



Seniors Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council acknowledges that the majority of services and facilities provided by Council are directed at the community at large rather than specifically for Seniors.

2. PURPOSE

In formulating a Seniors Policy the Council recognises that older people within the community have a right to quality facilities, services and programs that enable them to remain living in their own homes and continue to be active in the community. Council also recognises the significant contribution many Seniors make to the community through volunteer activity, enriching family life, and lending wisdom and experience through their participation in a wide range of community activities.

3. POLICY

A. THE IMPORTANCE OF SENIORS

Policy

The Council recognises the importance of Seniors in the community and identifies Seniors as a significant group to be considered and consulted with on appropriate planning and strategic decisions undertaken by Council.

Objective 1

To identify, provide and coordinate services, facilities and opportunities to meet the needs of older residents and maximise their quality of life.

Strategies

- Identify all services, facilities and opportunities that are available for Seniors in the Shire of Denmark.
- To liaise with Federal and State Government with regards to initiatives and programs for Seniors to ensure maximum use of available resources.
- To consider future key items from this Seniors Policy in Planning priorities by Council.
- Council to regularly monitor Seniors' demographic data as part of its Planning process.
- Prioritise the need for additional seating within the Denmark CBD, parks and gardens and on footpaths and walk trails.
- When conducting events Council assess the duration and timing of the event together with the demographic of the likely attendees and ensure appropriate seating is provided and/or encourage attendees to provide their own.
- When liaising with external organisers of events in the Shire, Council request that they assess the duration and timing of the event together with the demographic of the likely attendees and ensure appropriate seating is provided and/or encourage attendees to provide their own.

Objective 2

To have Seniors participate in identifying and meeting specific needs of older persons in the community and in being active in the community.

Strategies

- To support a Seniors Advisory Committee to provide Council with information and advice regarding ongoing needs of Seniors.
- To encourage Seniors to participate actively in the community especially in new ventures and community projects.
- To review, at reasonable intervals, Council's Seniors Policy to ensure its ongoing accuracy and relevance.

B. HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Policy

The Shire of Denmark recognises that many Seniors have special accommodation needs and will establish appropriate planning to assist enabling Senior residents to remain in the Shire in their later years.

Objective 1

Lend support for independent living villages for the elderly with emphasis on the need for affordable accommodation for all.

Strategies

- Shire to identify land suitable for independent living villages for Seniors.
- Identify and liaise with private parties to develop such villages in Denmark.

Objective 2

Consider strategies to encourage appropriate low-rental accommodation for Seniors in need within the Shire of Denmark.

Strategies

- Develop strategies to encourage the development of such housing for Denmark Seniors.
- Survey the need for such housing and work with State agencies to encourage their participation in its development.

Objective 3

Develop plans for dependent facilities and services for the elderly.

Strategies

- Advocate that the Denmark Health Service include sufficient beds for both aged residential and acute elderly patients.
- Support retaining and expanding home and community care services.
- Seek funding from State and Commonwealth agencies to assist with planning stages, as appropriate.
- Monitor, on at least an annual basis, the number of occupied beds, compared to funded or available beds, being provided at the Denmark Health Service Blue Wren Lodge to ensure that a sufficient number have been planned for the ageing population and to enable forward

staging of the second wing of the facility as proposed in the Denmark Health Service Master Plan.

Objective 4

Ensure Seniors are consulted and included within the decision-making process in relation to the design and location of Seniors housing developments.

Strategies

- Council utilise the Seniors Advisory Committee in relation to senior housing development opportunities and the identification of land suitable for such housing.
- In keeping with Council's commitment to the local environment, encourage the use of solar and passive energy in all housing developments sponsored or supported by Council, for Seniors.

C. HEALTH AND WELFARE

Policy

The Council recognises that Seniors have more specific health and welfare needs than other sectors in the community and these needs may necessitate changes in the services required. While much of the health and welfare provision is a Federal or State responsibility, Council acknowledges its role to ensure that proper services are being met and, where possible, to support the provision of these services.

Objective 1

Improve the general health and wellbeing of the Seniors within the community through the reasonable provision or access to medical, health and welfare services.

