

# Shire of Denmark Minutes



## LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING: COVID-19

HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
953 SOUTH COAST HIGHWAY, DENMARK  
WEDNESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020, COMMENCING AT 4.00PM

### Table of Contents

<b>1. DECLARATION OF OPENING/WELCOME TO COUNTRY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES</b>	<b>4</b>
4.1 Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee	4
<b>5. PREPAREDNESS</b>	
5.1 Communication / Public Information	4
5.2 Business Continuity Plans	4
5.3 Identification of Vulnerable People	4/5
5.4 Community Actions to Promote Resilience	5
<b>6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
6.1 Local / Regional Impacts (currently none)	5
6.2 What is the response to someone fulfilling the case definition	5
<b>7. RECOVERY</b>	<b>5</b>
7.1 Potential for significant, prolonged business disruptions	5/6
7.2 Implications for psychosocial impacts	6
<b>8. AGENCY REPORTS</b>	<b>6</b>
8.1 WA Police	6
8.2 Department of Communities	6
8.3 Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)	6
8.4 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)	6/7
8.5 Denmark Health Service	7
8.6 Denmark State Emergency Service	7
8.7 Denmark Surf Lifesaving	7
8.8 St John Ambulance (Denmark & Walpole)	7
8.9 Silverchain Walpole	7
8.10 Chief Bushfire Control Officer	7
8.11 Volunteer Fire & Rescue	7
8.12 Volunteer Marine Rescue (Denmark, Peaceful Bay & Walpole)	7
<b>9. OTHER BUSINESS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>10. NEXT MEETING</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>11. CLOSURE OF MEETING</b>	<b>8</b>

## **VISION**

For the Shire of Denmark's residents, ratepayers and businesses to be adequately protected, risks are minimised and recovery operations coordinated swiftly and efficiently.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To implement the objectives of the Western Australian Emergency Management Arrangements Public Statement number 7, that is;

1. To advise and assist the local government in ensuring that local emergency management arrangements are established for its district;
2. To liaise with public authorities and other persons in the development, review and testing of local emergency management arrangements; and
3. To carry out other emergency management activities as directed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) or prescribed by the Emergency Management Act or Regulations.
4. Prepare an annual report on Committee activities for submission to the District Emergency Management Committee.
5. The local emergency management arrangements are to set out —
  - a. the local government's policies for emergency management;
  - b. the roles and responsibilities of public authorities and other persons involved in emergency management in the local government district;
  - c. provisions about the coordination of emergency operations and activities relating to emergency management performed by the persons mentioned in paragraph (b);
  - d. a description of emergencies that are likely to occur in the local government district;
  - e. strategies and priorities for emergency management in the local government district;
  - f. other matters about emergency management in the local government district prescribed by the regulations; and
  - g. other matters about emergency management in the local government district the local government considers appropriate.
  - h. Local emergency management arrangements are to be consistent with the State emergency management policies and State emergency management plans.
  - i. Local emergency management arrangements are to include a recovery plan and the nomination of a local recovery coordinator.

**1. DECLARATION OF OPENING / WELCOME TO COUNTRY**

The Presiding Person opened the meeting at 1605hrs

*I acknowledge the land on which this meeting is being held on and the traditional custodians of the land, the Bibbulmun and Minang people and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.*

*Ms Gearon spoke to the unprecedented times that were upon us. It is extremely important that we deliver a unified response of timely, relevant, factual and consistent messages to the community to support them through this now and into the future.*

**2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE**MEMBERS:

Cr Ceinwen Gearon	Shire President & Presiding Person
Cr Mark Allen	Council Representative
Mr Matt Hartfield	Denmark Police, Officer in Charge
Mr John Bridger	Walpole Police, Officer in Charge
Ms Jane Kelsbie	Denmark Surf Life Saving
Ms Belinda Dufall	Department of Primary Industries & Regional Dev
Mr James Anderson	Denmark State Emergency Service
Mr Peter Mather	Denmark Volunteer Marine Rescue
Mr Lee Shelley	Denmark Volunteer Fire and Rescue
Mr David Rae	St. John Ambulance Community Paramedic
Mr Lez Baines	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Ms Julie Hollingworth	Denmark Health Service
Ms Kylie Spencer	Denmark Health Service

STAFF:

Mr Scott Medhurst	(non voting) Community Emergency Services Manager
Mrs Charmaine Shelley	Senior Ranger
Ms Melanie Haymont	Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator
Mrs Angela Simpson	Executive Manager Community Services
Mrs Renee Wiggins	Communication & Engagement Officer
Ms Judy Savic	Pandemic Response Team Admin

APOLOGIES:

