



Community Contributions Policy

Policy Statement

The policy objective is to establish an equitable and transparent approach to allocating financial support by the Shire to the Denmark community. It seeks to replace historical ad-hoc arrangements with sustainable, long-term partnerships that provide certainty to community groups delivering essential services. The policy aims to outline a framework and set of arrangements for funding community groups, organisations, and individuals who:

- contribute positively to the community;
- enhance the capacity of community groups;
- promote public safety;
- bolster environmental sustainability;
- support economic development;
- strengthen social well-being;
- support collaborative efforts with neighbouring local governments;
- facilitate significant financial leveraging for initiatives outlined in the Strategic Community Plan; and
- address service gaps in alignment with Council-endorsed strategies.

Policy Scope

This policy specifies that financial contributions to the community are allocated through one of four methods:

- Service Partnerships (Core)
- Service Partnerships (Discretionary)
- Grants
- Rates Exemptions

Contracts in which the Shire directly employs staff to deliver a service for a period are not considered service partnerships.

The Purchasing Policy must be considered before awarding any partnership agreement.

Definitions

Core Service Partnerships

Arrangements where the Shire has a business or community requirement to provide a service and has made a workforce decision to engage with a partner to deliver this service. The Purchasing Policy must be met before awarding a Core Service Partnership.

Discretionary Service Partnerships

Arrangements where the Shire of Denmark has determined to step in and provide a service to the community beyond the essential

functions of local government. These agreements are a forward commitment for up to three years.

Grants

The Shire's financial contribution to support specific projects, initiatives, or activities. It is awarded based on criteria set by the Shire. Grant recipients must adhere to specific terms and conditions outlined by the Shire in the grant agreement, including reporting and acknowledgement requirements.

Policy Principles

1. Service Partnerships (Core and Discretionary) Administration

The Shire CEO determines and agrees upon core service partnerships for up to four years as part of the Corporate Business Planning cycle. Service Partnerships are documented as legally binding Service Agreements, or non-binding Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and recorded in the Corporate Business Plan.

The factors considered when determining a Agreements or MOUs are:

- Public safety where there is no alternate provider available in the community.
- Regional collaboration where if the Shire is to withdraw from the partnership, it would jeopardise the activity of other local governments.
- Significant financial leveraging can be achieved by an organisation that provides social or economic value to the community.
- There is a gap in a service need.
- The partnership would contribute to initiatives or services in a Council endorsed strategy.
- Broader social, environmental or economic benefits.

As a service partnership nears the conclusion of its agreed term, Shire officers will engage with the community group and key stakeholders to brief the Council as part of a formal evaluation process.

The Shire can periodically review service partnerships to determine effectiveness and any future partnership needs as part of the Corporate Business Planning process.

The Council will document the core and discretionary service partnerships it has committed to in the annual budget. This disclosure aims to inform the general community about the services the Council has deemed necessary within the local government's scope of responsibility.

2. Grants

Grants are essential for community groups to access funding for projects, programs, and events they want to deliver to the local community. As a rule:

- Applicants are not guaranteed funding, and no applicant is guaranteed full funding.

- Previously funded initiatives cannot be guaranteed funding in subsequent years,
- The available funds remain subject to annual budget considerations.
- Applicants must address the relevant criteria in one of the funding categories.
- An applicant may apply for one category of funding in each round.
- The Shire of Denmark does not generally intend to be the sole provider of financial support for the funded project or activity.

Typically, two grant rounds a year will be advertised to the community. In the first round, 50% of the total budget will be made available, and in the second round, any unused funds, plus the budget balance, will be available.

As part of the budget process, the Shire of Denmark will receive formal feedback from officers on the measurable outcomes achieved in the previous grant rounds and based on broad community feedback, determine whether the grants meet the community's needs.

Grant categories

Category	Outcome	Maximum application
Startup Grants	focus on new clubs or community groups looking to get established by purchasing equipment, undertaking training or coaching programs or establishing their club structure and governance. Groups can only access this program once and must demonstrate that they are addressing an unmet community need, have members, and have a space to operate from	\$1,000
Be Active Grants	connect the community by building a sense of belonging, commitment, and activation. Clubs and groups may seek to engage new members, provide new services, or reach out to address a social need in the community as part of this grant.	\$5,000
Environmental Sustainability	focuses on activities that are supported through the Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan	\$5,000
Build Future Leaders	focuses on community groups seeking to build organisational sustainability by investing in leadership development, youth development programs or governance training.	\$2,000
Equipment and Facilities Grant	focuses on community groups who need to upgrade critical equipment or infrastructure for their service to continue delivery. Some groups may use this program to leverage external funding.	\$10,000

Wellbeing Grants	are broad-ranging grants that primarily focus on improving the health and general well-being of those most at risk in the community	\$5,000
Support through Donations	focuses on delivering community groups, charities and NFP organisations with a donation towards an identified need that addresses the local community's cultural, social, public welfare and human rights issues.	\$1,000

3. Rate Waivers and Peppercorn Leases

The Shire of Denmark holds a significant portfolio of property assets available to community groups through leases (Refer to Council's Property Management Policy).

The Council contributes to community groups by providing a peppercorn lease instead of charging commercial rent. Peppercorn leases to community groups is recorded in the Annual Budget.

Council commits to supporting the activities of charitable groups in the community in an equitable and fair approach. As such, where a community group hold a lease for a Shire-owned facility, Council will consider granting a rate waiver through the annual budget process.

4. Public Register

The Shire will publish a register of all service partnerships, grants, and rate waivers on the Shires website.

Responsibilities

The Council will approve:

1. New Discretionary Service Agreements that span multiple years
2. The total annual budget allocation for grants.
3. Any rate waiver for community groups leasing Shire property.

The CEO will approve:

1. Discretionary Service Agreements that are a renewal of an existing agreement.
2. Discretionary Service Agreements that are for less than a one year term and within budget.
3. All Core Service Agreements.
4. The grant assessment methodology, awarding and disbursement of grant funding.

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