

SCS-049 Community Development Policy

TRIM Reference: D20/41056 Due for Review: 1 July 2024
Responsible Officer: Coordinator Community Health & Development

Purpose

This policy outlines a set of principles and approaches to guide Council's commitment to community development.

Community development is a process where community members are supported to identify and take collective action on issues that are important to them.

Policy Principles

Community development works from an asset base rather than a deficit model and focuses on 'doing with' rather than 'doing to' or 'doing for' communities'. The Surf Coast Shire Council Community Development Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- community members are experts in their lives and communities, and consequently Council values their knowledge and wisdom
- each community member has knowledge, skills, care and connections. Feeling valued and capable depends on whether that knowledge and know-how can be shared and utilised
- community members are empowered to take the lead every stage, from deciding on issues, to identifying and building on assets, from selecting and implementing actions to monitoring and building improvements into future planning
- strong, productive relationships, nurtured over time, and a shared way of working are central to achieving lasting change
- the sense that individuals and communities have of themselves is inextricably linked to place. In working with communities Council considers the unique and interacting elements of nature, culture, lifestyle, industries and history of our towns and villages.

Scope

Community development principles can be applied to all instances where Council and community interact. This policy directs Council employees to work with a diverse range of stakeholders including individuals, community groups, volunteers, social enterprises, businesses, government departments and regional bodies to achieve community development outcomes.

Policy

A strategic and coordinated approach to community development supports Council's purpose 'to help our community and environment to thrive'.

To achieve this, Council will align its knowledge, skills, connections and resources to:

1. Seek out the diverse perspectives and experiences of Surf Coast Shire communities to inform Council's understanding of communities' needs and strengths.
2. Develop the confidence, skills and connections of local leaders and community builders to work together to create the positive changes they want to see in their communities.
3. Be flexible and responsive in its design and implementation of programs and services, trialling and evaluating new ways to achieve community outcomes.
4. Consistently invest in developing social capital by prioritising relationship building among a diverse range of partners.
5. Be principled and equitable in its planning and allocation of resources to support communities' access to infrastructure, open space, facilities, programs and services and networks.

Governance, roles and responsibilities, implementation and reporting for this policy will be set out in the Community Development Framework and series of Action Plans.

Definitions

Community	Communities can be formed around a common place (eg neighbourhood), identity (eg belonging to a cultural group), or interest (eg reconciliation with Australia's first peoples)
Community Development	An asset-based approach to working with communities, through individual and collective empowerment, to achieve social and economic development and change (Ireland Community Development Framework).
Community Assets	A community asset is anything that can be used to improve the quality of community life, including physical infrastructure, place of natural or cultural heritage, services, skills networks, etc.
Social Capital	Networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups.

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

1. State Government of Queensland Department of Communities, Disabilities Services and Seniors Framework for Place Based Approaches
2. Pugalis, L. Tan, SF (2017) The Role of Local Government in Local and Regional Economic Development University of Technology Sydney
3. Wilks, S., Lahausse, J., Edwards, B., (2015) Commonwealth Place-based Service Delivery Initiatives: Key Learnings Project (Research Report No.32). Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.
4. Kenyon, P (2018) Ten Key Community Development Beliefs Bank of I.D.E.A.S
5. Ireland Government 2014 Ireland Community Development Framework

Document History

Version	Document History	Approved by – Date
1	<i>Amended</i>	<i>Council Resolution – 28 July 2020</i>

ⁱ Bank of Ideas