Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre Inc.

Enhancing our community's ability to positively develop self, family and community.

Community Development Framework

This Community Development framework document for the Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre (DBNC) was developed by management staff and committee of DBNC after consultation. It aims to give broad direction to the developmental work of DBNC and inform the ongoing work plans and practice of staff over the coming years. It is expected the document will be reviewed triannually.

The Way We Will Work (Our Values)

- ❖ **Building on Strengths and Capacities**
- ❖ **Pursuing Equity and Valuing Diversity**
- ❖ **People's rights to respect**
- ❖ **Acknowledging custodians of this land and act to build reconciliation**
- ❖ **People's right to opinion and voice and DBNC will only speak on people's behalf by request**
- ❖ **Encouraging Innovation**
- ❖ **Collaborating and Cooperating as Partners**
- ❖ **Working with Integrity of Process**
- ❖ **Confidentiality, Participation and Accountable and Transparent Practices**

Underlying assumptions

- ❖ **Everyone has capacities and strengths.**
- ❖ **People change and change is constant.**
- ❖ **Everyone has a right to respect**
- ❖ **Equity and access of opportunity lead to improved life circumstances**
- ❖ **People know most about their own lives.**
- ❖ **Everyone has the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives**
- ❖ **Communities play a big part in people's lives.**
- ❖ **Rich and complex diversity of communities is valuable.**
- ❖ **Creativity, innovation and invention are integral to developmental work**
- ❖ **Working with consensus rather than competition assists cohesive communities**
- ❖ **Everyone has a right to integrity of process and practice**
- ❖ **Pace of development is local people driven**

Five key principles:

1. Engagement   2. Inclusiveness   3. Collaboration   4. Capacity building 5. Pace of development

1   Engagement

Engagement is about building purposeful relationships.

There are many reasons for engaging with individuals, families, organisations and communities, such as building networks for future work together or focussing on better individual or group outcomes.
Engagement involves:

- gaining and maintaining trust and finding common ground.
- talking with, meeting with, and getting to know people.
- relational process that is respectful and based on trust and reciprocity.
- taking the time to work alongside and together with people to build positive relationships
- understanding the context of connectedness, interdependence, independence and the acknowledgment of the impact of change.

Engagement within community development principles means that all processes are conscious and seek to enact social justice, through knowing who needs to be included, how to include, and understanding your own role in the community.

Engagement processes will assist in identifying the various stakeholders, their aspirations, their assets and their needs. Various dimensions in the work of engagement are acknowledged, such as systems, history and culture, particularly for the most vulnerable groups, including Aboriginal people and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people and communities. DBNC seeks to engage in ways that identify and address barriers to participation in broader community life.

2 Inclusiveness

The essence of Inclusiveness is that all people are intrinsically valued. Working in communities requires the effort of all, and inclusive processes respects the rights of all individuals and groups to be involved.

Maintaining social justice principles ensures that no person shall be discriminated against because of education, religion, abilities, marital status, sexual orientation, health status, or socio-economic status. Integral to the principles of social justice are: access, equity, empowerment, participation and rights.

Relevant participation and processes in planning, direction setting, decision making and consultation with individuals, families and communities contribute to inclusiveness, which value people and respect their contribution. Identifying key stakeholders for particular issues will ensure relevant and valuable diversity of views and ideas.

Engaging and inclusive processes are:
• open and participatory in nature
• respect differences and discern the value of contributions
• promote enquiry rather than impose solutions
• look for solutions and areas of agreement
• avoid the use of jargon and stereotypes
• provide a variety of opportunities for participation (Frank and Smith, 1999).
• value local knowledge, culture, resources, skills and processes
• DBNC recognises its obligations to adopt the principles of the Anti-Discrimination Act (1991). (Frank, F. & Smith. (1999), & Moore, A. & Hill, H. (2001), Kenny, S. (2006)

Working together can achieve powerful results for the community and can involve a number of elements, including:

- Cooperation – "characterised by informal relationships that exist without any commonly defined mission, structure or planning effort. Information is shared as needed and authority is retained by each organisation so that there is virtually no risk. Resources are separate, as are rewards".
- Coordination – "characterised by more formal relationships and understanding of compatible missions. Some planning and division of roles is required, and communication channels are established. Authority still rests with the individual organisation, but there is some increased risk to all participants. Resources are available to participants and rewards are mutually acknowledged".
- Collaboration – "a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organisations to achieve common goals. The relationship includes commitment to: mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards". (Mattessich, P.W. & Mooney, B.R. 1992)

It is important to recognise the strengths, roles and resources of all stakeholders which, when working together, can contribute to significant change in the community and to individuals. DBNC engages with individuals, families and communities as active participants (residents, government agencies, the community sector, business and industry).

