

Community Partnership Policy Feedback

Consultation was held on Wednesday June 12 at the Legion

Led by Heather Keam

Input from 14 people from 9 clubs/groups:

- Optimist Clubs of Paris, Scotland & Burford
- Masonic Lodges- Burford & Scotland
- Lions Clubs- Burford
- Burford Connects Community volunteer group
- Burford Seniors Housing
- Burford Soccer Association

Overall notes from the session:

- The policy went to committee in May and was passed and was going to council on May 28- recommendation at council to table decision for 1 month
- Purpose of the policy is so that everyone treated equally
- 76 groups impacted- Limited engagement (12 groups)
- They won't have time for engagement so we have until September/October
- Some flexibility for grandfathered groups

Large group discussion – County of Brant response in RED.

- Service clubs should be called out because they're different from neighbourhood groups, sports clubs. **Staff will update the description to include service club as an example, please see below. Also, at a later point below staff have addressed the concern with using the term sanctioned.**
Sanctioned Community Group – registered not-for-profit community group or agency with an organizational and financial accountability structure (i.e., Service Clubs, Minor Sports Group).
Non-Sanctioned Community Group – non-registered, not-for-profit community group with no formal structure and/or financial accountability (i.e., Neighbourhood Associations).
- They need to consider financial implications (clubs rely on community donations and some have very small budgets) **Through this policy, the County is committing to offer the following: Staff Liaison, access to discounted rates for community events and programs, information on funding resources, marketing and publicity assistance, discounted rates for Community Services Guide, Cost sharing opportunities (could be capital projects), priority booking for sports fields/ice, etc., free meeting room space. There is no financial commitment from a community group in this policy. Nothing has been taken away from a community group in this policy, only supports have been added in this policy.**
- They don't understand what the clubs do. We're leaders in the communities, creating new facilities, events, opportunities. **We recognize all the great work all the County's**

Service Clubs and Community Groups do. This was highlighted and the focus of the first Annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony that was held in December 2023.

- The Ayr news mentioned subsidies for clubs. - ie : the arena space was donated but it's important to remember that the fundraising revenue got put into the community.
 - if you put the volunteers in too tight of constraints, they won't want to continue. Purpose of the Policy:

“The Community Partnership Policy is designed to identify, and support, established, new and emerging County of Brant non-sanctioned and sanctioned not-for-profit community volunteer groups in the delivery of their programs and services. The Policy is established to enhance leadership, communication, and engagement of community groups. The Policy provides a mechanism to assist staff in determining what resources are available and how the resources should be allocated”.

- Things have changed over time and the volunteers are feeling controlled and not trusted. County has to recognize that we ought to trust our service clubs. The County of Brant trusts all Service Clubs and has no intentions of controlling the services provided by them.
- The fish fry used to have 700-800 people. Staff won't let you rent too far in advance. But the public can do it years in advance! Staff are currently working on updating the facility booking process to accommodate larger event bookings in advance, this event could be included in this.
- The service clubs will be closing if we don't have more support from the county. The County has developed this policy to support Service Clubs and Community Groups.
- It seems like the county is running it like a business with a goal to turn a profit. If the clubs have to pay more or work harder then clubs aren't able to sustain themselves.
- The clubs can work magic to lower costs that would otherwise be the county's responsibility. County of Brant staff are to be fiscally responsible partners and can assist with lower costs for programs.

How can this policy help the service clubs and communities? How can this be a policy so that it supports and keeps clubs alive? The policy ensures all Service Clubs and Community Groups have an equitable number of resources. The policy will be reviewed regularly by the County and Service Clubs/Community Groups to meet ongoing changes and future needs of Service Clubs/Community Groups.

