

SCHEDULE OF SUBMISSIONS: CLASSES AT THE DENMARK RECREATION CENTRE

Denmark Recreation Centre, Denmark (SER.15)

Note – redacted for privacy

#	Received	Submission	Officer Comment
S1	31/05/2022	<p>I wish to write in an email what you are already aware of - my disbelief that a compromise/solution to the imminent eviction of my Rehabilitation Circuit group from the Recreation Centre cannot be reached.</p> <p>We (you and I) are aware of both sides of the discussion so I will just mention the points where I see a compromise might be achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Offering equal access to all external contractors wishing to use the gym for groups •Your insistence of offering 24/7 access to Rec Centre members <p>I would love to continue to discuss the possibility of the Shire offering blocks of time where private contractors have sole use of the gym. This obviously impinges on your wish for 24/7 access for members which I, personally, think, in such a small community, is completely unnecessary.</p> <p>I have spoken with others, some taking classes in the gym (but employed by the Recreation Centre) and other professionals in allied health, (no-one openly admitting to wishing to offer supervised groups), and everyone is able to work together. The group times could be created at times less popular with members. None of this is insurmountable and I look forward to future public discussions with the shire.</p> <p>In the meantime, for the mental and physical health of my patients, I urge you to allow the group to continue whilst discussions are on-going.</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: ICR22578203</p>
S2	30/05/2022	<p>I would like to register my disappointment with the Shire's proposed decision to deny gym access to supervised group physiotherapy class.</p> <p>Seven years ago I was diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder called Ankylosis Spondylitis (AS). AS causes the spine joints to fuse together and is often referred to as bamboo spine. It also attacks all my major joints. It limits my movement and causes stiffness and a good deal of pain. Upon diagnosis the rheumatologist put me on a regimen of nerve blocking drugs and expensive disease modifying injections but he also advised, no he insisted I see a physiotherapist and do weekly gym classes under the physiotherapist's supervision. There is no cure for AS and although the drugs work their effectiveness is waning and my best hope to keep mobile is Melanie's physiotherapy gym sessions.</p> <p>At first I hated going to gym but I quickly realised the benefits I was gaining, not just in keeping mobile but I also appreciate the social camaraderie of the group.</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252154</p>

		<p>If as proposed, the Shire stops our gym classes I will have to travel to Albany several times a week. Apart from the time and cost involved I find driving the distance uncomfortable. Stopping the physiotherapy gym classes would be another loss of a service to our town. As a rate payer I cannot understand how our use of the gym equipment for 2 or 3 hours a week can be of any great inconvenience when non physio gym members have access for the other 165 hours every week.</p> <p>I urge you to please reconsider your position.</p>	
S3	30/05/2022	<p>Thank you for meeting last week with members of the circuit class led by Melanie Rees. I appreciated hearing your explanation of the background to the proposed cancellation of our classes and came away feeling more optimistic that a compromise can be found to allow the classes to continue.</p> <p>I have attended Melanie's classes for the past 14 years and under her guidance have corrected my chronic back and neck problems to the extent that I can safely engage in volunteer ambulance work without injury.</p> <p>Melanie's classes provide strong motivation to work hard, and her close supervision ensures that we exercise safely. The social bonds that have developed within the group motivate us to keep coming back every week and provide strong social support to those going through difficult times.</p> <p>I will be 67 in July and believe that keeping fit and socially connected by attending regular physio-led group sessions at the Rec Centre will help me continue to be an active member of the Denmark community for many years to come. I believe the discussion and suggestions for the way forward at our meeting last Thursday offer some hope that it will be possible to continue Melanie's classes and thank all concerned for working towards this goal.</p>	<p>Responded 31/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252155</p>
S4	31/05/2022	<p>As a 72-year-old Denmark resident I am appalled that our Council could even consider terminating a community service as beneficial as this class. When I relocated to Denmark 14 years ago, I tried to find a fitness group to replace what I'd been attending in Perth. I joined the gym, but didn't feel comfortable using equipment unsupervised, so tried some of the classes, sadly for me, uninspiring. Recently, during a much overdue clean out I found a bunch of unused Rec Center passes, from all those years ago.</p> <p>Fortunately, an elbow injury had my GP refer me to Physiotherapy, that was about 12 years ago. Attending Melanie's classes have also been of huge benefit to my long-standing condition of Osteopenia, and my bone density has even improved on recent testing. Weight lifting exercise is indeed the best treatment.</p> <p>I feel it is a duty for our council to accommodate the needs of aging residents, along with the more able and fit members of our community. These classes have been of enormous benefit to so many in this community and must be allowed to continue.</p> <p>I would urge you to reconsider this pending eviction of Melanie Rees Physiotherapy Circuit Classes.</p>	<p>Responded 31/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252157</p>
S5	31/05/2022	<p>I'm writing to express my concern at the council's proposal to terminate the current arrangements for the provision of remedial gym classes which are conducted by Ms Melanie Rees at the Denmark Recreation Centre. I've attended these gym classes for</p>	<p>Responded 31/05/22</p>