Working together builds on the work of engagement and inclusiveness. Once relationships have been established, decisions can be made and implemented.

Working together discourages competition by bringing people together, and rewards cooperative behaviour through ongoing support, identification of common purpose and focussing effort to achieve through agreed activities.

4   Capacity Building

Capacity building can be both an outcome of the first three principles as outlined above, as well as an important process in itself. Capacity building involves identifying, utilising and developing the abilities of individuals, families and groups so that they can work through and find solutions to issues, items and interests to set and achieve goals. When working individually, "good work" can be done and positive outcomes can be achieved. However, working together, using a range of skills and experiences can result in the overall capacity to work on any issue item, interest or opportunity is increased.

Individual communities are not without issues and problems, but they have the potential to use the skills, resilience and leadership that engages with and seeks solutions to their own issues. DBNC seeks to engage in capacity building processes that can lead to sustainable solutions to social issues at the local level and/or with other stakeholders/communities of interest.

The term 'communities' refers to both geographic communities and communities of interest:
- Geographic communities – people who identify with geographic areas.
- Communities of interest - refers to people who share a common history, culture, tradition, religion, experience or particular interest.

Community development aims to minimise reliance on non-renewable resources, and to substitute these with renewable resources, especially where these resources exist in the local community.

When people within a community are motivated or encouraged to take control of the project or interest themselves, and through it learn that they can genuinely have more influence and power within their community and their lives, they are "empowered", as they consciously participate in developing local solutions. (Frank, F. & Smith, A. 1999)

5   Pace of Development

Community Development by its nature is a living process, as autonomous, active and participatory communities are not created quickly, or without ongoing change. Attempting to 'push' a community process too quickly can result in the process being compromised, resulting in both the community and individual participants losing ownership of and commitment to the process.

Balanced development in all dimensions (social, political, cultural, environmental, and personal/spiritual development) is sought and mindfulness of all aspects ensures they are included by the community.

Balanced development also has components of process, outcome and vision – focusing specifically on only one of these results in the other areas being neglected. The challenge in developmental work is to address immediate needs or goals with the intention of achieving the full vision.
Integrity of process is important in achieving the outcome of community work. DBNC aims to work with this level of integrity. (Ife, J. 2002)

Community Development Work

Naming our work assists in all thinking and doing processes - it helps describe the nature of our activities. Any particular piece of work can contain any number or all of the following areas:

Networking - A network is a relationship or social infrastructure that enables people to interact with one another; a way of communicating and exchanging information, skills, and ideas; of planning and working together across roles.

Networks build strong communities by strengthening relationships between people. Networking is a tool for community development, which empowers people in democratic ways. Solutions are developed by people working together to solve community problems and improve the quality of life of the individuals within the community.

Workers, residents and groups of people develop informal and formal networking in the community and amongst work colleagues, assisting each to maintain individual and organisational identities while gaining the benefits of solidarity in a common cause.

Networking is grounded in cooperation, recognising that difference in approach and resources exists.

Information, Assessment and Referral – are process tools used to respond to individuals by assisting them with information, to problem solve and to assist them to find the pathway to the support or assistance needed to meet specific circumstances.

Providing appropriate information to community members and other agencies about available services and supports in the community (e.g. government departments and services, social clubs, educational courses, welfare supports, and legal and health services) aims to improve access to services.

Coordination - Coordination is about organising diverse people and groups who have individual contributions to offer, with the intention of forming a coherent or efficient whole. This integrates or links together different parts to accomplish a collective set of tasks through common effort. This can stimulate, support and mobilize resources, and distributes the tasks around a joint activity.

