



Community Facilities Fees and Charges Policy

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PURPOSE

This policy is to be used in determining the fees for Council managed community facilities including sports grounds, stadiums, meeting rooms and halls.

The aims and objectives of the Community Facilities Fees and Charges Policy are:

- To ensure the fair and equitable access and use of community facilities and sporting reserves to community group in Mitchell in line with the 2013 - 2017 Council Plan.
- To ensure optimal use of community facilities to meet community needs.
- To facilitate a shared approach to the costs of managing and maintaining community facilities through fair and reasonable charges for use.
- Develop a partnership approach to facility management and maintenance in which user groups share the responsibility and cost with Council.
- Ensure that Council-owned facilities are appropriately maintained, developed and occupied responsibly, having regard to the interests of local communities.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all sports grounds, stadiums, meeting rooms and halls directly managed by Council.

This policy **does not** apply to reserves, pavilions and meeting facilities managed directly by Committees of Management.

DEFINITIONS

A community facility is defined to mean any built facility or that is used by the community for community activity to occur.

- *Fees or Hire rates* are defined as charges for use (GST inclusive if applicable)
- *Full Day Hire* is more than four hours hire
- *Half Day Hire* is four or less hours hire.
- *Multi-Purpose Room* is a space that can be used for a range of purposes.
- *Meeting Room* is a room suitable for meetings.
- *Office* is a space that can be used for small meeting or for visiting consultants or health professionals.
- *Fit for purpose* refers to the condition and level of maintenance of the facility that is appropriate for its level of use for sports activities.

POLICY

Policy Statement And Principles

The provision of Council facilities and sporting reserves to community groups and clubs is a key part of local government's role in meeting the community's need through community, sport, recreation, health and wellbeing activities.

The provision, allocation and management of these facilities and reserves must be consistent with Council's Vision and Values and in line with the Community and Council Plans.

The following principles underpin this Fees and Charges Policy:

- **Affordability** – the policy and fee schedules recognise the differing capacities of users to pay.
- **Standard/Quality** – the fee schedules recognise the size, standard and/or quality of facilities.
- **Priority of access** – the allocation processes and fee schedules give priority to local community use above other users.
- **Recognition** – Council acknowledges the significant and important community development role that sport clubs and groups play in increasing the health, wellbeing and physical activity levels of the Mitchell community. Clubs and groups recognise the significant role Council facilities and support contributes to the success of their activities. In recognition of these roles, Council fees are set at a subsidised level that recognises these contributions.
- **Transparent** - The fees will be documented in a manner that users and the community can understand (e.g. how and why the fee was determined.)
- **Fair and Equitable** – The fees and charges will be consistent with other users of the same or similar facilities where those users are in similar circumstances.
- **Promote Participation** – Fees and charges will reflect Council's commitment to supporting and promoting the participation of population groups that are often under-represented in civic and community life. As recommended by the Sports Development Plan, Council should provide reduced fees and charges for sportsground use by schools, junior clubs and sports clubs with junior teams, to support club development and participation in sport.

Sports Ground Fees Rationale

The fees and charges for sports grounds is based on recovering a proportion of costs associated with the maintenance of sports grounds, such as mowing, plant hire and materials associated with renovation between sports seasons, to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Sports grounds have a residual benefit to the community as open space, and as a consequence, the cost of providing the resource should be shared between sports clubs and ratepayers where the general public have access to the facility.

Sports Ground Classifications

Sportsgrounds within Mitchell support competition and training use for structured sports such as football and cricket.

The sports ground classification model is based on determining the level of service provided (quality of the ground) and its level of use (predominant purpose), which in turn influences the annual maintenance cost.

Two levels of service are currently provided in Mitchell Shire:

- a. District level sports ground - Irrigation, floodlighting, and/or warm season turf species.
- b. Local level sportsground – Minimal irrigation, little or no floodlighting, little or no warm season turf species.

The level of use of each sports ground has also been determined based on current levels of use and its predominant purpose (type of use).