		<p>more than ten years on the advice of my GP, following serious leg injuries sustained in an accident, and believe I'm in a good position to comment on the benefits the classes provide to the Denmark community.</p> <p>I'd like to point out these remedial classes are not "keep fit" classes. They're much more than that.</p> <p>The majority of the people attending these gym sessions are elderly, most well into their seventies and some well into their eighties. Many of them have undergone surgery including artificial joint replacement or are recovering from strokes or other significant health issues. The opportunity to undertake supervised exercise classes under the supervision of a qualified physiotherapist is important and represents an invaluable adjunct to other formal physiotherapy sessions.</p> <p>These remedial classes however provide much more than rehabilitation exercises. Many of the attendees live alone. For many the classes provide a focal point for getting out during the week, and some have told me that they represent one of the few opportunities they have to interact socially with others.</p> <p>As I've stated, these remedial classes are more than simple gym sessions. They actually provide a small but important element to the fabric of the Denmark community. I believe the Denmark Recreation Centre is a facility intended for the benefit of all the residents. Not just the young and healthy but also the elderly whose needs are just as important.</p> <p>Given the specialised nature of the exercise program provided by these sessions and the familiarity provided by Melanie, I think it would be difficult for the council or the centre to replicate anything similar and the demise of these classes would represent a serious constraint to the services available to the elderly community within our town.</p> <p>Given that the Recreation Centre is available for public use, issues such as the management of liability issues and the provision of the appropriate insurances are manageable and the use of the centre for three or four hours each week does not seriously compromise the centre's schedule.</p> <p>On the basis of the points raised in this note I would strongly recommend that negotiations are undertaken to resolve any issues in order to ensure the continuation of this important service to the community.</p>	<p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252158</p>
S6	31/05/2022	<p>I'm writing re the decision to terminate the use of the Denmark Rec. Centre gym by Melanie Rees' physiotherapy/rehab group on June 30th. I have been a member of this group for about 18 months, on referral by my doctor. It has been of great value to me and I am hoping that it can continue. Melanie provides attentive and personalised service at an affordable cost.</p> <p>Doctors feel confident about sending people to Melanie, and participants are confident of taking the class, because they know that she is qualified for the job. Melanie provides attentive and personalised service at a very affordable cost.</p> <p>I'd imagine that many shires would be very pleased to have this service available to community members, and I hope that the council will do all in their power to find a way for this service to continue.</p> <p>In the interim, the 30th of June being not far away, it would be fantastic (and highly desirable) if the classes be allowed to</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252164</p>

		<p>continue whilst a more creative solution is found, rather than just stopping this service with a line of red tape which would be to the detriment of all participants now and in the future.</p> <p>I am worried that some group members will struggle to do any regular exercise without the motivation which comes from the group and a caring and qualified supervisor. This will be to the detriment of the individual and the community as a whole. Please help us to find a solution.</p>	
S7	31/05/2022	<p>Please include my letter of support for Meanie Rees and the supervised exercise classes she runs at Denmark Recreation Centre.</p> <p>As discussed at the recent meeting at Denmark Shire, seniors health (both physical and mental) has been identified in numerous surveys over the years in Denmark. Almost all Shires and councils have this on their agenda and accommodate programs that address this. I hope the shire of Denmark can work towards a viable solution that accomodates aged and infirm clients with their special needs as well as the fit and healthy clients. It would be a tragedy to lose the program that Melanie Rees runs from our community.</p> <p><i>I fully support the community physiotherapy community program at Denmark Recreational centre.</i></p> <p><i>I have worked in Denmark for 27 years and have overseen the amazing results the program has produced on both the physical health and mental health of the patients of Denmark.</i></p> <p><i>I cannot emphasise enough that the social isolation and depression is a huge problem in elderly people in our community. Exercise and social cohesion have been shown to improve greatly the mental health of elderly patients. I fully support endeavours from a medical evidence-based stance.</i></p> <p><i>Denmark is truly lucky to have committed practitioners of Mel Reeves ability who give up their time to perform such a community service.</i></p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252163</p>
S8	31/05/2022	<p>We attended a meeting at the Shire offices on 26th May 2022 and also previously co-signed a letter to Shire regarding the closure of group physiotherapy classes at the end of June at the recreation centre.</p> <p>We are not satisfied that your action's and responses effectively serve the needs of the retirees in the Denmark Community.</p> <p>You stated that the meeting on the 26th is the first time you have actually engaged with users of this class despite what you describe as a two year engagement with stakeholders. You also claimed that stakeholders opinions were sought through a survey document left on the counter at the recreation centre. We have passed through the reception area at least twice a week through this period and have never had our attention drawn to such a survey. Also, no one at the group physiotherapy class, around 50 people, has contributed to this survey. It therefore appears that you have canvassed opinions from people not including those affected by your potential actions. Also, Dr REDACTED, who attended the meeting, and other practitioners, have not been contacted. Also, it is apparent that no communication has been posted to the Shire website; Community Engagement, Latest News.</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252162</p>

