



MEDIA RELEASE

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley advocates for sustainable approach to minimising alcohol and other drug harm in Position Statement

23 February 2024

For immediate release

The Shire of Derby/West Kimberley has released a position statement taking a firm stance on alcohol and other drug (AOD) harm minimisation in the West Kimberley region. The Shire recognises the alarmingly high rates of AOD abuse, which have been an ongoing concern for years and is still calling for urgent attention and investment into the community to address these issues. The Position Statement reinforces the Shire's commitment to addressing the significant health, social and economic challenges associated with AOD harm.

The Shire is advocating for a collaborative approach to the issue, to strengthen local and holistic rehabilitation and wellness supports and services in our region.

Shire President, Peter McCumstie emphasises the Shire's position, stating "We believe enforcement of strict purchasing restrictions, without the strengthening of localised, wrap-around services, and infrastructure to support these services, will not address the issues caused by AOD abuse and could have further adverse effects on the region. Therefore, the Shire is calling for a sustainable, collaborative, and holistic approach to AOD harm minimisation'."

President McCumstie acknowledges the significant resilience and commitment of the Derby/West Kimberley community during these challenges that face our region.

Peter McCumstie acknowledges the commitment of the community and its focus on providing ongoing community-led, strength-based local initiatives. Referring to a recent example of this commitment, the Shire President states "A perfect example of the commitment of this community is the Proposal recently sent to the Minister for Health and Mental Health, from Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS), Derby Aboriginal Health Service (DAHS), and Milliya Rumurra Aboriginal Corporation (Milliya Rumurra). The Shire fully supports this proposal, as we see the positive effect this investment will have on the West Kimberley region."

Shire CEO Amanda Dexter stresses the need for strengthened localised supports and services to combat AOD-related issues effectively. "Our community needs localised supports and services strengthened to address both the root causes and the symptoms of AOD-related issues, in the short and long term. We are committed to working collaboratively with all levels of government, local businesses, Aboriginal and Community Organisations, and all our community members."

The Shire of Derby/West Kimberley is committed to working collaboratively with all relevant providers and organisations and advocating for preventative and rehabilitation services to be established in our region. The

Derby

📞 (08) 9191 0999 | 30 Loch Street
✉️ sdwk@sdwk.wa.gov.au | PO Box 94, Derby WA 6728

Fitzroy Crossing

📞 (08) 9191 5355 | Flynn Drive
✉️ sdwk@sdwk.wa.gov.au | PO Box 101, Fitzroy Crossing



Shire of Derby / West Kimberley

Shire is dedicated to acknowledging community led alcohol management initiatives and contributing where appropriate.

The Shire looks forward to the future of community collaboration to address and combat these important issues for the betterment of our community.

To read the full position statement, visit the *Policies – Local Social Impacts/Position Statements* page on our website (<https://www.sdwk.wa.gov.au/council/local-laws-policies/policies-local-social-impactsposition-statements.aspx>)

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For media information:

Peter McCumstie
Shire President
Shire of Derby/West Kimberley
PO Box 94 Derby WA 6728
08 9191 0999 | peter.mccumstie@sdwk.wa.gov.au

Amanda Dexter
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Derby/West Kimberley
PO Box 94 Derby WA 6728
08 9191 0999 | ceo@sdwk.wa.gov.au

Maria O'Connell
Media Officer
Shire of Derby/West Kimberley
PO Box 94 Derby WA 6728
08 9191 0999 | media@sdwk.wa.gov.au

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 (08) 9191 0999 | 30 Loch Street
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