



# Small Business Friendly Local Government Discussion Paper

February 2020

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Ordinary Council Meeting - 17 February 2020



## Background

A Notice of Motion was received from Shire President, Councillor Michelle Rich on Monday 7 October 2019 to prepare a Discussion Paper about the Small Business Friendly Local Government, as promoted by the Small Business Development Corporation and present to Council at the February 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting.

## Officer Commentary

The Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) has developed the Small Business Friendly Local Government (SBFLG) initiative to recognise those local government authorities (LGA's) in Western Australia that are actively committed to supporting small businesses in their local areas.

Participating LGA's are required to sign the Small Business Friendly Local Government Charter to demonstrate they are committed to work with, and actively support local small business. A copy of this charter is attached as Attachment 1.

Participating local governments are required to adopt three 'standard' activities and three 'flexible' activities that support and help develop local small business. Additional information is outlined in the Small Business Friendly Brochure included as Attachment 2.

Local governments who engage with this program are required to report every six months to the SBDC on their progress towards achieving the commitment made.

If the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale were to sign up to the SBFLG Program, some of the activities that could be delivered to assist in the growth and development of local small business include:

- *Facilitating workshops to deliver training and staff development programs*
- *Facilitating business networking and knowledge based learning opportunities for local small business*
- *Co-hosting regular business networking events in collaboration with the Peel Chamber of Commerce Inc and other similar business support groups*
- *Requesting small business input into the Shires economic and tourism development initiatives*
- *Updating the Shires economic development and tourism websites*
- *Improving the tendering capacity and awareness of Shire procurement opportunities for local small business through workshops and training. Also distributing early information to local small business on open quotation requests and Shire tenders.*
- *Promoting economic and tourism development investment that will support local small business throughout the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale*

The Shire is already undertaking many of these activities. Any additional activities will be considered as part of the budget process.



The participation of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale in the SBFLG Program will allow it to form a working relationship with the SBDC which should yield additional small business development ideas, such as 'Buy Local Campaigns' and to partner with the SBDC on other small business friendly local projects.

## Branding and Promotion

It is possible to co-brand the deliverable information with the Shire's current branding and utilise the social media feeds available to broadcast to our databases. Work with Peel CCI and Business SJ will enable further broadcast this program throughout their membership bases.

## Budgetary Impacts

It is not envisaged that there will be any additional budgetary impacts from the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale being engaged with this program, as all of the initiatives listed are a part of current or planned small business development activities by the Shires Economic and Tourism Development Team. It is not envisaged that there will be any additional financial costs to roll out this program other than officer time at this stage. If there are unforeseen costs for specific program delivery, this could be covered from the Economic Development Marketing account 1200-10101-6121-0000.

## Other Local Government data on the impact of this program

Specific real time data is not yet available, but feedback obtained suggests the following advantages are available to local small businesses as a result of their LGA being a part of this program:

- *Enhanced levels of customer service and engagement*
- *Red tape reduction*
- *Creation of a business friendly environment*
- *Building vibrancy within the small business community*
- *Collaborating and sharing with other small business friendly local governments*

The following lists local governments currently joined to the program

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| • <i>City of Armadale</i>                | • <i>City of Fremantle</i>          |
| • <i>Shire of Ashburton</i>              | • <i>City of Gosnells</i>           |
| • <i>Shire of Augusta-Margaret River</i> | • <i>City of Joondalup</i>          |
| • <i>Town of Bassendean</i>              | • <i>City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder</i> |
| • <i>City of Bayswater</i>               | • <i>City of Karratha</i>           |
| • <i>Shire of Brookton</i>               | • <i>City of Kwinana</i>            |
| • <i>Shire of Broome</i>                 | • <i>City of Melville</i>           |
| • <i>City of Bunbury</i>                 | • <i>Shire of Mt Marshall</i>       |



