



shire of Ashburton
opportunity to community



Club Development Plan

2024 – 2027

ROBE RIVER RODEO
AND CAMPORAT

EST. 1995

PANNAWONICA

Acknowledgement of Country

The Shire of Ashburton acknowledges all Native Title holders throughout the Shire. We respect and honour the Traditional Owners, custodians, native land titles, and Elders past and present. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.

Thank you to contributors

The Shire appreciates the valuable feedback from the community to help develop this plan of action. This includes residents, schools, local businesses, community groups, clubs and organisations.

Front cover image courtesy Ngaarda Media





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A home with strong foundations.

‘Community and opportunity’ are the foundation of ‘My Pilbara Home’. They enable the Shire and the many residents, volunteers, organisers, leaders, corporate sponsors, and participants to develop activities, initiatives and events in a way that makes the most of our remote location and dynamic population.

The ‘My Pilbara Home’ Community Development Strategy 2024 – 2027 (‘My Pilbara Home’) includes six informing strategies:

RAP

Connecting culture to community to advance reconciliation.

CAIP

Connecting all community members with the same opportunities and experiences.

Youth

Connecting young people with opportunities to feel engaged, empowered and supported.

my Pilbara home

Programs & Events

Connecting community members through the delivery of inclusive programs and events.

Club Development Plan

Connecting clubs and groups with opportunities to build capacity.

Arts

Connecting community with Arts.

1. Why *Club Development* in the Shire?



1.1 Clubs make “My Pilbara Home”

In communities, clubs and groups are one of the core ways people cultivate connection. In regional areas specifically, they take on even greater importance – becoming powerful pillars in the social life of the community.

They help with building communal identities, forming friendships, having fun, and growing the kind of connections that last a lifetime. And with loneliness and isolation a critical social issue leading to poorer long-term health outcomes, clubs have a crucial role to play in both the physical and mental health of communities.

Clubs bring people together and bridge gaps between diverse backgrounds, driving unity and understanding of each others' experiences. They are a way for people

(of all ages) to learn new skills. This helps people to feel empowered – both over their own lives and the communal life of their community.

The Shire of Ashburton is comprised of diverse towns and communities that stretch across pristine coastal and inland Pilbara environments. Our communities consist of people from a range of backgrounds who enjoy the economic and employment opportunities on offer, while also relishing the unique lifestyle in this part of the world.



The following quotes from community members in the Shire illustrate the contribution of clubs to community belonging, connection and inclusion:

“

I thoroughly enjoying being a part of the few sporting clubs in town – the relationships formed are very valued working together for the children. Seeing the children develop and improve in their sporting skill is hugely rewarding, as well as seeing their friendships and sharing experiences.

“

No matter what club I'm playing for, I feel very included, which makes it very comfortable to be a part of.

“

All the sporting clubs help out each other wherever possible. We are one small town so that's how it should be.

“

I haven't met a family that isn't involved in some sort of sporting club. It's massive. It's just life. There's nothing else to do but just play sport.



1.2 Our commitment to Clubs

At the Shire of Ashburton, we provide core Council services and work with mining and other resources companies to create liveable townships. Our vision is to embrace our unique Pilbara environment and lifestyle, by developing vibrant, active and connected communities. As community members ourselves, we believe that social values are worth fighting for, and that everyone deserves to share in the richness created from where we choose to invest, live and visit. We are dedicated to driving and delivering 'opportunity to community.'

The Shire is committed to the development of Clubs. This includes all sporting and recreational clubs, as well as community

groups, both incorporated and not incorporated. The level of support provided to each Club is proportionate to the Club's needs (for example, volunteer-run Clubs may receive more support than incorporated organisations with paid staff).

The implementation of this plan is led by the Shire's Club Development Lead, with support from the Shire Community Development Team based in each town. Club development is part of the Community Services directorate at the Shire. The Shire has five critical roles to play in the delivery of the Club Development Plan. These roles are clearly outlined in the Plan, alongside who should be involved in each action.