Strategies

- Provide support and assistance for programs specific to Seniors health and welfare issues.
- Evaluate services to ensure they remain appropriate, affordable and inclusive for Seniors.
- Develop and maintain liaison between Seniors and health agencies.

Objective 2

Support the provision of specialist services for the region.

Strategies

- Develop formal mechanism for ongoing communication between relevant profession groups, Seniors and Council.
- Advocate and support the provision of mental health services.

Objective 3

Identify the numbers of Seniors in the community with specific medical, health and welfare issues.

Strategies

- Council to build or access data base(s) including quantitative and qualitative data on Seniors needs.
- Use data to identify services required to meet needs.

Objective 4

To improve quality of life of Seniors by addressing the issues of loneliness, isolation and depression.

Strategies

- Facilitate the provision of social and recreational programs for Seniors and promote intergenerational social and sporting events.
- Identify community programs that could include and involve Seniors and encourage their participation.
- Collaborate with schools, youth and senior organisations to create processes which encourage all ages to be actively engaged in the community.

Objective 5

Ensure Seniors are consulted on their health and welfare needs.

Strategies

- Council to consult with relevant Seniors for information and guidance about health and welfare issues and appropriate actions steps to be taken.

Objective 6

To encourage the Denmark Health Service to address key issues relating to the needs of Seniors.

Strategies

- The Seniors Advisory Committee to meet with the Health Service Manager of the Denmark Health Service to give support to the principle and assist in identifying areas of need and develop appropriate strategies to meet these needs.
- The Denmark Over 50s Association be encouraged to offer a Senior to represent Seniors' interests on the Denmark Health Hub.

Objective 7

Link the World Health Organisation accreditation to relevant areas pertaining to Seniors.

Strategies

- Seniors Advisory Committee to be consulted for advice on this matter and to lend assistance as appropriate.

D. RECREATION AND LEISURE

Policy

The Council recognises the importance of having a physically active and healthy community. It acknowledges the importance of exercise and sporting activities for Seniors for the health and social opportunities these provide and identifies a role for Council in assisting in the provision of such activities.

Objective 1

To consider building a Centre for Senior activities and involvement.

Strategies

- Liaise with Seniors on the development of a Community Centre.
- Determine the projected use by Seniors of such a Centre.
- Determine the annual running cost of such a Centre.
- Explore cooperative opportunities with developers and others for building a Community Centre available to all Seniors.
- Identify suitable land for the Community Centre.
- Explore ways of funding the running of the Centre including grants and sponsorship.

Objective 2

To encourage Seniors to participate in sporting, recreational and leisure activities to enhance their health and wellbeing.

Strategies

- Seek funding to promote and hold a series of sporting and leisure activities for Seniors.
- Liaise with Seniors to develop and promote activities they identify as priorities for leisure and recreation.
- Encourage appropriate fees be used to make participation in local leisure activities affordable for Seniors.
- Council shall convene/host a function or activity which the senior citizens of the Denmark community can attend free of charge once annually preferably during the State's Seniors Week.

The purpose of the annual function or activity to;

- *Recognise & thank Seniors' contribution to our settlement;*
- *Recognise Seniors' valuable, ongoing contributions to our community;*
- *Acknowledge that Seniors make up a large sector of the Denmark population;*
- *Acknowledge the hardships that some Seniors face either financially and/or socially;*
- *Encourage and promote intergenerational activities linking seniors with the community.*
- *Encourage social interaction and well-being; and*
- *Align with the State Government strategies and actions such as Seniors Week and Living Longer, Living Stronger.*

Eligibility to Attend

Denmark Residents & Ratepayers who are:

- *Seniors Card holders; or*
- *Receivers of the Aged Pension; or*
- *Be of at least the age of 60; and*

and Carers of the elderly may attend.”

Objective 3

To ensure that parks, recreational areas, beaches, paths and trails are easily accessible and user-friendly for Seniors.

Strategies

- Council to review access of its recreational sites and parks for Seniors.
- Involve Seniors in discussions on improving access and upgrading sites for Seniors.

Objective 4

To recognise the growing demand among Seniors for a local therapy pool and explore opportunities to site a therapy pool in the Shire of Denmark.