We went into small groups and talked about the policy and here are our recommendations:

What we like:

- The identification of a staff liaison to support the clubs
- Existing/newly agreements supersede this policy (pg 7)
- To view the document before it was implemented
- We like the idea of support but don't want it when it comes with control

In speaking with legal staff, the County requires control of the supports listed in the policy as fiscal circumstances could change. In addition, the supports are available; however, groups are not required to utilize all the supports outlined in the policy if they don't want to.

What we would alter:

- The descriptions of the groups don't align with the groups that are in the county- Service clubs are not authentically represented. Why are you using the language of sanction? That is not used in the community.

In speaking with legal staff, they have suggested the policy could be updated to use terms such as "authorized" OR "endorsed" rather than sanctioned. Please let me know your thoughts.

- Why change what is working well- can this policy be about what has worked and only add what needs to change that is not working?

Its not about what is working and what is not working, its about meeting existing needs, providing the same supports to all service clubs/groups and opening the door to new and emerging groups. Again, service clubs/groups can choose to utilize the supports within this policy or not.

- Termination language does not work for the clubs

Staff will update the termination language and include an "appeal process".

Further information is provided below regarding the County's position legally.

- Application for partnership needs to be altered- its too much information and no real reason for collecting it-No need to see minutes/financial or membership

In reviewing this section with legal, we can work on simplifying this section, and remove sections like the request for financial statements/operating budgets (i.e. (i) on pg. 7, etc.

Keep in mind, we may not require certain information from long-standing groups like service clubs but may require it from new/emerging groups. The staff liaison would make sure this process is easy for all our community partners. It is not our intention to create work for our volunteer groups.

- Varying rates (pg 4) discounts but only if low fundraising return

What this is saying is the County will offer Free space to host a fundraising event annually, but the maximum rental cost cannot exceed \$750.00. The County must budget accordingly for rental expenses like staffing, cleaning, etc., with no revenue to offset.

- Discounts should be 50% this will show equity between county and partners

Historically and current Fees & Charges By-Law has 25% for the discount.

- Ineligible parties- at sole discretion of one county staff. This should be done as a partnership.

This does not impact existing community groups/service clubs and will be reviewed by the Community Services Department annually.

- Less overreach on groups (pg3 i) Staff liaison at meeting

As mentioned before, supports are optional, and if your group does not want a staff liaison to participate in meetings, it is not required.

- The list of community partnerships support- more equitable commitment on the part of the county. Groups have to do more work for the policy than county does. (pg 7-8)

As mentioned above, through this policy, the County is committing to offer the following: Staff Liaison, access to discounted rates for community events and programs, information on funding resources, marketing and publicity assistance, discounted rates for Community Services Guide, Cost sharing opportunities (could be capital projects), priority booking for sports fields/ice, etc., free meeting room space.

This is a lot of additional work to the County, a dedicated staff person to be available to assist if needed with over 60 Community Groups and who knows how many new and emerging to come. The implementation of this policy spans across various division within the Community Services Department, and it will be