		<p>The main reason given by the CEO for terminating the classes was to achieve fairness for other specialised service providers. This would indicate that, to achieve this fairness, a transparent commercial process is to be instigated. Such a corporate process would surely take several months to achieve. Preparing an approved contracting plan, preparing and issuing requests for expressions of interest, preparation of tender documents, preparation of a tender evaluation plan, tender issue, service provider submission of expression of interest and tender response, tender evaluation, contract/ service order finalisation and award, with appropriate time allowance for executive approval and oversight will all require time at each stage. You did not give any indication of the timeframe envisaged. Neither have you detailed the section/ subsection of the Local Government Act as requested.</p> <p>As expressed by those attending, including Dr REDACTED, it is vital that the classes continue uninterrupted to avoid undesirable outcomes for class attendees. This essential requirement appears to be unachievable in the current timescale.</p> <p>To interrupt a class that has been running for over 25 years in just a few days' time to meet Shire internal/ local government compliance procedures is unfair to our demographic. Rather than giving us confidence in the Shire's processes this situation could create a perception of incompetence, poor planning and possible hidden agendas.</p> <p>It must surely be possible to implement your commercial process, checks and balances etc without interrupting this essential service to your community members.</p> <p>We request that this correspondence be included with any report submitted to Council on this matter for their consideration.</p>	
S9	31/05/2022	<p>I write in regard to the Shire's intention to close Melanie Rees' Rehabilitation Circuit at the Denmark Sports Centre.</p> <p>I have attended Melanie's rehab class for several years and have found it enjoyable, very beneficial to my health and very good value. The gym and associated complex is an extremely good facility and a credit to the shire and the residents involved in bringing it into being.</p> <p>I feel that Melanie's class is a highly appropriate use of it. Catering for a considerable number of residents, mostly with health issues it does require the supervision of a health professional like Melanie and we are fortunate that she is available to provide this service. In all it is a good example of local government, residents and the health profession working together and achieving a very positive outcome.</p> <p>It strikes me as appalling that an arrangement like this that is working so well, and has been for 28 years, should be knocked on the head for reasons that don't seem to have any merit at all. If there are some legalistic issues that can be raised, the fact that it has been running smoothly for 28 years indicates that these can be overcome.</p> <p>I urge you to do all in your power to enable the service to continue, and not to vote in favour of curtailing it.</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252161</p>
S10	31/05/2022	I writing this submission to protest the ceasing of Melanie Rees ability to use the Denmark Recreation Centre Gym for Circuit	Responded

		<p>Classes.</p> <p>I am 76 years old and have chronic neck and back problems. I benefitted from these classes since 2008 when I was 63 years old. I was referred to Melanie after shoulder reconstruction surgery after which I had limited movement of my right shoulder. I soon regained full movement after attending the classes. Since then, I continued to attend at least twice a week as the regular supervised exercise is extremely beneficial to my strength and well being.</p> <p>I have had some minor joint surgery over the years and have always recovered very well by attending the Circuit.</p> <p>Unfortunately, last year I required spinal fusion and removal of a cyst. I have recovered really well but did not attend the classes for most of last year. The reason I recovered so well was because I was reasonably fit for my age. Thanks to Melanie supervised circuit. I have seen Melanie professionally several times since my discharge from Hospital and felt I was ready to return to the circuit classes. But now if they do not continue I and others like me who need some form of rehab will loose out. Where do we go from here?</p> <p>Melanie has done a great service to the community keeping us fit mentally and physically. The population of Denmark has one of the oldest cohorts in the state. Is it not better that we stay as fit as we can and not be a burden on the Health Care system. Melanie offers a unique service to us older resident. I would never use the gym facilities without the supervision of Melanie.</p> <p>I hope that the Shire allows these classes to continue surely the members of the gym can spare us older residents 2 hours out of the 168 hours available to them each week.</p>	<p>30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252160</p>
S11	31/05/2022	<p>As a longstanding member of Melanie Rees' Gym group I write to you concerning the current situation - seemly at an impasse. Now 73 years of age, I have attended these gym sessions for over 13 years. This class has significantly contributed to my health. specifically to reduce the effects of osteoarthritis and to develop my upper body strength. I am not interested in team sports and would not wish to attend other sessions run at the Recreation Centre.</p> <p>As a diverse but cohesive group we support and encourage one another. Each older resident who maintains their health saves the community money and in turn is able to contribute more fully to that community.</p> <p>As a Speech Pathologist who has worked alongside Physiotherapists in various settings, I value the particular skillset which they bring. As a member of the Denmark community for 23 years I also value being able to access the Recreation Centre's gym.</p> <p>I am perplexed and dismayed that there has not yet been a resolution to the situation which now threatens eviction of this Gym class from the Rec. Centre. Surely there is a means by which a workable compromise can be reached between the parties involved.</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252159</p>
S12	31/05/2022	<p>This time I am not writing about REDACTED! I am a member of the Circuit Group run by Melanie Rees at the Recreation Centre and I am dismayed by the Shire's decision to stop the sessions .</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p>