Strategies

- Quantify the demand for a therapy pool in the community.
- Explore the possibility of having a therapy pool as part of any community swimming pool proposed for Denmark.

E. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Policy

The Council is committed to the concept of Denmark being a Learning Community. This concept extends to supporting educational and learning opportunities for Seniors across a wide variety of activities. The Council recognises that within the ranks of Seniors lie a wide and broad range of practical and professional expertise that can provide significant richness and opportunity to the whole community. The Council wishes to assist in providing access to the experience and knowledge which Seniors can provide.

Objective 1

To provide opportunities for older people to participate in a range of educational and training activities.

Strategies

- Council to assist in identifying appropriate educational and training activities for Seniors.
- Council to assist in seeking funding to help provide such activities.

- Council to encourage partnerships with learning and training organisations to provide educational and training opportunities for older people.

Objective 2

To assist the participation by Seniors in a range of educational and training activities.

Strategies

- Council to assist in providing affordable and accessible meeting places for Seniors.
- Council to consult with Seniors in supporting key educational and training programs.

Objective 3

To encourage Seniors to participate in education and training programs in which their own practical and professional skills can be used.

Strategies

- Council encourage a Seniors Mentors list of older people willing to assist educational and training programs at all levels of the Denmark community.
- Council identify opportunities for seniors to volunteer use of their skills.

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Policy

The Council recognises each person in our community has a right to feel safe and secure within the home, out on walkways, streets and roads, in parks, on beaches and trails or anywhere else in the Shire of Denmark. Whilst not all safety and security issues are the responsibilities of Council, the Council is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all citizens. In this regard Seniors may highlight certain safety and security concerns and Council accepts these concerns must be addressed.

Objective 1

To create and maintain a Shire that is safe, welcoming and friendly for Seniors.

Strategies

- Make upgrading of key walkways close to town facilities a major priority with secure road-crossings at key intersections, with special regard for the transport of disabled, infirm and older persons.
- Improve streets, footpaths and trails to address concerns such as slipping, trips and falls.
- Inspect signage, lighting, seating and parking with Seniors in mind.
- Include Seniors in Council discussions on relevant planning issues relating to safety and security.
- Support programs and activities targeting Seniors' safety and security.

Objective 2

To endeavour to protect Seniors from crime.

Strategies

- Monitor, with police support, incidence of crime against seniors and support efforts to keep this as low as possible.
- Actively support the local Police wherever possible, especially with reference to Seniors and safety.

Objective 3

To consult with and include Seniors in the decision-making process on matters of safety and security.

Strategies

- Council to ensure that the Seniors Advisory Committee is contacted by Council Staff to discuss matters of safety and security in relation to Seniors.
- Regular contact to be maintained with the Police on these matters.
- Support Police in educational programs targeting the safety and security of Seniors.\

G. TRANSPORT, ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy

The Council recognises the importance of transportation to Seniors in order to access services and facilities in the community, to enjoy an active lifestyle and to socialise with family and friends. The Council is aware that Seniors, who are unable to drive, have to rely on other means of transportation. Council also recognises the importance of safe, well-built walkways, especially around the Denmark CBD for access to shopping and services.

Objective 1

To develop a safe, user-friendly pathway system especially close to main shopping and service facilities.

Strategies

- Upgrade key walkways close to the Denmark CBD & Denmark townsite facilities as a major priority.
- Educate public, but especially Seniors, as to the availability of such walkways.
- Ensure new residential & commercial developments include safe walkways designed on Disability Access and Inclusiveness principals.
- Include shelter and rest facilities on long stretches of walkways.

Objective 2

To improve public transport availability within the Shire of Denmark.

Strategies

- Consult with Seniors and others on key concerns regarding access to transport.
- Explore ways of improving access to transport, including use of the Community Bus.

Objective 3

To consider ways in which Council services can assist Seniors in maintaining their homes and properties.

Strategies

- Examine how Seniors, disabled or infirm persons, who are unable to use trailers, can get waste materials to the Refuse Site.
- Monitor the need for green waste and general roadside collection services.

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