section 356 of the LG Act allows Council to 'contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance'.

Section 377(1A) of the LG Act 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 financial assistance granted by the General Manager under delegated authority, and in accordance with Council's 'Retail Water Customer Account Assistance' policy, during the period July to December 2023 equated to \$ 8,923.25.