		<p>I started with Melanie about 6 and a half years ago when It became clear I would have to have a hip replacement operation. Going to the gym for supervised exercises was vital as I was in pain and had to wait over a year for the op. It also enabled me to continue working. After the operation I went back to the gym which helped for a faster recovery and I was back working and driving after only 6 weeks. Then 5 years later I have had to have the other hip operated on and again the supervised rehabilitation was and continues to be vital to my recovery and strengthening of muscles.</p> <p>I would not go to the gym if I was not supervised as it would be too dangerous. I know that the medical professionals in Denmark would see this twice weekly gym session as helping to keep Senior members of the Denmark Community out of hospital and doctors' surgeries and helping them stay in their own homes and not in aged care.</p> <p>When I look at the members of this Circuit Group I know that the majority of the participants, if not all, have been or still are Community Volunteers for the Rural Fire Brigades, St John's Ambulance, the Historical Society, most Denmark Sports Groups, the RSL and many more Groups and Associations. They have given thousands of hours to the Community and the Shire and I am angry that the Shire will not allow them 2 measly hours where they can improve their health and feel part of a COMMUNITY group.</p> <p>In a couple of weeks the Shire is holding a "Thank a Volunteer" event at the same time as contemplating ending the gym sessions which are helping some of those volunteers to continue to do that volunteer work. Does that sound like hypocrisy?</p> <p>I am hoping that the Shire will think again about this misplaced and petty decision.</p>	<p>Synergy ref: OSUB2252156</p>
S13	31/05/2022	<p>It is with the utmost concern, not to say alarm, that I notice a Council decision to withdraw the gym facility at the Rec centre from the use of Ms Melanie Rees and her supervised circuit class. I am aware that the Local Government may, or may appear to, leave Council no choice in this, but my contention is that a way <i>must</i> be found to overcome this problem, and to allow the classes to proceed as before.</p> <p>It is plainly true that over the last 28 years, Ms Rees has saved lives by providing this service. She has also brought better health, longevity and happiness to very many. And she has also saved all levels of government untold money, which would otherwise have needed to be spent on seniors' health. Now this vital service is at risk.</p> <p>I repeat, the service <i>must</i> be allowed to continue. Whatever the difficulties are, they must be overcome.</p> <p>If the situation remains uncorrected, and finds a wider notoriety in the district, state and nation, I am sure you can imagine the contempt and obloquy that will, deservedly, fall on the town that allowed it to happen.</p>	<p>Responded 01/06/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: ICR22578199</p>
S14	31/05/2022	<p>Having attended the meeting last Thursday afternoon at the Shire to discuss the hiring of the Rec Centre I must say that I am extremely disappointed with your response to the concerns of the rate paying seniors of Denmark who attend Melanie Rees classes.</p> <p>As a 75 year old semi retired farmer arriving in Denmark 9 years ago and having been referred to Melanie for treatment for a</p>	<p>Responded: 30/05/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: OSUB2252153</p>

		<p>reoccurring back injury attending the gym under her supervision has been one of the big plus's in moving to Denmark.</p> <p>In a letter to Melanie you stated that there had been extensive consultation with patrons and the community. This was in regards to allowing 24hour access for members. At the meeting when questioned you advised that a survey had been left at the front desk of the Rec Centre. None of us were aware of the latter and neither was Cr Jan Lewis when I spoke to her 4 or 5 weeks ago.</p> <p>Melanie Rees has provided an excellent service to seniors of the Denmark community for over 25 years and has the support of local Doctors. If the Shire cannot find 3 hours in the week for our gym class's to continue it is a poor state of affairs and selfish of those patrons you say oppose our use of the gym.</p> <p>I hope that this situation can be resolved.</p>	
S15	31/05/2022	<p>Attached is a document with my objections to the proposal to stop Physio Circuit sessions at the Denmark Recreation Centre.</p> <p>This is an important matter for the Denmark community and health services in WA please consider my points prior to making a decision on this matter.</p> <p>Incoming submission ICR22578191 - included under separate cover as pdf attachment APPENDIX 1</p>	<p>Responded 30/05/22</p> <p>Synergy ref: ICR22578191</p>
S16	31/05/2022	Incoming submission ICR22578190 – included under separate cover as pdf attachment APPENDIX 2	<p>Responded to 30/05/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: ICR22578190</p>
S17	31/05/2022	Incoming submission ICR22578190 – included under separate cover as pdf attachment APPENDIX 3	<p>Responded to 30/05/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: ICR22578190</p>
S18	31/05/2022	<p>I have attended this group for several years which has been and continues to be an important part of my fitness programme. Mel concerns herself with the individual - which is far more valuable than exercising solo in the gym. Thanks to her input and I have regained strength after one operation and am in better condition for another.</p> <p>Not only is this class valuable for our physical needs, it also provides an environment of mental support and stimulation which is all too important, particularly to us older people. For a mere two hours per week in the Recreation Centre it is detrimental to the physical and mental health of a dedicated group to lose this.</p> <p>Please re-consider the Shire's threat to disallow this group of Shire ratepayers who, in various ways, also contribute in volunteer roles to the community.</p>	<p>Responded to 01/06/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: ICR22578185</p>