- a. High – All year round use, purpose or function is to support multiple sports clubs including seniors
- b. Low- Only one club or seasonal user and/or predominant purpose or function is to support junior sports use.

These two variables have been combined to provide three classification levels:

- a. Sports Ground Classification A - District Level High Use
- b. Sports Ground Classification B - District Level Low Use
- c. Sports Ground Classification C - Local Level Low Use

Sports Ground Fees

Fees for Council managed sports grounds have been based on recouping a percentage of maintenance costs in line with other local governments. The fees aim to recoup **a minimum of 10%** of the annual maintenance costs incurred by Council.

Please refer to Addendum for annual estimated maintenance costs and breakdown of anticipated seasonal and casual fees for use of sports grounds.

There is no charge for use of sports grounds for junior developmental programs such as Auskick and Milo cricket, and there will be a 25% reduction in seasonal/annual fees for junior clubs and sports clubs with junior teams, to support junior development and foster ongoing participation in sport.

There is no charge for schools located within the Shire of Mitchell for physical education lessons during school hours. Use of sports grounds for inter school sports/carnivals will incur the casual user rate with 25% reduction to support junior development and participation in sport.

Please refer to Addendum for permit fees relating to use of Council's open space parks and Council managed reserves for personal trainers.

Stadium Fees

Stadium Fees have been based on industry benchmarking of indoor sports courts and apply to two rates of use: Peak use (4.00pm – 10pm Monday to Friday and Saturday all day) and Off Peak use (8.00am – 4.00pm Monday to Friday and Sunday all day).

Please refer to Addendum for anticipated fees and charges relating to stadium use.

Room Hire Charges

The room hire pricing structure has three categories for applying fees and charges. The categories are based on the capacity of an individual, group, organisation or business to pay. Each category provides for a different level of subsidy for venue use.

The categories are:

- Private/Commercial/Government
- Community Group
- Access Rate (zero cost)

Private/Commercial applies to individuals, businesses, government and profit making organisations with a capacity to pay or to receive a fee for use of the facility when delivering a service. This applies to groups and organisations such as:

- a. Businesses, corporations, political organisations
- b. Private individuals for parties, functions and general hire
- c. Local, State and Federal government agencies (e.g. DHS, Electoral Office)

Community Group rate applies to not for profit groups and organisations based in Mitchell who make a community contribution through their activities. This includes organisations in

receipt of state or federal operational funding. The community group rate applies to all incorporated groups and organisations. This applies to groups and organisations such as:

- a. Groups in receipt of State or Federal Government funding (e.g. Neighbourhood Houses)
- b. Incorporated groups (e.g. Seniors groups, Lions Club, social and sporting clubs)
- c. Non-Government organisations (e.g. Anglicare)
 - i. There are two rates for community groups - regular users (multiple, scheduled bookings) and one off/casual hire.

Access Rate (zero cost – full subsidy) aims to support fledgling clubs until they become established. The access rate may be offered for up to **6 hires** for new groups in Mitchell Shire. The use of the access rate must be approved by the relevant Department Manager.

Please refer to Addendum for anticipated fees and charges relating to room hire charges and use of Broadford Hall.

Hardship Consideration

Should a community group who is either a regular or seasonal hirer be significantly financially impacted by a fee increase as a result of this policy, an application for financial consideration will need to be lodged in writing by the group and will be considered by the Director Sustainable Communities and Manager, Active Communities.

Alternative considerations may include:

Initiating a payment plan

Group providing an in-kind contribution as an alternative to cash contribution

RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers in the Sustainable Communities Directorate, specifically the Leisure Services, Recreation Services and Library Services units will be responsible for maintaining/upholding this policy.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Council documents that have informed the development of this policy include:

2013 – 2017 Council Plan

Sports Development Plan 2011

Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan

POLICY REVIEW

The Community Facilities Fees and Charges Policy will be reviewed every two years with fees being updated annually as part of Council's budget process.