10.5.1 - attachment 1

## Small Business Friendly Local Government Discussion Paper

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- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • <i>City of Busselton</i>      | • <i>Shire of Nannup</i>       |
| • <i>Town of Cambridge</i>      | • <i>Shire of Narrogin</i>     |
| • <i>City of Canning</i>        | • <i>Shire of Northam</i>      |
| • <i>Shire of Carnarvon</i>     | • <i>Shire of Quairading</i>   |
| • <i>Shire of Chittering</i>    | • <i>City of Stirling</i>      |
| • <i>Town of Claremont</i>      | • <i>City of Subiaco</i>       |
| • <i>City of Cockburn</i>       | • <i>Shire of Toodyay</i>      |
| • <i>Shire of Collie</i>        | • <i>Town of Victoria Park</i> |
| • <i>Shire of Dandaragan</i>    | • <i>City of Vincent</i>       |
| • <i>Town of East Fremantle</i> | • <i>City of Wanneroo</i>      |
| • <i>Shire of Esperance</i>     | • <i>Shire of Waroona</i>      |
| • <i>Shire of Exmouth</i>       |                                |

## Risks and Benefits

Properly rolled out, there do not appear to be any specific risks or negatives at this stage. The positives/benefits include:

- 1 – Creating a desirable location to live and establish a new business
- 2 – Supporting our local economy and providing new employment opportunities
- 3 – Building vibrancy within our community
- 4 – Meeting the needs of ratepayers for local goods and services
- 5 – Collaborating and sharing with other Small Business Friendly Local Governments

Signing the Charter is free and straight forward, and will give this Shire the additional tools to further engage positively with our small business community.



# Charter

Commitment to this Charter is a requirement for participation in the Small Business Friendly Local Governments (SBFLG) initiative and outlines what the local government agrees to do to support small business in their area.

## 1. Commitment to small business

The local government agrees to:

- a) recognise that the small business community is an important stakeholder;
- b) undertake regular and targeted consultation with this group;
- b) work towards understanding how its local small business community operates, its needs and goals, and the key challenges;
- c) provide networking and other development opportunities for its local small business community; and
- d) actively engage, where appropriate, with the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) on matters affecting small business.

## 2. Commitment to customer service

The local government agrees to:

- a) maintain open lines of communication with small businesses through both formal and informal approaches;
- b) provide clear advice and guidance to small businesses with a focus on assisting them to understand and meet their regulatory obligations, and to work with them to achieve compliance;
- c) publish a set of clear service standards setting out what small businesses can expect from them;
- d) consider the needs of local small business owners for whom English is not a first language; and
- e) publish a link on its website to take small business owners to resources available on the SBDC website, including the Business Licence Finder.

## 3. Administration and regulation

The local government agrees to:

- a) take reasonable action to limit unnecessary administrative burdens on small business such as:
  - i. only asking for information that is absolutely necessary;
  - ii. not asking for the same information twice;
  - iii. working collaboratively with other local governments;
- b) undertake regular policy reviews to limit their impact on small businesses, and to test new policies and procedures for 'small business friendliness'; and
- c) ensure that its officers have the necessary knowledge and skills to apply plans and regulations in a consistent manner.

## 4. On-time payment policy

The local government agrees to work towards ensuring all invoices from small business suppliers are paid within 30 days.

## 5. Small business engagement

The local government agrees to regularly meet and consult with the small business community, including small business operators and members of representative bodies, to assist their understanding of small business needs in their local area.



## 6. Dispute resolution

The local government agrees to implement a timely, cost-effective and non-judicial process to manage any disputes it may have with small businesses and to publish details of this on its website. The process could include referring the dispute to an independent dispute resolution service (such as that offered by the SBDC).

## 7. Additional activities to support small business

In addition to items 4, 5, and 6 above, the local government agrees to implement at least three other activities to improve the operating environment for small businesses within its authority. Details of the initiatives are to be included in the local government's bi-annual reports to the SBDC.

## 8. Progress reports

The local government agrees to:

- a) provide the SBDC with a biannual progress report that outlines the results achieved in relation to its small business friendly initiatives, including its policy relating to small business being paid on-time, business advisory group, and dispute resolution process; and
- b) forward success stories and case studies to the SBDC in relation to the SBFLG initiative when requested.

## 9. Promotion and marketing of the program

The local government:

- a) agrees that the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer will make a public statement in relation to its commitment to the SBFLG initiative, and to post this statement on its website;
- b) will be provided with a logo which it agrees to use in accordance with the SBFLG style guide supplied by the SBDC; and
- c) is encouraged to promote the SBFLG initiative by displaying the approved logo on its online and printed marketing and communication materials.