S19	31/05/2022	<p>From recent discussions and correspondence the benefits and need for a continuation of the physiotherapy wellbeing and rehabilitation circuit is self-evident and is now also evident to all of the people involved in this matter.</p> <p>The next step is a recommendation to council to either continue to rent the gym to Melanie Rees for 3 hours per week or cancel the arrangement and deprive an ageing section of the community of the opportunity to exercise using ratepayer financed gym equipment. the regulations (as yet unseen) appear to be intended to avoid any perception of favouritism in Shire dealings giving everyone equal access to opportunities.</p> <p>Thus far even though there have been expressions of sympathy, there are no concrete proposals to find a solution. To avoid an obscure tick-the-box council vote a recommendation must include a mechanism for a way forward.</p> <p>Suggestions are as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a discounted seniors group class of membership as a starting point to work out a way of access to the gym. 2. The 24 hour exclusive access argument is invalid since there are already Shire mandated exclusion times for gym members which are advertised on the gym walls. Continuing with the three hour arrangement should not therefor be a problem. 3. The Shire hires out facilities such as the Civic Centre, Berridge Park and the Visitor's Centre to incorporated bodies and others who then make money out of running events. The Chamber of Commerce also sub leases part of the Visitor's Centre to a commercial entity. If the members of the physiotherapy class become an incorporated not for profit organisation would they then qualify to rent the gym? 4. The standard reply to a request to do something is "if we let you do this then we would have to let everyone do it" The implication here is that there are a number of physiotherapists queuing up with a similar number of clients to get an opportunity to run an exercise class. <p>A solution to this would be to canvass potential candidates and, if there are any, put an offer out for transparent open tender to fill slots in a pre-determined timetable</p>	<p>Responded to 01/06/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: ICR22678204</p>
S20	01/06/2022	<p>My Name is REDACTED, I have moved to Denmark 6 month ago with my wife REDACTED. After I was involved in a near Fatal truck accident, I had to have major shoulder surgery. I have been referred by my specialist to have 3 hours a week supervised gym physiotherapy.</p> <p>I was informed recently that the supervised gym session will end June 30. IF this is the case what will the shire replace it with? one of the reasons we moved to Denmark was to be close to medical services. In concluding the shire needs to have this service continue.</p>	<p>Responded to 01/06/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: OCR22678223</p>
S21	01/06/2022	<p>I have been a member of Melanie Rees' exercise program for a number of years now, following the recommendation of my G.P., Dr REDACTED.</p>	<p>RESPONDED 01/06/2022</p>

		<p>I had heard glowing reports about the circuit class from fellow tennis club members for some time prior to joining. I had to give up tennis because of the deterioration of my arthritic knee, and I was without any structured exercise and had all but given up even walking. Since joining Melanie's group, not only has my knee improved, but my overall health and wellbeing have increased significantly.</p> <p>I am in complete disbelief to learn that the Shire is preparing to terminate the group's access to the recreation centre and the gym equipment that enables Melanie's program to run effectively. This action will destroy a unique program conducted by a committed professional, and leave the participants without access to expert rehabilitation, carefully supervised strength and fitness activities, and a sense of community. With due respect to the fitness instructors employed by the Shire, no other programs offered at the recreation centre are able to fill this void.</p> <p>Please register my total objection to your plan to axe this program, and my sincere hope that a reasonable solution to the bureaucratic issues can be found. It would be reassuring to know that the Shire is committed to its older citizens like myself, who need Melanie's classes so that we can keep well and fit and mobile.</p> <p>Yours sincerely (and with great restraint)</p>	<p>Synergy Ref: OCR22678250</p>
S22	01/06/2022	Incoming submission ICR22678251 – included under separate cover as pdf attachment APPENDIX 4	<p>Responded: 02/06/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: ICR22678251</p>
S23	01/06/2022	<p>I wish to advise my disapproval and disappointment at your intent to close our circuit exercise class run by Melanie Rees. I have been attending these classes for over seven years after being referred by my doctor. I have had great health and fitness results from these sessions. I hope that a compromise can somehow be achieved as do not believe there is any other class that would achieve these results.</p>	<p>Responded 02/06/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: OCR22678269</p>
S24	01/06/2022	Incoming submission ICR22678252 – included under separate cover as pdf attachment APPENDIX 5	<p>Responded 01/06/2022</p> <p>Synergy Ref: ICR22678252</p>

APPENDIX 1

Mr. David Schober
CEO Denmark Shire
South Coast Hwy
Denmark.

31 May 2022.

Dear CEO (David),

I'm writing as an individual regarding the proposed cessation of the three times a week Physio Circuits at the Recreation Centre.

