

Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program

Project Manager

Senior Ranger & Emergency Services Coordinator

Project Team

- Ranger Services
- Communications
- Customer Service
- Finance
- Kimberley Veterinary Clinic
- Information Technology (website support)

1.1 Project Background

The Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley experiences one of the highest dog impoundment rates in regional Western Australia. Large numbers of unwanted litters contribute to:

- Increased impoundments
- Increased euthanasia rates
- Higher operational costs
- Increased roaming dogs
- Dog attacks
- Animal welfare concerns

Recent amendments to the Dog Act 1976 have also increased the importance of responsible dog ownership and desexing.

To address these issues, the Shire proposes implementing an annual subsidised dog desexing program through a voucher system administered by Ranger Services in partnership with Kimberley Veterinary Clinic.

1.2 Project Purpose

To improve responsible pet ownership by reducing financial barriers associated with dog desexing while reducing unwanted litters and long-term Ranger Service costs.

1.3 Project Objectives

The project aims to:

- Reduce unwanted dog breeding.
- Reduce dog impoundments.
- Reduce euthanasia numbers.
- Improve community safety.
- Encourage compliance with the Dog Act.
- Improve animal welfare.
- Reduce long-term operational costs for the Shire.
- Promote responsible pet ownership.

1.4 Scope

1.4.1 In Scope

The Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program includes the planning, implementation, administration and ongoing management of a subsidised desexing voucher scheme for eligible dog owners within the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley. This includes:

- Development and maintenance of all program documentation, policies and procedures.
- Preparation and delivery of public communications, advertising and promotional material.
- Management of the online and paper-based application process.
- Assessment of applications against the approved eligibility criteria.
- Issuing, tracking and administration of desexing vouchers.
- Management of the agreement with the participating veterinary provider.
- Creation and maintenance of program records, including Synergy records and voucher registers.
- Financial administration, including purchase orders, invoice processing and budget monitoring.
- Monitoring program performance and reporting on outcomes.
- Annual review of the program, including recommendations for future improvements.

1.4.2 Out of Scope

The following activities are outside the scope of this project:

- Subsidised desexing for cats (may be considered as a future program expansion).
- Funding or subsidising desexing for dogs owned by registered rescue or rehoming organisations.
- Veterinary services or treatments unrelated to routine desexing procedures.
- Payment of any veterinary costs exceeding the approved voucher value, which remain the responsibility of the dog owner.
- Emergency veterinary treatment, vaccinations, microchipping, medications or any other ancillary veterinary services not specifically covered by the program.
- Transport of animals to and from veterinary appointments, unless otherwise approved by the Shire as part of a separate initiative.

This version reads more like a formal project management document and clearly defines the boundaries of the program.

1.5 Project Deliverables

The project will deliver the following outcomes to enable the successful implementation and ongoing management of the Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program:

Deliverable	Description
Dog Desexing Assistance Program	An operational annual subsidy program providing eligible dog owners with financial assistance towards desexing their dogs.
Application Form	A standardised application form (online and/or printable) for eligible residents to apply for a desexing voucher.
Desexing Voucher Template	A uniquely numbered voucher template with terms and conditions for redemption at the approved veterinary practice.

Deliverable	Description
Veterinary Services Agreement	A formal agreement between the Shire and the participating veterinary clinic outlining roles, responsibilities and payment arrangements.
Program Administration Procedure	An internal procedure detailing the assessment, approval, voucher issuance, record keeping, invoicing and payment processes.
Communications Package	Public communication materials including media releases, website content, social media posts, FAQs and promotional material.
Website Information	A dedicated webpage containing program information, eligibility criteria, application forms and contact details.
Financial Administration System	A standing purchase order, invoice verification process and budget monitoring system to support program delivery.
Record Keeping System	A centralised record management system using Synergy and supporting registers to track applications, vouchers, invoices and program outcomes.
Program Reporting Dashboard	A reporting spreadsheet and associated performance measures to monitor expenditure, uptake and program outcomes throughout the year.
Annual Program Report	A report summarising program performance, expenditure, outcomes, lessons learnt and recommendations for future delivery.