Table 1.1 Role of the Shire

Provider	Delivers the initiative, activity, service, or facility	For example, developing the 'Connecting Clubs' identity.
Facilitator	Connects the right people together	For example, convening training and development workshops for clubs.
Partner	Collaborates or is part of making something happen	For example, collaborating with clubs to raise awareness of volunteering during Volunteer Week.
Advocate	Talks about or promotes an issue to people who need to listen	For example, promotes clubs on the Shire's website and social media.
Funder	Provides money or resources to support	For example, encourages clubs to participate in programs and events run by the Shire.

This plan cannot succeed with the Shire acting alone: it requires support and involvement from across the community, clubs, organisations and the State Government Department of Local Government Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC).

Our approach is based on the principals of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) in recognition that the community has many strengths. An ABCD approach focuses on doing things *with* the community and valuing the capacity, skills, knowledge and potential in the community that contribute to Club Development.

You can read more about ABCD in the 'My Pilbara Home Community Development Strategy'.

Asking what community wants or needs is an early but important step in setting the direction of Club Development – and how we make progress together in a collaborative way. Understanding what part community can play alongside the Shire is another important step. Playing our parts together takes us closer to our big goal for 'My Pilbara Home': *"to foster a sense of belonging, connection and inclusiveness in our approach to the delivery of our programs, events and initiatives".*

Table 1.2 Role of community

Advocate	Talks about or promotes an issue to people who need to listen	For example, a club committee member who shares information and resources on the Connecting Clubs Facebook page.
Facilitator	Connects the right people together	For example, one club offering volunteer support to another club.
Funder	Provides money or resources to support	For example, a corporate sponsor funding a sporting club.
Participant	Attends, visits or participates	For example, nominating for the Ashburton All Stars awards.
Partner	Collaborates or is part of making something happen	For example, one club running a stall at an event organised by the Shire or another organisation.
Provider	Delivers the initiative, activity, service, or facility	For example, a local club running an event.
Volunteer	Contributes personal time and skills	For example, volunteers coaching a sporting club.

1.3 Our current activities with Clubs

The Shire has a long history of supporting clubs, however the level to which we have been able to do this has varied over time. In 2020, the Shire launched its new 'Club Development Operational Plan (2020 – 2023)', but due to the COVID19 pandemic and staffing challenges, this plan was not implemented in full. With the appointment of a new Club Development Lead in 2024, we have the skills and resources to deliver support for clubs to develop.

The Shire acknowledges that the function of Club Development can be difficult due to the transient nature of our communities (which revolve around employment and work shifts) which contributes to a high turnover of volunteers in community groups. The Club Development Lead provides an important link between the local government and clubs and supports the sustainability of clubs in towns with transient populations.

The Club Development function within the Shire includes following functions:

- Utilise Shire events, where appropriate, to promote Shire of Ashburton (SoA) Club Development, to promote the support available.
- Promote that the Club Development Lead provides one-on-one support to clubs and groups as requested. Support clubs in their efforts to secure and manage grants or seek sponsorships.
- Proactively engage with clubs and groups, sharing information that may impact them.
- Encourage clubs and groups to participate in programs and events as appropriate within the Shire. This can help increase their visibility, participation and membership.
- Coordinate and promote Ashburton All Stars (volunteer of the month) and celebrate the award winners each month.
- Actively work to connect relevant clubs to each other.
- SoA representation at the Pilbara Sports Professional Network meetings to leverage opportunities to the SoA clubs.





2. Club Development and you



2.1 How we talked with the community

Community consultation to develop this Club Development Plan was delivered as part of the engagement for the My Pilbara Home Community Development Strategy and informing plans between March and April 2024 and included:

- a print and online survey that received 214 responses (103 complete, 111 incomplete)
- talking with community members at one of the four Welcome to Town events (Tom Price, Onslow, Pannawonica, Paraburdoo)
- 38 one-on-one interviews (online and in-person) with people living or working in the Shire
- two stakeholder workshops (Onslow and Tom Price) involving 21 people.

Information about the development of the “My Pilbara Home Community Development Strategy” and informing plans, including the opportunity to participate, was delivered to the community through the Shire’s website, Facebook page and via direct engagement with select stakeholders.

A comprehensive summary of consultation can be viewed in the “My Pilbara Home Community Development Strategy”.



2.2 What we learned

2.2.1. Clubs in Ashburton

Each of the communities within the Shire is unique in its own right, with differing demographics, trends and access to facilities. These external factors impact Club Development differently in each town.