Ms Emma Holliday	Administration Officer Community Services (scribe)
Mr Dennis Hall	Chairperson St John Ambulance Walpole/Nornalup
Mr Brian Vigus	Peaceful Bay Volunteer Marine Rescue
Ms Marion Macdougall	St. John Ambulance, Denmark
Ms Kelly Burton	Walpole, St John Ambulance
Mr Adam Smith	DFES District Emergency Management Advisor
Mr Bryce Edwards	Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer
Mr Neville Blackburn	Department of Communities

ABSENT:

Mr Wes Bailye	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Mr George Doust	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions
Ms Nikki Rouse	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions
Mr Lee Brampton	Denmark Surf Lifesaving
Ms Marnita Sletten	SilverChain Walpole
Mr Wayne Dumbrell	Walpole Volunteer Marine Rescue
Mr Peter Newton	Walpole State Emergency Service

VISITORS:

Mr Luke Bentley	Department of Biodiversity Conservation & Attractions
-----------------	---

**3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING**

*I acknowledge the land on which this meeting is being held on and the traditional custodians of the land, the Bibbulmun and Minang people and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.*

*Ms Gearon acknowledged the current climate and tough times ahead and thanked the members for coming together and welcomed visitors.*

**4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****4.1 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE****OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

ITEM 4.1

Moved: **Matt Hartfield**Seconded: **Melanie Haymont**

That the minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

Carried: Unanimous

**Motion**

ITEM 4.2

Moved: **Ceinwen Gearon**Seconded: **Lez Baines**

That the committee size is reduced to a smaller group to attend the COVID-19 Special Meetings which will be conducted by teleconference moving forward. The Group will consist of essential parties relating to COVID-19 as required.

Carried: Unanimous

**5. PREPAREDNESS****5.1 Communication / public information**

All agencies discussed their current communications and public information plans, plans focus on the delivery of consistent information from a single source of truth (Health Department) and ensuring that message is delivered within the whole community. Several options were discussed around the delivery options for that message such as; Social Media, Community Notice Boards, Visual Message Boards, pamphlets and engagement officers for remote communities.

**5.2 Business continuity plans**

All agencies discussed current business activities and concerns currently full services are being provided where possible outside of government mandated closures. Agency wide plans are available for a scalable response should the situation escalate. From a volunteer emergency service perspective things are looking good as travel restrictions are seeing more people in the area than usual. Key staff across agencies have been identified and redundancies put in place to ensure those staff do not burn out. Where services are not able to be bolstered staff that can realign are being identified.

**5.3 Identification of vulnerable people**

LEMC Chair has written to Local Members in an effort to obtain details of vulnerable people who have engaged the NDIS and Similar Programs within Denmark and is awaiting a response.

Denmark Health Service advise that they are in contact with private contractors

providing services to the vulnerable community members to ensure an appropriate service is being provided to them. They are currently well supported through private agencies, they have also reached out to past clients to ensure the same level of service is being provided.

WA Police asked where Denmark Health Service where we send people that are identified as vulnerable through local interactions or request for assistance. Denmark Health Service advised they are the contact for these people and will accept referrals for requests for care packages etc.

Shire of Denmark is receiving information about many cases of homelessness as a result of the economic impacts of COVID19. Currently the Community Resource Centre and Homeless Project Denmark are assisting where possible but have no accommodation available. Shire of Denmark is investigation options around planning policies and implementing some relaxed process around hardship to assist with this.

#### **5.4 Community actions to promote resilience**

All agencies are working together to build on the already strong community of Denmark and aiming to provide leadership and guidance to community groups in delivering a consistent message throughout the community.

Shire of Denmark is implementing staff changes though the Pandemic Response Team to assist local business with continuity guidance and ensuring minimal supply chain interruptions where possible. Staff are liaising with business and agencies as appropriate to identify current gaps and attempt to resolve them. Staff have been dedicated to assisting the community navigate through this process and new ways to deliver library and rec services are currently being implemented. The Shire of Denmark are currently implementing recovery actions as part of the above mentioned plans to ensure early resilience promotes recovery.

The Shire of Denmark will make this information available to other local governments to assist on a reach out or request basis as appropriate. This will be done through local government networks.

### **6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

#### **6.1 Local / Regional Impacts**

Currently the impacts are economical however the scale of this is yet to be truly identified all agencies will work together to monitor this and share information to provide and accurate impact assessment when practical.

#### **6.2 What is the response to someone fulfilling the case definition?**

Response to all cases will be as per the response guidelines provided by the WA health department and all agencies are aware of this process and protocol.