1.6 Budget

The Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program is intended to receive an ongoing annual budget allocation of \$30,000 through the Shire's annual budgeting process. This allocation will provide the core funding required to deliver the program each financial year.

Where funding opportunities become available, Ranger Services will actively seek additional external funding to expand the program, increase the number of vouchers available, or enhance program delivery without increasing the Shire's financial contribution.

Item	Estimated Annual Cost
Annual Desexing Voucher Allocation	\$30,000
Program Administration	Existing Ranger Services Resources
Promotion and Communications	Existing Shire Resources
Total Annual Shire Budget Allocation	\$30,000

1.6.1 Additional Funding Opportunities

To maximise the benefits of the program, Ranger Services may apply for supplementary funding through:

- State and Commonwealth Government grant programs.
- Animal welfare and responsible pet ownership grants.
- Corporate sponsorships and community partnerships.
- Contributions from not-for-profit organisations and other funding bodies.

Any additional funding secured will be used to supplement the annual Shire allocation by increasing the number of vouchers available, expanding eligibility where appropriate, or enhancing community education and responsible pet ownership initiative

1.6.2 Budget Management

The program budget will be managed by Ranger Services in accordance with the Shire's Financial Management Policies. Program expenditure and available funding will be monitored throughout the financial year to ensure the program remains financially sustainable and operates within approved budget allocations.

1.7 Program Eligibility and Administration

The Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program is available to eligible residents of the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley who meet the approved program criteria. Applications will be assessed by Ranger Services and vouchers issued subject to available funding.

1.7.1 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a desexing voucher, applicants must:

- Be a resident of the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley.
- Be the registered owner of the dog.
- Ensure the dog is currently registered with the Shire.
- Ensure the dog is microchipped in accordance with the Dog Act 1976.
- Submit a completed application form together with any required supporting documentation.
- Apply for no more than two (2) dogs per household during each funding round.
- Not have adopted the dog through a registered rescue or rehoming organisation, as these organisations generally include desexing as part of the adoption process.
- Meet any additional eligibility requirements approved by the Shire from time to time.

Applications will be assessed on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to available funding. Approval of an application does not guarantee ongoing funding in future program rounds.

1.7.2 Program Administration Process

The program will be administered by Ranger Services in accordance with the following process:

1. The applicant submits a completed desexing voucher application to the Shire.
2. Ranger Services assesses the application against the approved eligibility criteria.
3. If approved, Ranger Services issues a uniquely numbered desexing voucher valid for 30 days from the date of issue.
4. The applicant contacts the participating veterinary practice to arrange a desexing appointment.
5. The voucher is presented to the veterinary practice at the time of admission for the procedure.
6. The dog owner is responsible for paying any costs that exceed the voucher value directly to the veterinary practice.
7. Following completion of the procedure, the veterinary practice submits an invoice to the Shire quoting the voucher number, dog's name and microchip number.
8. Ranger Services verifies the invoice and supporting documentation before authorising payment.
9. Finance processes payment in accordance with the standing purchase order and the Shire's Financial Management Policies.
10. Ranger Services updates all program records, including Synergy, the voucher register and reporting spreadsheet, before closing the application.

Ranger Services will monitor voucher allocation and expenditure throughout the program to ensure funding is managed responsibly and that accurate records are maintained for reporting and future program reviews.

1.8 Program Governance and Administration

The Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program will be administered by the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley through a coordinated approach involving Ranger Services, Finance, Customer Service, Communications and the participating veterinary practice.