2.2.2 Volunteerism

In most cases, clubs within the Shire are run solely by volunteers. With a smaller population size, the proportion of community members in each town who need to volunteer to keep a club running is higher than in a metropolitan area. For clubs to thrive, the percentage of volunteerism within the Shire should be significantly higher than that in other geographical areas.

The 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census found that for people aged 15+ who undertake voluntary work through organisations or groups, shows the rate of volunteering in the Shire fluctuates, which may be connected to the transient nature of the population. This data does not separate volunteerism for community groups and clubs, compared to volunteering with other organisations.

A Three-Year Comparison of Volunteerism in the Shire of Ashburton vs Other Areas in Australia

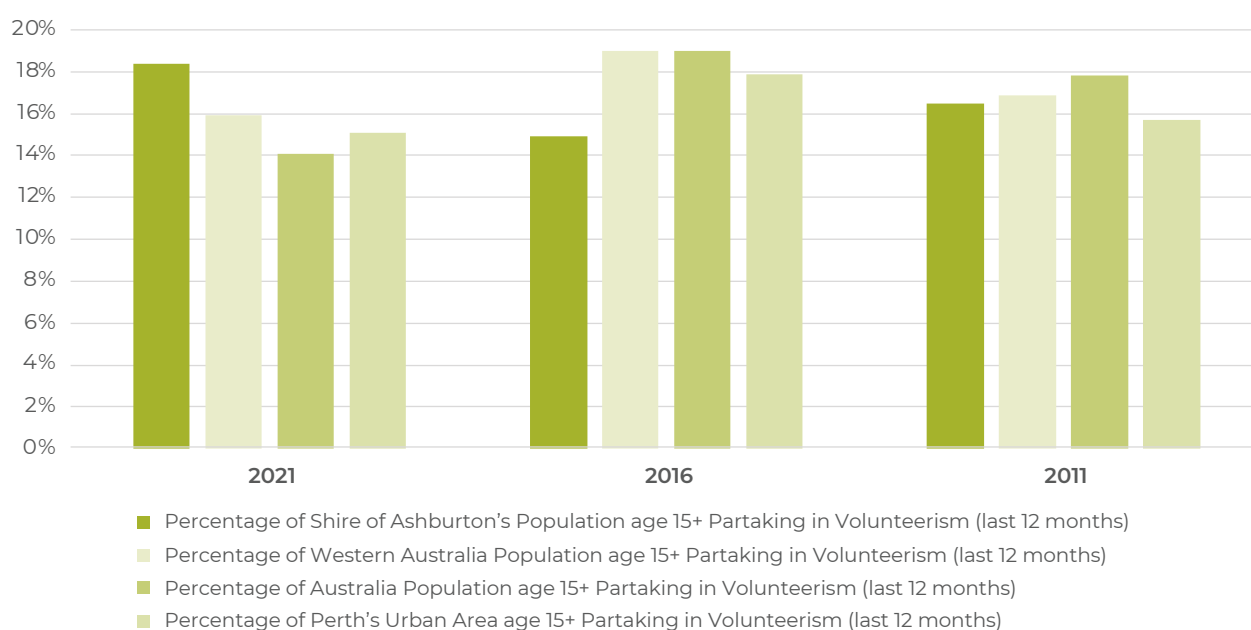


Table 2.1 Volunteerism in the Shire

2.2.3. Key findings from consultation

Committee members from clubs and community groups within the Shire shared feedback on Club Development through one-on-one meetings and the community survey. There were common themes across all four towns. A summary of key findings is provided below.

1. Capacity building: improving the way clubs are managed and run and providing clubs with the skills to succeed.

Overall, the effectiveness of club governing structure depends on whether they have a state body guiding them (for example, Netball WA). Clubs believe that currently the Shire provides limited support to governance, and that the governance requirements for clubs are too burdensome. Some clubs do not know what grants are available and need support accessing them.

- Clubs expressed a desire, and need, to partake in training and development opportunities for committee members. There was also confusion around the hiring of Shire facilities, and clubs felt this could be improved.
- “Being really strongly governed by our state association helps drive overarching approach and structure. Strong by-laws and Constitution that holds people accountable.”
- “Club governance is lacking in all towns with many constitutions not been updated or adhered to. Clubs and organisations may need a reminder of their obligations and the legal requirements.”
- “Grants are a key barrier – wondering about allocation processes.”
- “I think our town would benefit from committee member upskilling as we have so many non-profit organisations that rely on volunteers. A lot of us are really new to

volunteering so the pressure on the more experienced members to train the newer members is a lot.”