I'm of the understanding that Council will vote on the matter at their June 2022 meeting. In general, I'm against any move to stop these sessions as they are of considerable benefit to middle aged and senior ratepayers and residents. My objections can be summarised as follows:

- One of the main goals of local government is to facilitate and encourage positive, professionally supervised community participation in health approved activities; not to stop them.
- Physio Circuits require 3 hours per week leaving 165 hours for all other users.
- The shire owns and controls access to the recreation centre and gym equipment on behalf of the community.
- Participants of Physio Circuit sessions are referrals from GPs and medical specialists. It is part of a supervised programme of continuity of care after medical events. The sessions are under the supervision of a qualified Physiotherapist.
- Seniors remedial and physical management is a positive way to prevent falls and repeat hospital visits.
- Having an experienced allied health professional prepared to take supervised group circuit activities is highly valued by the participants and is an asset to the community.
- After 28 years of unchallenged local service, using rec. centre facilities, hundreds if not thousands of Denmark residents and ratepayers have received remedial benefits from this service.
- I agree that Competitive Neutrality is essential in a transparent government system, but I doubt that it was meant to include 3 hours per week supervised physio circuit.
- Given goodwill by all parties I'm sure an acceptable solution is achievable.

While this is not an exhaustive list of objections to the proposal, it provides some reasons why these circuit sessions are of benefit to the Denmark community. I'm sure a cost benefit analysis would show a great cost saving to ambulance, hospital and wider medical care over the shire's cost of 3 hours at the recreation centre. I'm also sure that the 'competitive neutrality' requirement is unlikely to apply to this level of service.

I thank you for your time to read this submission and ask that you review the proposal to disallow the use of the Recreation Centre for 3 hours of Physio Circuit per week.

Yours Sincerely

REDACTED

Denmark WA 6333.

REDACTED.

Hi Mel, [REDACTED] I can't make it for the meeting with David Schober. Please show him this message. Not sure why Mel's gym classes are under threat, but we both support whole heartedly the continuation of them. Both of us would be getting fat on pain killers if not for her gym classes. We were both able to return

to a normal life & the workforce [?] And there's still plenty of room for improvements. We definitely need these gym classes run by Mel
Thanks
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Meeting with David Schober and Renee Wiggins 3pm Thursday 26th May 2022

In attendance 35 participants of Physiotherapist-supervised rehabilitation circuit class (12 apologies), Melanie Rees, Dr REDACTED, Dr REDACTED, Cr Nathan Devenport

Introduction to meeting – REDACTED

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us, as you know we have requested the meeting to discuss the decision of the Shire to terminate the arrangement whereby Physiotherapist Melanie Rees has rented the gym for conduct of a supervised rehabilitation circuit class, an arrangement that has been in place for nearly 30 years. We are here to show the depth of support for continuation of this class.

We wish to make the following points:

- We represent a large and growing demographic in the town of Denmark
Most of us are over 70
Several of us are over 80
- All of us have been referred to the class by medical professionals for a variety of conditions
- As an Ambulance volunteer I routinely attend people in our age group whose mobility and quality of life are severely impaired by similar conditions.
By contrast we are fit, healthy and motivated, due in large part to attendance at this class
- We enjoy the benefits of targeted exercise and the social connection so often lacking in our age group.
Our mantra is 'Maintenance is Progress', we are all determined to stay out of the Nursing Home
- As ratepayers of Denmark Shire, we are dismayed by the decision to terminate the arrangement by which the class has been run at the REC Centre
- There **IS** no suitable alternative venue that permits the classes to be carried out in safety

In requesting this meeting we are hopeful of a constructive discussion that will lead to an arrangement that will permit the class to continue.

Dr REDACTED

Denmark WA 6333

REDACTED

Shire of Denmark

Attn. Renee Wiggins

Dear Renee

This submission follows up on the meeting last Thursday between members of the Physiotherapy Rehabilitation Circuit Class, Mr David Schober and yourself, attended by representatives of both the Denmark Medical Centre and the Denmark Family Practice, and by Cr Nathan Devenport.

I don't believe there can be in any doubt as to the depth of feeling amongst the class participants and the medical fraternity that this class is of enormous benefit to a significant Denmark demographic, as acknowledged by Mr Schober, who also stated that the Council is committed to the health and wellbeing of residents. This is why we are convinced that a solution can and must be found which would permit the continuation of the classes under the guidance of a qualified physiotherapist, at present Melanie Rees.

Mr Schober clearly explained the issues which have led to the proposed removal of the provision for hire of the gym by a private contractor. Renting of Shire facilities to private enterprise does not seem to be prohibited per se, so as I understand it these issues are:

- The requirement not to give one private contractor an unfair advantage over others who may wish to hire the gym.
- The provision of 24-hour access to gym members

The provision and maintenance of the gym and its equipment represent a significant investment on the part of the Shire, which is undoubtedly reflected in the rates which all class participants pay, it is not owned by the gym members. We can of course join the gym and use the equipment whenever we like, but the benefit of the class is in its targeted and supervised nature. Mr Schober also mentioned an Occupational Therapist who would be keen to make use of the equipment for a therapy class. The aging and infirm make up a large section of the Denmark community, surely the community investment in the gym means that council has a responsibility to allow for these groups to be accommodated in some way.