1.8.1 Ranger Services

Ranger Services will be responsible for the overall management and administration of the program, including:

- Managing the day-to-day operation of the program.
- Assessing applications against the approved eligibility criteria.
- Issuing approved desexing vouchers.
- Liaising with applicants and the participating veterinary practice.
- Maintaining all program records and documentation.
- Monitoring program expenditure against the approved budget.
- Verifying veterinary invoices prior to payment.
- Preparing performance reports and annual program reviews.
- Recommending improvements to the program where appropriate.
- Participating Veterinary Practice

1.8.2 The participating veterinary practice will be responsible for:

- Accepting valid Shire-issued desexing vouchers.
- Verifying the voucher details prior to providing services.
- Completing the desexing procedure in accordance with normal veterinary standards.
- Recording the voucher number and the dog's microchip number on all invoices.
- Submitting invoices to the Shire in accordance with the Veterinary Services Agreement.
- Advising the owner of any costs exceeding the voucher value, which remain the owner's responsibility.
- Communications

1.8.3 The Communications Team will support the program by:

- Preparing and publishing promotional material.
- Maintaining program information on the Shire's website.
- Coordinating social media and public awareness campaigns.
- Assisting with media releases and community education initiatives.
- Customer Service

1.8.4 Customer Service will:

- Provide general information about the program.
- Assist residents with obtaining application forms.
- Receive completed applications where required.
- Refer technical or eligibility enquiries to Ranger Services.
- Finance

1.8.5 Finance will support the program by:

- Establishing and maintaining the standing purchase order.
- Processing approved invoices submitted by the participating veterinary practice.
- Monitoring expenditure against the approved annual budget.
- Assisting with financial reporting where required.

1.9 Program Records and Reporting

Ranger Services will maintain comprehensive records to ensure the program is administered in a transparent, accountable and auditable manner. All records will be managed in accordance with the Shire's Record Keeping Plan and relevant legislative requirements.

1.9.1 Program Records

The following records will be maintained throughout the life of the program:

- Synergy record for each application.
- Applicant register.
- Voucher register.
- Invoice register.
- Budget and expenditure register.
- Performance reporting spreadsheet.
- Information to be Recorded

For each approved application, the following information will be recorded:

- Applicant name.
- Residential address.
- Contact details.
- Dog name.
- Breed, age and sex (where available).
- Shire registration number.
- Microchip number.
- Photograph of the dog.
- Voucher number.
- Date voucher issued.
- Voucher expiry date.
- Veterinary invoice number.
- Invoice amount.
- Synergy reference number.
- Application outcome.
- Date the desexing procedure was completed.
- Reporting

Ranger Services will monitor and report on the performance of the program throughout each financial year. Reporting may include:

- Number of applications received.
- Number of vouchers approved.
- Number of dogs desexed.
- Total program expenditure.
- Remaining available funding.
- Community uptake and participation.
- Trends in dog registrations, impoundments and euthanasia.
- Recommendations for future program improvements and funding requirements.

1.10 Communications and Community Engagement

A communications strategy will be implemented to ensure the community is aware of the Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program, understands the eligibility requirements, and is informed of key dates and program updates. Communications will also support responsible pet ownership and maximise community participation.

1.10.1 Pre-Launch

Prior to the commencement of each annual funding round, the following activities will be completed:

- Obtain all required internal approvals and budget allocation.
- Confirm participation arrangements with the approved veterinary practice.
- Finalise and approve all program documentation, including application forms and voucher templates.
- Prepare promotional material and community information.
- Update the Shire's website with current program information and application forms.
- Brief Customer Service and relevant Shire staff on the program and application process.

1.10.2 Program Launch

At the commencement of each funding round, the Shire will promote the program through a coordinated public awareness campaign, which may include:

- Publication of a media release.
- Announcement on the Shire's Facebook and other social media platforms.
- Updates to the Shire's website.
- Distribution of promotional material through Shire facilities.
- Direct engagement with community groups and relevant stakeholders where appropriate.

1.10.3 Ongoing Communications

Throughout the program, Ranger Services and the Communications Team will continue to promote responsible pet ownership and provide regular updates, including:

- Reminders regarding voucher availability and application deadlines.
- Information on responsible pet ownership and the benefits of desexing.
- Updates on program funding availability and future funding rounds.
- Responses to community enquiries.
- Promotion of program outcomes and achievements where appropriate.

1.10.4 Internal Communication

To ensure consistent program delivery, Ranger Services will provide regular updates to relevant Shire departments regarding:

- Program commencement and closure.
- Funding availability.
- Administrative process changes.
- Significant program outcomes.
- Annual performance and recommendations for future delivery.