- “Shire club development officer [could] work with Sport and Rec to promote proper running of clubs (governance roles etc.). Guest talks. Do that across all the towns.”
- “Hiring the courts is brilliant. Communications and lease negotiations is not great. Unless you know someone and you can call their mobile the communication is long-winded.”

2. Participation: Support and promote clubs to assist them in increasing their levels of community participation.

While generally there is a high level of enthusiasm around participation in clubs, the small population size of each town poses a challenge. There is also a lack of understanding of what clubs are currently active in the Shire, and how to join them.

- “Our club is consistently active, and new kids are willing to join as soon as they arrive [in town].”
- “Maybe a food truck at sporting events and that way people will go down and watch the sport while enjoying nice food.”
- “All of our sporting clubs in town revolve around one person who wants to do that sport.”



3. Volunteer recruitment and recognition: Recruiting more volunteers and celebrating their contributions.

All clubs have difficulty recruiting and retaining volunteers. Many clubs spoke about the desire for volunteer support from some of the large employers in the Shire.

- “Volunteers is always a problem. We have a big community but at the same time not much help. Our executive committee is the same people. We don’t have parents’ support.”
- “Volunteer burnout and a lot of that comes from community not chipping in to help these clubs and groups, and too scared to because the demand is too high, so more support to the clubs and groups and encouraging more community members to get involved.”
- “Overall, the town of Pannawonica relies so much on volunteers that get burnt out and we have very limited things to do here.”

4. Coordination and collaboration: Fostering coordination and collaboration between clubs, state sporting bodies and the wider community.

Many clubs expressed that running their group was a lot of work and they were often ‘reinventing the wheel’, which played a part in volunteer burnout. The small population size of each town does not allow for sporting competitions within towns.

- “Discussion with other towns has been useful to learn their ways of operating, e.g. paying coaches.”
- “I would like to see more sporting events where teams can play against each other more often i.e. Port Hedland vs Tom Price in basketball/footy. It will allow our towns to support each other.”
- “Sporting gala days would be cool with the surrounding towns Tom Price and Newman.”
- “Due to our numbers, we can never really have team sports here because there wouldn’t be enough people to have multiple teams to play each other, but if we had more support to be able to bring more skills into the sports we do that would be fantastic.”

3. Developing Clubs together



3.1 What we will do

This unifying plan was informed by extensive consultation with clubs in the Shire. It details strategic initiatives to support Club Development. The aim of this plan is to:

Assist in creating and maintaining sustainable clubs and groups in transient communities for now and into the future.

To achieve this aim, this plan is structured under the following key areas of focus:

- 1. Capacity building:** Improving the way clubs are managed and providing clubs with the skills to succeed.
- 2. Participation:** Support and promote clubs to assist them in increasing their levels of community participation.
- 3. Volunteer recruitment and recognition:** Provide clubs and groups with the knowledge and tools to recruit more volunteers and to celebrate their contributions.
- 4. Coordination and collaboration:** Fostering coordination and collaboration between clubs, state sporting bodies and the wider community.



The Shire's 'Strategic Community Plan 2022 to 2032' captures the views of our diverse community, our vision for the future, our planning imperatives and provides direction for the next decade. The Shire delivers services to its community in line with its values and strategic goals set out within the Strategic Community Plan. Each of the goals has several outcomes the Shire seeks to achieve under the headings People, Place, Prosperity and Performance.

Club Development supports local clubs to thrive, including sporting, community groups and organisations (both incorporated and not incorporated). This is linked directly to the desired outcome of Objective 1.2 of the Strategic Community Plan "Support and develop sustainable clubs and groups, providing opportunities for meaningful participation in arts, culture, sport, and recreation".

This Club Development Plan sits under the Shire's 'My Pilbara Home Community Development Strategy', which has the vision "to foster a sense of belonging, connection and inclusiveness in our approach to the delivery of our programs, events and initiatives". Community groups and clubs play an important role in life in the regions and help foster a sense of belonging, connection and inclusiveness within the Shire of Ashburton. This plan will be implemented across a three-year timeframe.