	<p>an ongoing collaboration with the County and Community Partners to make the Community Partnership Program successful.</p> <p>As mentioned, the County's intent was to launch this policy/program with existing community groups first. It was understood that this initial launch would be trial and error and require some tweaking. The intent is to sit back down with existing community groups after 6 months to see what is working and what is not and update the policy/program accordingly, with the goal of creating a very successful community partnership policy/program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community guide should be free for service clubs <p>Each County department budgets and pays for the cost their own pages in the guide. Discounted rates are a fair opportunity for community partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The joint fundraising for capital project should be added to the Community partner section <p>We will include Joint Fundraising for Capital Projects to the policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was the decision for a biannual application is too much paper work for both <p>This would be to update membership, double check that no information has changed (i.e., contact information). The staff liaison would assist with this and ensure that there is not a lot of paperwork required. Could be just simple email correspondence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs who are part of a recognized body (national or international) should not have to be approved by county. They are already are governed and don't need more <p>The County is not approving a club but would require certain information for groups to be considered a community partner. There must be criteria outlined, the County can't just accept anyone can be a community partner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language- "potential" " no guarantee that supports available" This is to loose and not conducive to partnership. It can be seen as a way out to support. <p>The County's financial situation could change and could impact this policy and what supports are offered in the future. Its not something we hope to ever see, but legally the County needs a way out.</p> <p>Also, there are items in this policy that may not apply to the Burford Optimist for example, but would for other community groups, the County deals with many groups, and some do unfortunately become controversial where the County may want to stop supporting, with the ability to exit from provision of supports in the policy.</p>
<p>What is missing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The feeling that this policy is not a genuine partnership- lack of trust <p>Community Services staff feel the opposite, the long-standing relationship between the County of Brant and Service Clubs speak for itself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for service clubs- seen as a burden that needs to be subsidized and not as an investment. Service clubs across the county have put in million of dollars in projects and service- playgrounds, parks, programs, events ect. <p>The County of Brant appreciates all the fundraising projects/initiatives over the years. Once the project is complete, the County would assume the infrastructure and takes on full responsibility for the ongoing asset management, capital maintenance and associated operating costs unless otherwise noted in the Council approval for the project. This is in addition to the Council approved portion of upfront capital costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose- needs to be more equal. Right now its all about the county and it should be more about the partnership. The purpose of this policy should be about both community groups and county- if it is really a

partnership. Example “ *this policy is about building relationships between county and community groups so that there is mutual benefits and supports so that there is sustainability of services and programs across the county*”

Community Services Department will seek Council approval to ensure the policy/program is sustainable.

- The purpose and scope of the policy talks about building capacity, resources and guidance but it is not listed in the County of Brant responsibilities. It also does not outline how it will be done or what clubs expect

Once Council approves the Community Partnership Policy, it is the Community Services Department’s responsibility to adhere to the purpose and scope of the policy as well as implement and adhere to the supports outlined.

<p>What to add:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appeal process for groups who feel like they are not getting what is agreed to in the policy <p>As mentioned, the review of the policy will be ongoing. In speaking with legal staff, we will work on drafting an appeal process for groups in this policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard booking procedure- first come first served. There are groups who do annual events on the same weekend for 20 years and they should be able to book it more than a calendar year in advance <p>This is not part of this policy. This fits within the Sport Allocation Policy, which is up for review, and community groups will have an opportunity to provide input.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service clubs should be its own category and not clumped in with others <p>Please confirm if the Burford Optimist Club fits within the following definition.</p> <p>“Registered not-for-profit community group or agency with an organizational and financial accountability structure”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups should be notified 6 months in advance for any changes to the policy <p>The County of Brant would not change anything in this policy without consulting or advising our community partners, we can include this language under County responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue existing agreements with clubs <p>The policy already indicates the following:</p> <p>*Existing or newly negotiated agreements between the County of Brant and Community Group(s) supersede administration of the Community Partnership Policy.</p> <p>Noting that community groups would also have access to the community partnership policy/program in addition their existing agreement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make it simple as volunteers are people who work during the day and want to use their volunteer time for community and not paperwork and county rules. <p>The purpose of the staff liaison support is to minimize paperwork for community groups.</p>
<p>Risk of losing clubs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of free community events and activities and less volunteering opportunities Additional cost to count to implement and track rules and regulations Reduction of clubs Additional cost to count to provide services as they will have to take what clubs do Lose out on what is happening in the community- clubs know Reduction of funds that go directly into the community (fundraisers) <p>The County of Brant appreciates the concerns presented and hope the implementation of the community partnership policy/program will solidify relationships and improve programs for all communities in the County of Brant.</p>
<p>How can county support clubs:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and highlight what the service clubs do in the community <p>This is included within the Policy already.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize a volunteer campaign- promote volunteering with the clubs in the community <p>This is included within the Policy already.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a list of clubs and be the connector to clubs and programs <p>This currently exists and is promoted. The policy aims to enhance this service to community groups.</p>