Project management - Focuses on producing defined outputs within planned resources so that agreed outcomes are achieved. Organizing and managing resources ensures completion of projects within defined parameters. The project activities are chosen within these resource limits (time, money, people, materials, energy, space, provisions, communication, quality, risk assessment, etc.) to meet, where possible, pre-defined project objectives.

Support for Community Organisations – Assisting other community organisations with resources, information and/or education (e.g. practice and governance information in meeting legal & constitutional requirements; co-facilitation of groups to explore issues or plan). Support may also be offered to the DBNC from other organisations, (e.g. exploring a new direction or with a feasibility study). (Mattessich, P.W. and Mooney, B.R. 1992)

Service Delivery and Infrastructure Development – Ensures the community has access to appropriate service responses and affordable, safe and appropriate public or community space for varied activities.

DBNC works to develop the following:
- Physical infrastructure (meeting rooms, child safe and accessible spaces)
- Services and facilities
- Planning and coordination mechanisms / structures
- Delivery mechanisms

Enhancing Staff, Student and Volunteer Development –development of all roles involves providing opportunities for enhancing and sharing of expertise across the organization and across the community. Examples include:
- co facilitation of groups and events
- involvement on committees and working groups
- considering who has the capacity and skills to be involved in particular projects that enhance or connect current work practice
- mentoring relationships and job sharing or swapping for short periods.

Individual Advocacy –Involves being a third party who acts to address a barrier that may be impacting on an individual having their needs met. This can involve obtaining services for, informing the way services are provided, or assisting the person to access an existing process.

Systemic Advocacy - Actions taken to address systemic barriers that may be impacting on a group in relation to their needs being met. This barrier could be one or more of the following:

- legislation
- policy decisions (e.g. planning or lack of; availability of transport/housing/employment)
- services (or lack of)
- locational

- cultural
- guidelines, or
- processes

Systemic advocacy is oriented towards influencing and changing systems, institutions and social structures, for the benefit of more than one individual or group and is therefore resource effective.

Systemic Advocacy activities include:

- Awareness raising of issues (individual and community wide; forming groups)
- Lobbying decision makers
- Influencing Policy development
- Legal avenues
- Submissions (to stakeholders and for resources)
- Publications/research
- Campaigns (political and educational)
- Media releases/ interviews
- Formal activism for action on issues (formal activist groups, peak bodies etc.)

Community Education

Access to information and resources, awareness raising, and personal development opportunities for community members (across age groups, cultures, traditions and interests) contributing to their social and cultural development.
Community education is used to:

- create awareness

- enhance knowledge, understanding and skills

- influence values and attitudes

- encourage responsible participation

- develop new skills or coping strategies

Effective community education requires a good understanding of the issue of concern, being clear about whom we are trying to reach, knowing what behaviour we are trying to change, and investigating the best ways to make this happen.

Activities may include:

- Producing an information brochure or discussion paper

- Holding an event or forum on a particular issue

- Providing a short course or program

Needs and Assets Assessment:

Needs assessment is:

A systematic study of a problem or innovation, incorporating data and opinions from varied sources, in order to make effective decisions or recommendations about what should happen next, (Allison Rossett).

Assessment is conducted generally and:

- creates a picture about a person, community or situation based on available evidence
- is about a process that encourages and assists community members and groups to identify their needs and assets
- takes into account individual skills, organisational or community resources
- includes mapping of goals, strengths and achievements, current supports, prioritisation of needs, the desired benefits for individuals/families, and services available across government and the wider community
- Enables community to participate in decision-making and develop appropriate actions
- leads to improved services and facilities to meet needs and build on strengths.