For each key focus area, implementation actions have been developed that assist us to break down the work into realistic and achievable actions. These actions will be implemented by the Shire in collaboration with clubs and with support from organisations such as Clubs WA and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC).

Actions in the My Pilbara Home Club Development Plan support one or more of these themes, as indicated by the following icons:

People



Place



Prosperity



Performance



3.2 Action plan

The table below provides a summary of actions to be undertaken over the three years to implement the Club Development Plan. Internally these actions are further refined and detailed, and written into an operational plan.

Action	Town				Shire role and resourcing	Other stakeholders
	Ons	Panna	Para	TP		
1. CAPACITY BUILDING: Improving the way clubs are managed and run and providing clubs with the skills to succeed						
1.1	Develop the “Connecting Clubs” identity for the program that is linked to Shire of Ashburton branding. To be used across media, communications platforms.	●	●	●	●	Provider
1.2	Create a dedicated “Connecting Clubs” page on the Shire’s website to include information about and for clubs. Use this for dissemination of important information from the Shire and external bodies to relevant clubs and groups.	●	●	●	●	Advocate Facilitator Provider
1.3	Explore developing a “One Club” governance model for clubs and groups who are interested, to reduce the administrative burden for smaller clubs.	●	●	●	●	Advocate Facilitator Partner Clubs within the Shire Clubs WA DLGSC
1.4	Provide links to toolkits (such as how to manage a club, best practice) on the “Connecting Clubs” webpage	●	●	●	●	Advocate Provider Clubs WA DLGSC

Timing			What success looks like
2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
			<p>"Connecting Clubs" branding developed and rolled out across social media and communication platforms.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>"Connecting Clubs" developed and "live" on the SoA website. Usage monitoring tracked.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Community discussions are held to further develop this idea and gather support. Information from examples obtained from Clubs WA and/or other LGAs shared at community discussions. Pending community interest and volunteers, support the development of this association.</p> <div>  </div>
			<p>Links are published and regularly accessed by clubs.</p> <div>  </div>


Action	Town				Shire role and resourcing	Other stakeholders
	Ons	Panna	Para	TP		
1. CAPACITY BUILDING continued						
1.5	Collate and publish a list of relevant external grants on the “Connecting Clubs” website page, including links to the Shire grant options.	●	●	●	●	Advocate Provider
1.6	Utilise Shire programs and events, where appropriate, to promote Club Development support provided by the Shire.	●	●	●	●	Advocate Facilitator Partner Provider
1.7	Provide individual support to clubs as required, including assistance in securing and manage grants, governance and operations and other general club enquiries.	●	●	●	●	Advocate Facilitator
1.8	Develop a plan and implement a regular series of training and development workshops.	●	●	●	●	Facilitator Provider Clubs WA DLGSC Other LGAs (for inspiration)

Timing			What success looks like
2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
			<p>List is published and maintained on Shire website.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Increased community awareness of SoA Club Development Support as measured through annual survey.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Multiple clubs are supported annually, measured through annual survey.</p> <div>  </div>
			<p>Deliver a minimum of four workshop series annually per town.</p> <div>  </div>

Action	Town				Shire role and resourcing	Other stakeholders
	Ons	Panna	Para	TP		

2. PARTICIPATION: Supporting clubs to increase their levels of community participation

2.1	Encourage clubs and groups to participate in programs and events as appropriate within the Shire. This can help increase their visibility, participation and membership.	●	●	●	●	Facilitator Partner	
2.2	Develop a club profile template to feature clubs on Shire website and social media	●	●	●	●	Advocate	
2.3	Develop, publish and promote a comprehensive list of clubs within the Shire for new community members to join (public Clubs Database). Hosted on the “Connecting Clubs” page on the Shire website.	●	●	●	●	Provider	
2.4	Explore the opportunity to implement a club promotion event, such as a Club Expo that could be held in conjunction with other programs or events within the Shire.	●	●	●	●	Facilitator Provider	Clubs within the Shire

Timing			What success looks like
2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
			<p>Increased participation by clubs and groups. Clubs and groups are involved in the delivery of programs or events.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Profile template developed and being used on website and social media.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Clubs Database developed Clubs Database updated annually</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Business case developed for a Clubs Expo.</p> <div>   </div>

Action	Town				Shire role and resourcing	Other stakeholders
	Ons	Panna	Para	TP		

3. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RECOGNITION: Recruiting more volunteers and celebrating their contributions

3.1	Set up an email delivery application and CRM system, to communicate directly with volunteers, clubs, groups and stakeholders in each town.	●	●	●	●	Provider	
3.2	Investigate and design a model for the implementation of a central online place (Volunteer Hub) for community members, groups and clubs.	●	●	●	●	Facilitator Provider	Clubs within the Shire
3.3	Review and define the Active Ashburton Awards, Volunteer Week and Citizen of the Year Awards to create consistency across all towns that increases participation and raises awareness of the Awards and Award winners.	●	●	●	●	Facilitator Provider	
3.4	Continue to coordinate and promote Ashburton All Stars and celebrate the award winners each month.	●	●	●	●	Provider	

Timing			What success looks like
2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
		●	<p>Delivery application and CRM system implemented.</p> 
●	●		<p>Volunteer Hub platform is developed. Platform is updated monthly.</p>  
●			<p>Volunteer Week is celebrated annually. Active Ashburton Awards and Citizen of the Year Awards receive an increase in nominations year on year.</p>  
●			<p>More nominations are received for Ashburton All Stars.</p>  

Action	Town				Shire role and resourcing	Other stakeholders
	Ons	Panna	Para	TP		

4. COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION: Fostering coordination and collaboration between clubs

4.1	Support the Tom Price Sporting Working Group meetings for club committee members to share information, provide updates and enable collaboration.					Facilitator Provider	Clubs in the Shire
4.2	Investigate the possibility of establishing other working groups, in Paraburdoo, Pannawonica, and Onslow.					Facilitator Provider	Clubs in the Shire
4.3	Implement an interactive fixtures calendar on the Connecting Clubs website page where clubs can update accordingly and is available for viewing by the entire community.					Provider	Clubs in the Shire
4.4	Create a public "Connecting Clubs" Facebook page to encourage sharing and collaboration.					Facilitator Provider	
4.5	SoA representation at the Pilbara Sports Professional Network meetings to leverage opportunities to the SoA clubs.					Provider	
4.6	Facilitate collaborative projects between two or more clubs, generating positive outcomes for all involves as requested.					Advocate Facilitator	

Timing			What success looks like
2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
			<p>Support provided as per the Working Groups terms of reference.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Club Development Lead to provide a report of the needs of the towns.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Calendar is published and contains more than 50% of all club fixtures.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Public Connecting Clubs Facebook Page created, shared and active.</p> <div>  </div>
			<p>Regular SoA attendance at the Pilbara Sports Professional Network Meetings.</p> <div>   </div>
			<p>Multiple clubs are supported annually, measured through annual survey.</p> <div>   </div>

4. *Tracking* progress



The Shire will check the progress of the Action plan on a fixed schedule.

When	What	Who
Ongoing	<p>Seek feedback from participants after conclusion of Shire-led activity, initiative or program</p> <p>Review feedback results</p> <p>Report key findings to Manager Communities</p>	<p>Club Development Lead</p> <p>Community Development Officers</p>
Every 3 months (February, May, August, November)	<p>Collect information from Clubs, Community Groups, Program partners, Sponsors involved with Strategy actions, programs, initiatives and activities</p> <p>Enter how the Strategy actions are progressing in the Implementation Plan</p> <p>Report key issues to Manager Communities</p>	<p>Club Development Lead</p> <p>Community Coordinators</p>
Every 3 months (March, June, September)	<p>Report on the progress and status of the Strategy actions to Shire Executive and Council</p>	Manager Communities
Every year (November/December)	<p>Survey Clubs, Community Groups, Program partners, Sponsors to learn about the effectiveness of Strategy Actions</p>	Club Development Lead
Every year (February)	<p>Review survey results</p> <p>Report key findings to Manager Communities</p>	<p>Club Development Lead</p> <p>Community Coordinators</p> <p>Grants Administrator</p>
Every year (March/April)	<p>Adjust Implementation Plan, as needed</p>	Manager Communities

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