

# COUNCIL POLICY



<b>Community House</b>	Document No:	SCS - 006
	Approval Date:	
	Approved By:	Council
Responsible Officer: Manager Leisure and Wellbeing	Trim Reference:	D13/4210
Authorising Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council's support to the five Community Houses within the Surf Coast Shire.

## 2. Scope

This policy recognises the ongoing community development role Community Houses play at a local level and has been developed to provide guidance and support to Community Houses. Council recognises and supports the benefits that Community Houses bring to communities through the provision of programs, services and venues for community development, as well as avenues for informal support and opportunities for resident participation in the planning and delivery of services at a local level.

Community Houses within the Surf Coast Shire are funded primarily through the State Government Neighbourhood House Coordination Program.

## 3. Application

This policy applies to Council, its employees and its contracted service providers. This policy will also apply to any new or emerging Houses within the Shire.

## 4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the terms '*neighbourhood house*' and '*community house*' are interchangeable.

Neighbourhood Houses and Community Houses are incorporated, non-profit organisations, managed by democratically elected committees of management, who act in a voluntary capacity. They are not religiously or politically affiliated and develop their activities based on the needs of the local community.

## 5. Policy

5.1 Council commits to support Community Houses in the following ways:

- An individual Lease Agreement with each Community House.
- An annual Community Development Contribution set via Council's budget process.
- Provision and maintenance of facilities according to the documented Lease Agreement and Maintenance Manual.
- Guidance and support in the form of a Council contact officer.
- Coordination of the Surf Coast Network of Community Houses.
- Advocacy on behalf of Community Houses and committees.
- Provision of demographic and social information to Community Houses.

5.2 Community Houses, including committee, staff and volunteers (where appropriate) are responsible to:

- Operate in a transparent and accountable manner in keeping with their statement of purpose and rules of incorporation, and the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program guidelines.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including disability anti-discrimination legislation.
- Be accessible to all citizens and visitors during operating hours.
- Provide Council with the following documents within 20 days after the Annual General Meeting
  - Annual Report of the Community House including financial reports as presented at the Annual General Meeting
  - Minutes of AGM
  - Report on previous Annual Community Development Contribution

- Proposed expenditure for Annual Community Development Contribution
- Annual budget for the forthcoming year

## 6. Records

Records shall be retained for at least the period shown below.

Record	Retention/Disposal Responsibility	Retention Period	Location
Legal Documents	Manager Leisure and Wellbeing Coordinator Governance & Regulatory Services	Term of the legal arrangements Ongoing	Relevant Trim File  Legal documents register & storage

## 7. Attachments

Not applicable.

## 8. References

### Surf Coast Shire documents

- Surf Coast Shire Council Plan 2013-2017
- Health & Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Community Engagement Policy (SCS – 017)
- Relevant Lease Agreements
- Maintenance Manual for Community Houses

### External Documents

- Neighbourhood House Coordination Program, [www.dhhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au)
- Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centre [www.anhlc.asn.au](http://www.anhlc.asn.au)