## 10. Contact details

The local government agrees:

- a) that the primary contact for the SBFLG initiative will be the Chief Executive Officer and that a secondary contact will also be nominated, as a delegate of the Chief Executive Officer; and
- b) to provide the SBDC with direct contact details for the nominated contacts.

	Name	Position	Phone number	Email address
Primary contact		Chief Executive Officer		
Secondary contact				

## 11. Acceptance

On behalf of [insert local government name], we agree to the terms outlined in this Charter and agree to implement the SBFLG initiative.

**Mayor**

**Chief Executive Officer**

Print name:

Print name:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

Date:



## Small Business Friendly

An initiative of the Small Business  
Development Corporation



# Is **your** local government small business friendly?

[smallbusiness.wa.gov.au](http://smallbusiness.wa.gov.au)



Small Business  
Development Corporation

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# SBDC working with local government to support small business

Accounting for 97 per cent of all businesses in Western Australia, small business has a significant impact on our economy – small business is big business!

Small business owners (and operators) create local employment, provide essential goods and services and help create attractive, liveable communities. The right mix of small businesses can create a sense of vibrancy and attract people to live, work and visit.

Local governments can have a significant influence over how attractive their area is for businesses to set up, and established enterprises to grow. They also play a key role in the lifecycle of a small business; in fact most of the interactions business owners have with government are at a local level.

To help build stronger, more productive relationships between small business and local government, the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) has developed the Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative. The initiative aims to recognise local governments that are working to support their small business communities.

IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**97%**

of businesses employ  
fewer than 20 staff

There are more than

**221,000**

small businesses

**45%**

of employees in the private  
sector are employed by  
small business



# How you can be involved

To participate in the initiative, we're asking you to sign a Charter – to formally commit to the initiative and to your small business community.

Taking part in the initiative means you have committed through the Charter to work with, and support, small businesses by adopting three 'standard' activities and at least three 'flexible' activities (ones that suit your particular organisation and community).

## Standard activities

In response to some of the most common issues small business owners face in dealing with their local government the initiative involves engaging in standard activities that include:

- adopting a policy to pay invoices from small business suppliers within 30 days
- regularly meeting with and consulting members of the local small business community to improve our understanding of their needs
- introducing and promoting a timely and cost effective process to manage any disputes arising between your organisation and small business clients

## Additional activities

We understand that each local government area differs in size, demographics and geography, so you can choose at least three additional activities that best suit your circumstances. These may include, but are not limited to:

- surveying local small businesses to assess their needs
- accepting online payments
- introducing deemed approvals
- simplifying processes and forms
- providing more small business information on your website
- improving communication and customer service
- encouraging 'buy local' shopping campaigns
- supporting business incubators or start-up spaces
- offering contracts to local small business suppliers
- introducing an economic development team
- facilitating small business forums and events

Your selected activities need not necessarily impose an additional burden on your resources. We can help you to develop ideas that will work best for your organisation.

## Reporting

We understand there are many demands on your time, so reporting involves nothing more onerous than completing a simple report card twice a year.

## Promoting

After committing to the initiative, it's your opportunity to let everyone know that you are 'small business friendly'. You'll be able to use the Small Business Friendly Local Governments logo on your print and online publications, and display a one page overview of the Small Business Charter, personalised for your organisation. We'll also list your organisation on our website and in other marketing material associated with the initiative.

**Being small business friendly doesn't have to be onerous or expensive - little changes can often have a big impact.**

## Why you need to be involved

Being small business friendly can bring many benefits for your organisation and your community, including:

- creating a desirable location to live and to establish a business
- supporting your local economy, including providing employment opportunities
- building vibrancy in your community
- meeting the needs of ratepayers for local goods and services
- collaborating and sharing with other small business friendly local governments

## Your next steps

Our Small Business Friendly Local Governments Project Manager can help you sign up to the Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative and answer any questions.

**T:** 13 12 49

**E:** [sbfriendly@smallbusiness.wa.gov.au](mailto:sbfriendly@smallbusiness.wa.gov.au)

**For some business owners it's their interaction with local government, not compliance with regulations, that can create problems.**



A key role for the Small Business Development Corporation is advocating on behalf of small business at all tiers of government. We value our relationship with local governments and are keen to strengthen our engagement with this important sector. ””

**DAVID EATON,**  
SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER, CEO OF THE SBDC



**Small Business Friendly**

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