To gain a true picture, more than one method can be utilised to gather information for a needs assessment and some techniques include:

- Questionnaires
- Consultation –with key stakeholders (groups and individuals)
- Review of relevant literature - records & report studies
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Direct observation (Kenny, S. 2006)

Community Development – Flow Chart

For clarity of understanding of the above Model of community Development, a Chart has been provided as a reference point for the process of community development. (See Attached Chart)
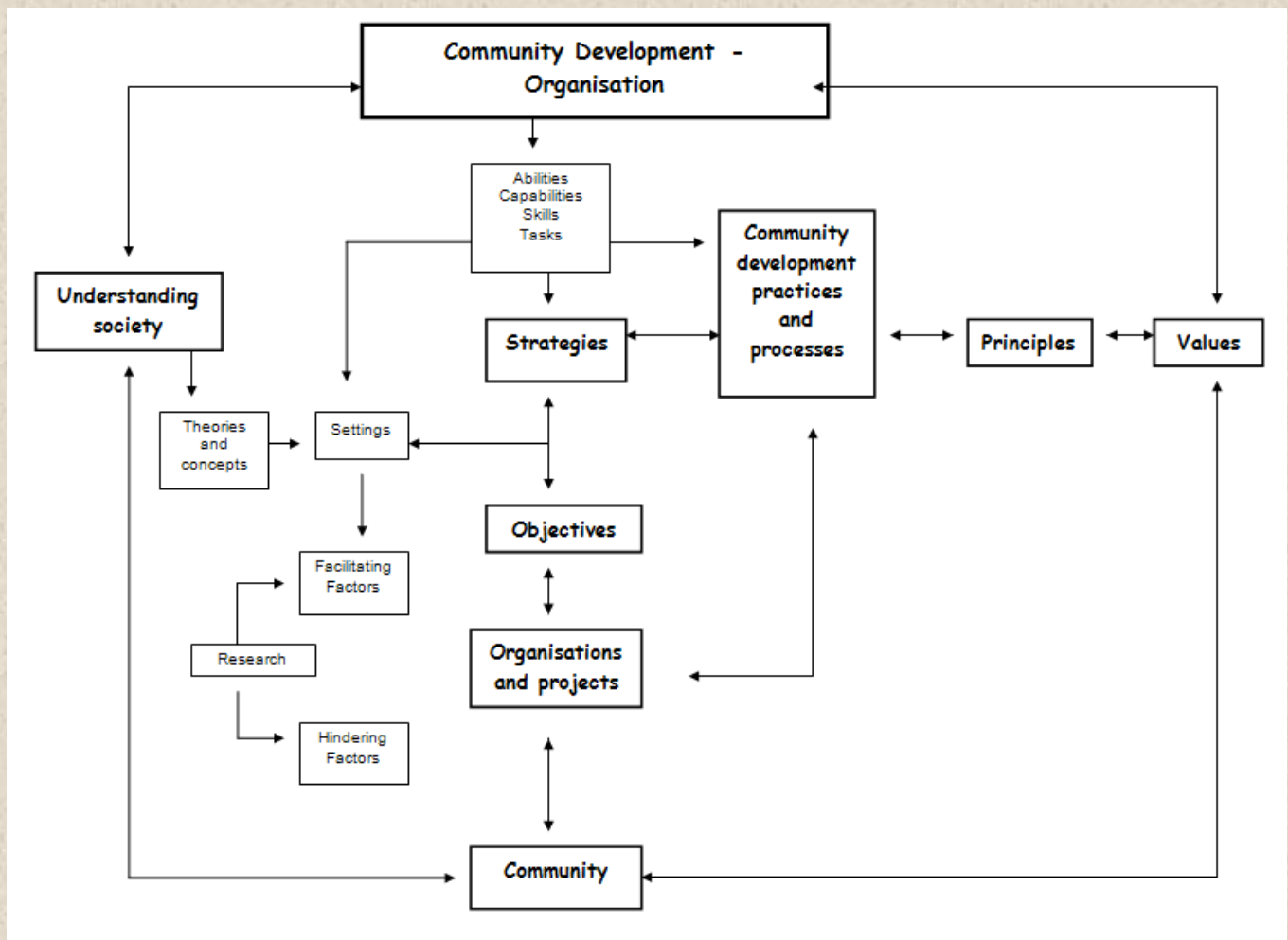
'(Chart - Original Unknown, subsequent compilation, Ife, J. (2002)).

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- Mattessich, P.W. and Mooney, B.R. (1992) 'Collaboration: What Makes It Work"; Wilder Research Centres in association with Wilder's Community Collaborative Venture, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, Minnesota.