A suggestion was put to the meeting which we believe has the potential to allow for this, and it is one which we hope will be considered by council:

- Identify a one-hour time slot, ideally at the same time on each weekday, to make the gym available for medically-related classes. I suggest that either 7.30-8.30am or 8.00-9.00am would probably cause minimal inconvenience to regular gym users. Those who wish to use the gym before work will come in earlier, and those who come in once they have dropped the kids at school will be in after this time

- Offer this time to health professionals, to run rehabilitation or therapy classes, on a tender basis, thus providing a level playing field. They must be able to show evidence of adequate insurance to cover their participants
- Advise gym members that this time slot has been set aside for medically-related classes and that instead of 24-hour access their membership will give them unlimited access outside of this time. If properly communicated to members I cannot see that there would be much objection

It is our hope that this suggestion, or something like it, will form part of your report to be put to council at the June meeting.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that curves slightly upwards at the end.

Dr REDACTED

REVISED SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL REGARDING GYMNASIUM ACCESS FOR PROVISION OF SUPERVISED GROUP PHYSIOTHERAPY

All revisions are in italics

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regulations under the Local Government Act require councils to be fair and equitable in their dealings with business and the community. The provision of a group physiotherapy service in the Recreation Centre gymnasium under terms previously existing has been deemed to be contrary to those regulations and the service was faced with closure. A meeting at the Denmark Shire Offices between group physiotherapy class members and the Chief Executive Officer was held on Thursday 26th May 2022 to endeavour to resolve the apparent impasse. This submission proposes a solution which is considered to be the most cost effective and efficient for all concerned. The submission also highlights associated matters to be considered for the transition to and continuation of access for this and similar special needs groups that require council support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council immediately set aside three reserved time slots each of one (1) hour duration on Monday morning, Wednesday morning and Friday morning each week,
2. That Council alter the membership provisions of the Recreation Centre gymnasium club as required to reflect the withdrawal of gymnasium access during these reserved time slots,
3. *That Council set and advertise the price for the use of the reserved time slots by providers of supervised group physiotherapy sessions.*
4. That Council allow the continued provision of supervised physiotherapy sessions in the Recreation Centre gymnasium, three times a week in the existing time slots, over the transition period and until the new arrangements are completely in place.

DISCUSSION

AGING POPULATION & THE BABY BOOMERS

The baby boomers have produced a spike in the demographic and are now in retirement. We are being encouraged stay in our own home and only view aged care homes as a last resort. Numerous government assistance programs have supported this objective, such as “Living stronger living longer”, assistance with mobility aids in the home, wheelchair friendly, etc. All levels of government should support this objective. The aim of this submission is consistent with that objective.

RECOGNITION THAT THERE IS A GROUP WITH SIGNIFICANT SPECIAL NEEDS

Some people recovering from injury, or coping with a medical or mental condition, can benefit from supervised and focused exercise. Also, being part of a group provides additional social and mental health benefits. This holistic approach is well recognised within the medical and allied fraternities, but maybe not so much in the wider community. The benefit of this type of exercise is also recognised by medical insurance funds, in so much that they have a claim item precisely for group exercise supervised by a physiotherapist. Melanie Rees has been providing supervised group physiotherapy sessions in Denmark for over 25 years, ample proof that there has been and continues to be ample demand for this type of support. Access to this group can only be gained by referral from a medical doctor. The gym time required by the supervised group amounts to three (3) hours per week, which is less than 1.8% of the time. After much spirited discussion last Thursday, I believe this special need was recognised.

SO WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS:-

Subsequent to the meeting with the CEO, it would appear there are *four* ~~three~~ options to be considered.

- The Shire engages a physiotherapist as a paid employee or contractor,
- A “Not for profit” association provides the link between the shire and physiotherapist (similar to the arrangement at the Visitor Centre), ~~and~~
- The Shire provides time slots for special needs use and calls tenders for use of those time slots *and*
- *The Shire provides time slots for special needs use and advertises the price for use of those time slots in the Gymnasium Price List.*

WHAT IS THE BEST OPTION

In all *four* ~~three~~ options there must be an element of competition and equal opportunity afforded to all applicants/bidders/contenders looking to win the work. To plagiarise the old legal aphorism “Not only must fairness and equity be done, but it must be seen to be done”.

Engaging a paid employee or contractor is not a good option for a number of reasons. Not the least of which being that providing a medical service is outside the purview of a local authority especially when it is in direct competition with a local private enterprise. The arrangement also has to be acceptable to health insurance funds in so far as the responsible person would have to have a provider number and be able to issue an invoice. Responsibilities are shared and therefore dividing lines can over time become blurred.

Having a “not for profit” organisation as a middleman is a clumsy, costly and onerous arrangement, since its sole reason for existence is to act as a go between. It requires the establishment, registration with state government, office bearers, members, meetings, sub-letting of its time slot to a service provider, receiving and making payments, accounts to be kept and audited, all of which requires time and effort, by whom and for what?

Providing reserved time slots for the provision of supervised health services and requiring service providers to bid for those time slots *would, in the absence of a better idea*, seem to be the most economical in terms of time and effort. Apart from the introduction of a formal contract it should be identical to the current arrangement for all practical purposes. The numbers and times of reserved time slots should be determined by supply and demand considerations. For the last 25 years the supervised physiotherapy service provided by Melanie Rees was delivered in three one (1) hourly time slots on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. The number of people attending these sessions has varied throughout the year being generally more in the warmer months. The term of the future agreements should be as long as possible. Say, two or three years, or alternatively one year with a number of annual extensions. A longer contract period means that establishment costs are spread over a longer period. Ongoing contract administration costs should be minimal and certainly no more than the current arrangements. ~~The old adage “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” having some relevance here.~~

I am not aware of there being any demand for or by other physiotherapists to be allowed to operate a supervised physiotherapy gym session in competition with Melanie Rees.