### **7. RECOVERY**

#### **7.1 Potential for significant, prolonged business disruptions**

The Shire of Denmark has established a Pandemic Response Team they have been removed from Shire core business to focus wholly on the Shire response and recovery efforts, this includes aligning staff with roles identified to support the Pandemic Response Plan. These roles will look at supporting business through future disruptions as well as communicating any policy changes and funding opportunities that have been identified to facilitate business continuity and recovery. WA Police commended Shire of Denmark for being very proactive in this space.

Department of Biodiversity Conservations & Attractions advised they will be maintaining

facilities such as National Parks and Local Attractions to ensure that they are ready to go and accept tourists back into the region once normality begins to be restored.

Work-link are working with local businesses, Chamber and Shire to establish opportunities for job seekers this includes employment and also navigating government financial assistance opportunities.

## 7.2 Implications for psychosocial impacts

The committee discussed the far reaching implications of psychosocial impacts that will be felt and continue to be felt throughout the region as a result of COVID19. The committee agreed that it is an ever evolving space. Consistent messaging from a single source of truth and engaging the community in the delivery of that message will be key to building community resilience towards psychosocial impacts now and in the future.

## 8. AGENCY REPORTS RELATING TO:

- Agency Preparations
- Anticipated Impacts
- Issues of Concern
- Information Requirements

Ms Gearon acknowledged that this meeting had now been running for a significant period of time and requested reports to be provided by exception only if content had not been covered previously within the meeting.

### 8.1 WA POLICE

Nil

### 8.2 DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES

Nil

### 8.3 DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Nil

### 8.4 DEPARTMENT OF BIODIVERSITY, CONSERVATION AND ATTRACTIONS

Mr Luke Bentley reported on the following;

DBCA Hazard Reduction Burning Program is being assessed on a day by day basis this is subject to the usual approval process as well as a heightened awareness of COVID-19 and the implications surrounding it.

The Committee commended DBCA on their continued work in relation to hazard mitigation through Hazard Reduction burning within the Shire of Denmark, The body of work to support it is enormous and the continued program reduces the risk of Fire to Denmark greatly. Committee discussion surrounding COVID-19 being a respiratory condition and the implications of the smoke warning being issued from the recent Boat Harbour Burn as well as the reduced capacity of agencies to respond to additional emergencies in the Shire.

#### Motion

ITEM 8.4

Moved: **Ceinwen Gearon**

Seconded: **Lez Baines**

A letter is written from the Committee and Shire of Denmark to the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions providing support for their fire mitigation programs within the Shire of Denmark. The letter will be requesting that the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions Hazard Reduction Burning program is suspended within the Shire of Denmark during the COVID-19 restrictions until June 2020 or the capacity of agencies to respond to additional emergencies within the Shire of Denmark is restored.

8 Carried: Unanimous

**8.5 DENMARK HEALTH SERVICE**

Nil

**8.6 DENMARK SES**

Nil

**8.7 DENMARK SURF LIFE SAVING**

Nil

**8.8 ST JOHN AMBULANCE**

Nil

**8.9 SILVERCHAIN WALPOLE**

Nil

**8.10 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER**

Mr Lez Baines reported on the following;

Currently the restricted burning period is in place which has seen permits being issued for the burning of small heaps on clear ground. These permits have only been issued to landholders that on assessment have the means to extinguish them if requested. Given the current climate consideration must be given to revoking permits until such time as it appropriate to issue them.

Input was provided to the committee from Denmark Health Service, Community Emergency Services Manager, Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions Fire and Rescue and Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator. Input surrounded the implications of not having permits and the risk it presented as well as the risk of additional emergencies within the Shire of Denmark.

**Motion**

ITEM 8.10

Moved: **Lez Baines**Seconded: **Lee Shelley**

That No more Permits will be issued within the Shire of Denmark effective 26/03/2020 and that designated sites for camping and cooking fires will be revoked until further notice due to the reduced capacity to respond to additional emergencies within the Shire of Denmark.

Carried: Unanimous

**8.11 VOLUNTEER FIRE & RESCUE**

Nil

**8.12 VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE**

Nil

**9. OTHER BUSINESS****Mr Peter Mather – Travel Restrictions and Personal Movements**

Mr Mather raised the question of restricting travel to the region and if that was a possibility and also how people not complying with self isolation practices were being managed. It was advised that the Shire had no power to close the Shire down to tourist and that all travel restrictions were under the direction of the State and Federal government which the Shire would be guided by and adhere to. WA Police advised that they were receiving reports of non compliance to self isolation and they would be dealt with as per their normal response processes.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

Scheduled for Tuesday 31/03/2020 by video link hosted by Shire of Denmark due to COVID-19 restrictions, commencing at 4.00pm

**11. CLOSURE OF MEETING**

There being no further business the Presiding Person closed the meeting at 1810hrs.

These minutes were confirmed at the meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Presiding Person at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed.)*