This communications plan will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and continues to meet the needs of the community and the objectives of the program.

1.11 Risk Management and Performance Monitoring

Effective risk management is essential to ensure the Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program is delivered efficiently, remains financially sustainable, and achieves its intended outcomes. Ranger Services will monitor risks throughout the program and implement appropriate mitigation measures where required.

1.11.1 Project Risks

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Annual funding is fully allocated before all applications can be approved.	Medium	Medium	Monitor application numbers and maintain a waiting list where appropriate. Consider increasing funding in future years if demand consistently exceeds supply.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
High community demand exceeds available voucher numbers.	High	Medium	Verify ownership, Shire registration, residency and microchip details before approving any application.
Fraudulent or ineligible applications are submitted.	Low	Medium	Issue uniquely numbered vouchers with expiry dates and require verification by the participating veterinary practice prior to redemption.
Vouchers are misused, duplicated or transferred.	Low	Medium	Maintain regular communication with the participating veterinary practice and encourage applicants to book appointments promptly after receiving a voucher.
Veterinary capacity delays appointments.	Medium	Medium	Monitor expenditure throughout the program, verify invoices prior to payment, and cease issuing vouchers once the annual budget allocation has been reached.
Program expenditure exceeds the approved budget.	Low	High	Deliver an annual communications campaign and promote the benefits of responsible pet ownership through a range of communication channels.
Low community participation.	Low	Medium	Review the program annually and amend eligibility criteria, voucher values or procedures as required.
Changes to legislation or veterinary costs.	Low	Medium	

1.11.2 Program Monitoring and Success Measures

The effectiveness of the program will be monitored throughout each funding year to ensure it continues to meet its objectives and provides value to the community. Ranger Services will collect and analyse program data and prepare an annual report for management.

Key performance indicators may include:

- Number of applications received.
- Number of vouchers approved and issued.
- Number of dogs successfully desexed through the program.
- Percentage of allocated funding utilised.
- Average cost per desexing voucher.
- Reduction in dog impoundments.
- Reduction in euthanasia of unwanted dogs.
- Reduction in roaming dog complaints.
- Reduction in reported dog attacks.
- Increase in responsible pet ownership and legislative compliance.
- Community participation and feedback.

- External grant funding secured to supplement the annual program budget.

1.1.2 Implementation Plan

The Annual Dog Desexing Assistance Program will be implemented each financial year following the adoption of the annual budget. Prior to the commencement of each funding round, the Shire will undertake a series of preparatory activities to ensure the program is ready for delivery.

<u>Implementation Activity</u>	<u>Responsible Officer/Department</u>	<u>Timing</u>
Confirm annual budget allocation and available funding.	Executive Management / Council	Annual Budget Process
Confirm participation arrangements with the approved veterinary practice and review the Veterinary Services Agreement.	Ranger Services	Prior to Program Commencement
Establish or renew the standing purchase order.	Finance	Prior to Program Commencement
Review and update application forms, voucher templates and program documentation.	Ranger Services	Prior to Program Commencement
Prepare and approve communications and promotional material.	Communications	Prior to Program Commencement
Update the Shire website and online application information.	Communications	Prior to Program Commencement
Brief Customer Service and relevant Shire staff on program procedures.	Ranger Services	Prior to Program Commencement
Open applications to eligible residents.	Ranger Services	Commencement of Funding Round
Assess applications and issue vouchers.	Ranger Services	Throughout the Funding Round
Process veterinary invoices and monitor expenditure.	Ranger Services / Finance	Ongoing
Monitor program performance and funding availability.	Ranger Services	Ongoing
Prepare an annual program review and recommendations for the following year's budget.	Ranger Services	End of Financial Year

1.1.3 Annual Review and Continuous Improvement

At the conclusion of each funding round, Ranger Services will undertake a review of the program to evaluate its performance against the project's objectives, budget allocation and key performance indicators. The review will identify opportunities to improve program delivery, amend eligibility criteria where appropriate, and support future budget submissions and external funding applications.

This implementation cycle will be repeated annually to ensure the program remains responsive to community needs and continues to support responsible pet ownership within the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley.