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NOTICE OF MEETING

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

SUPPLEMENTARY

FRIDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2015

You are invited to attend the Ordinary Meeting of the Central Desert Regional Council to be held at Alice Springs on Friday, 9 October 2015 at 9:00am.

Cathryn Hutton
Chief Executive Officer



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**SUPPLEMENTARY
AGENDA
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
FRIDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2015**

The Ordinary Meeting of the Central Desert Regional Council will be held in the Alice Springs on Friday, 9 October 2015 at 9:00am.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORTS



ITEM NUMBER S.1
TITLE Responsibility for Morgue Management
REFERENCE 313818
AUTHOR John Gaynor, Director Community Services
DUE DATE 9 October 2015

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 01: Social and Cultural
Goal 02: Physical Assets

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council develop a definitive position on the responsibility for the future management of morgues in the CDRC region

SUMMARY: The Department of Local Government & Community Services (DLGCS) has advised that the NT and Commonwealth Governments will provide \$5 million for morgue upgrades throughout the Territory and \$120,000 per annum for repairs and maintenance of all morgues for 3 years.

These funds will be managed through the NT Department of Infrastructure.

As a result of the Upgrading Program, there is currently a discussion being held within the NT Government about who should be responsible for Morgue Policy & Administration, Morgue Repairs and Maintenance and Morgue Operational Management.

While there is money earmarked for R&M over the next 3 years, there is no money allocated for morgue operational management.

The Lajamanu, Yuendumu and Nyirripi Morgue's will be upgraded under this program to bring them up to a minimum National standard.

The DLGCS is seeking advice from the CDRC on whether Council is willing to continue to be responsible for morgue repairs and maintenance and morgue operational management.

BACKGROUND

The NT Government is prioritizing the upgrade of the Kalkarindji morgue. Discussions have already commenced with the Kalkarindji Local Authority.

Given the proximity to Kalkarindji , the DLGCS wishes to commence discussions with Lajamanu community with a view to having both upgrades take place at the same time.

Nyirripi and Yuendumu morgues are also listed for upgrade under this program.

The NT Government wishes to develop a policy on responsibility for morgue repairs and maintenance and morgue management.

It is possible that the funds allocated for morgue R&M will be administered by the Department of Infrastructure as an extension of the existing facilities contract they have with the Dept of Health.

Morgue management refers to the conveying, admission and discharge of deceased persons into and out of the morgue. This requires body handling. There are no funds allocated for morgue operational management.

Information provided by Victoria Daly Regional Council to the DLGCS indicates that their council has no role in morgue maintenance or management at Kalkarindji, or elsewhere.

Central Desert Regional Council has 3 Morgues in its region, Lajamanu, Yuelamu and Nyirripi. Unlike Victoria Daly Regional Council, CDRC does take responsibility for R&M and manages the morgues. There is no budget provision for morgue R&M or management.

CDRC has received many objections from staff about involvement in the morgues issue. This is not a formal role of any Council employee.

While morgue management is not Council administration 's preferred position, it is recognize that, at this point in time, no other agency is prepared to take responsibility for the morgues and in the event of a major breakdown of the morgue, Council may receive the blame.

LGANT wrote a sector response on 6 June 2012 to an NT Department Local Government enquiry. The response is titled *Local Government Responses to the Discussion paper on Body Handling and Morgues*.

In summary, the 'Shires' at the time did not want to take on responsibility for morgue management or body handling.

CDRC are quoted in that report: Central Desert Shire – 1 June 2012

‘There is no doubt the statement from Bob Beadman 8.2 sums it up – “Install unambiguous arrangements for the onwards management of morgues, with appropriate funding arrangements to ensure that no cost shifting is occurring”.

CDSC’s preferred position is to have no responsibility for the 3 morgues in the Shire. Our latest discussions have centered on maintaining the morgues on two conditions: 1. Non –Shire funds are secured to upgrade morgues to an acceptable standard (thermal upgrade of building, temperature alarm, appropriate fridges or similar). 2. Clinic staff or other non- Shire agency takes formal and full responsibility for body handling/management. No Shire workers are to deal with bodies.

ISSUES, CONSEQUENCES AND OPTIONS

The DLGCS has requested definitive advice from CDRC on its preferred position regarding Morgue R&M and Operational Management.

Indications are that neither the NT Department of Health nor Aboriginal Medical Services will be prepared to take responsibility for morgues if they are not coerced.

Advice received indicates that Katherine West Health Board has not accepted responsibility for morgue management in Lajamanu because Council has always taken responsibility.

Morgues in remote areas should essentially be the responsibility of health service providers.

Council may elect to continue to take responsibility for morgues and seek some funding from the DLGCS to contribute to the cost however it’s likely that morgue operations and body handling will continue to generate objections from council employees.

CDRC may offer their services as a sub contractor to carry out repairs and maintenance of morgues in its Region on a full cost recovery basis or; Council may decide that it will no longer take any responsibility for morgues in their region which will require the NT DLGCS and the NT Dept of Health to make alternative arrangements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no budget allocation or funding for Morgue R&M or management.

In December 2014 Council paid for the replacement of the air conditioner in the Lajamanu Morgue at a cost of \$6000. In early 2015 CDRC installed insulation in the Lajamanu morgue 'tin shed' to reduce summer heat. This was at Council's cost.

In Yuendumu recently \$7000 was expended on replacing a new air conditioner at Council cost. CDRC is seeking reimbursement from CLC through Lease Funds, GMAAAC or other.

On request of the Nyirripi LA, CDRC is currently pricing an upgrade of the structure, insulation, air conditioning and body fridges for consideration by GMAAAC (in 2016).

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no attachments for this report.

COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT



ITEM NUMBER S.1
TITLE Increase in Aged Care Client Contribution Fee
REFERENCE 313315
AUTHOR John Gaynor, Director Community Services
DUE DATE 8 October 2015

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 01: Social and Cultural

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve an increase to the Client Reimbursement Fee charged to Aged Care Program clients from \$90.00 per fortnight to \$140.00 per fortnight.

SUMMARY:

Aged Care Reform changes that came into effect on 1 July 2015 have resulted in changes to the way Central Desert Regional Council (CDRC) delivers Home Care Packages. Changes include delivering Home Care Packages as a Consumer Directed Care Package (CDC), which allows each client to have more say in the services they receive. CDRC is required to produce monthly income and expenditure statements to show that funding received by each client is being expended only on that client. This has reduced the ability for CDRC to provide services to clients who have been assessed and receive low level care but who have historically received some extra services to assist them to stay independent.

The 'client reimbursement fee' is the amount each client pays to the Aged Care Program for food that is bought, prepared and delivered on their behalf.

This is the first increase to Aged Care Fees in 7 years.

BACKGROUND

Under the new Aged Care reforms, Home Care Packages are to be delivered as a Consumer Directed Care Package, giving consumers more input into the services each client receives. There are restrictions to the services that can be offered to each client and this is dependent on their assessed needs and the services that are available on each community.

CDRC is required to produce individualised income and expenditure statements for all Home Care Package Clients, to show that the subsidy paid by the Federal Government is being allocated to that client.

These changes have had a negative impact on communities as CDRC no longer has the ability to cross subsidise clients who require more services than their assessed needs. These clients have previously been given extra services whilst waiting for a Home Care Package to become available.

In order to continue to provide a level of care that all clients are accustomed to, it is necessary to increase the client reimbursement fee to \$140.00 per fortnight.

This increase is the first increase for 7 years and although it's a considerable increase, it is a sum total increase of \$50.00 over 7 years which is an increase of \$7.14 per year.

It should be noted that under the Aged Care Act and the Home Care Guidelines, CDRC can charge Home Care Package Clients an additional "Client Contribution Fee" for services delivered to the client. This amounts to 17.5% (or \$9.77 per day / \$136.78 per fortnight) for any other services provided to each client. At this time CDRC does not charge this extra fee.

ISSUES, CONSEQUENCES AND OPTIONS

The rise in the client contribution is due to the increase in cost of transport, food and labor to prepare meals for Aged and Disability Clients. There has not been a rise in the reimbursement fee for many years. If the client reimbursement fee does not increase it may be necessary to reduce meals to one meal a day which would have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of the Aged and Disability Clients.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the increase in the client reimbursement fee is not approved CDRC will be unable to continue to provide meals 7 days a week.

At present funding for individual clients is made up of the following:

1. Federal Government Funding - (Dependent on hours of services delivered and level of package client has been assessed for)
2. Client Reimbursement Fee - for meals.
3. Client Contribution Fee - For other services - (Council does not charge this fee)

Due to the reforms CDRC is now required to charge for any services provided to clients. This includes personal care, washing of blankets and personal washing, travel to and from clinic, shops or for outings, social activities, advocacy whether in person or by phone, client case management, a cost for administration or any other services provided by Aged Care

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no attachments for this report.