However, having a competitive tendering process for time slots should reduce any accusations of unfairness or favouritism to a minimum, if not completely. In reality what will most likely happen is that Melanie Rees will be the one and only bidder. It is my understanding that the demand in the past has been such that other physiotherapists in town

when faced with a patient who would benefit from supervised exercise *have just referred the patient on to Melanie Rees. However, fairness and equity have to be seen to have been done!*

*Setting and advertising the price for the use of the reserved time slots for the provision of supervised health services is by far the simplest and most economical solution. It addresses the issues of fairness and visibility. As indicated above, there is unlikely to be any additional demand for access by other physiotherapists. Setting a reasonable rate would seem to be the only matter to be addressed. The current rate paid by Melanie Rees is \$65 per hour. The cost charged to members of the group is \$10 per hour. HBF provide a benefit of up to \$500 per year, which roughly equates to \$10 per session for one session a week. On this basis, 7 people must attend a session just to cover the gymnasium charge. The current rate for a physiotherapy session at their normal place of business is about \$80 per hour. This means that 8 more people must attend to make the supervised gymnasium session viable for the physiotherapist. Currently about 15 people attend the Monday session that I attend. I would attend the Friday session as well if it was available. So, it would seem that \$65 per hour is about the right rate. **The only actions required of the Shire are to add this class of usage to its existing gymnasium price list and explain the rationale to other gymnasium users.** Having an advertised price for the special needs usage would avoid the administrative overhead of establishing and administering a contract. If in the unlikely case that demand exceeds supply, the shire still has the option of creating more reserved timeslots or going to competitive tendering as described above.*

TRANSITION TO BEST OPTION

A smooth transition from the present to the future arrangement is to be desired by all parties and stakeholders.

To that end members of the supervised physiotherapy sessions run by Melanie Rees want to see an unbroken continuation of the arrangements in place before the Covid lockdowns, which were three sessions each week for which there was demonstrable demand. Therefore, we are seeking an undertaking by Council to that those sessions be immediately continued until the *selected option* ~~formal contract~~ is in place.

The Council website Recreation Centre Gymnasium Membership has pricings for “after-hours” usage. No mention is made of 24 hour access. Is this an unofficial expectation that has developed over time or is it officially mentioned somewhere else? “24 hour” access was certainly a hot topic of discussion with the CEO last Thursday and he made no denial of its existence. “24 hour” access is something of a tautology here since access is already available to everyone during normal business hours. Unless the intention is to imply some sort of overriding priority for gym club members.

If in fact there is some perception on the part of gymnasium club members that they have exclusive “24 hour” access, then this needs to be addressed and resolved. I would expect that gymnasium club membership should allow for an unlimited number of visits during business hours and after-hours **except** during those times reserved for special needs groups or other customers the Council may deem appropriate.

Furthermore, if other gymnasium users were to be made aware of the need and benefit of the supervised physiotherapy for people recovering from injury, or coping with a medical or mental condition, they would likely be more understanding and less likely to complain.

INTO THE FUTURE

The primary concern of the Council in this matter should be balancing the time slots allowed for the support of special needs groups against the needs of all ratepayers and gymnasium club members. As the population of the shire increases into the future so too the number of

reserved slots should be adjusted in line with demand. Or, at some future point in time, the gymnasium may have to be enlarged.

In future however, when the Council is contemplating a change which will affect users, it is to be hoped that the Council will, early on in the process, view and invite all interested residents and ratepayers to participate as stakeholders rather than exclude them on the basis they are customers of a service provider.

There will always be complaints from some people about not being able to access the gym when they want. It just has to be accepted that you will never be able to please all the people all of the time!

1-5-22

Denmark WA.

P-Code 6333

Denmark Shire Council

+ Renee Wiggils

Subject Community Gymnastic Facility

My age is 87 turning 88 on 8 of June 2022 and have been attending the class run by Mel Rees for just over 20 years.

I have a number of medical and physical issues which require me to attend a specific exercise program to avoid becoming medical liability or becoming a hospice candidate which is a real issue for myself.

Because of the program I attend along with all the other members of our group we all have a reasonable level of fitness for our age enabling us to have a meaningful life and participate in a number of activities and voluntary work.

The current situation has us in the most difficult ^{position} ~~situation~~ there is no other venue in Denmark for us to go to, leaving us the feeling that we are no longer required ~~at~~ we have all past our useful by date.

The situation is crazy we have both State and Federal government advertising their full support for a more healthy life style but we find ourselves in this position. There are times when the law is a ass, can we not let common sense prevail and council exercise its discretionary power and find a equitable solution for all.

Please give this situation your deepest consideration there are about forty (40) old people who's lives are being seriously effected. Your truly ~~[redacted]~~