

Allocation of Community Facilities Policy

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Adopted by	Council
Review due	31 August 2029
Responsible officer	Manager Recreation and Facility Activation
Records reference	12561137

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Allocation of Community Facilities Policy (**this Policy**) is to guide and support decision making by Council and its officers in relation to the fair access to and use of community facilities in the City of Melton.

2. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to Council owned and managed community facilities including community centres, libraries, sport and recreation facilities and indoor stadiums. This policy does not apply to other types of facilities including aquatic centres and commercial / industrial facilities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Lease and Licence Policy, Group Fitness and Personal Training – Use of Public Open Space Policy and other Melton City Council policies and procedures.

3. General Provisions

Council aims to create a welcoming and livable City that provides equitable access to a diverse range of community facilities to address community needs and support Council's health and wellbeing priorities.

This policy has been developed to achieve the following objectives:

- To **prioritise local use** of Council's community facilities.
- To maximize the **community benefit** of Council's community facilities by prioritising programs and services that align with Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- To provide **fair and equitable access** to Council's community facilities.
- To provide a **consistent and transparent** approach to decision making regarding the allocation and use of Council's community facilities.
- To provide clarity regarding **responsibilities** for the allocation and use of Council's community facilities.

3.1 Facility Type

Table 1 provides an overview of the type of community facilities dealt with under this policy.

Table 1 – Type of Facility

Type of Facility	Description
Community Centres	May include children and community centres and halls. These facilities have spaces such as function rooms, meeting rooms, consulting rooms, offices and multipurpose rooms available for ongoing and casual hire.
Indoor Stadiums	Facilities that are primarily designed to cater for indoor sports such as basketball netball, badminton, volleyball, table tennis and futsal. These facilities have spaces including courts, meeting rooms, offices and multipurpose rooms available for ongoing and casual hire.
Libraries	Council facilities that provide and deliver library services and include designated hire spaces.
Sport and Recreation	Includes community pavilions, sportsgrounds, tennis and netball courts, floodlighting, cricket nets and other related infrastructure used primarily by clubs to support formal and informal sport and recreation. These facilities may be available for informal public access.

3.2 Occupancy Agreements

- Council will enter into occupancy agreements for the use of all community facilities.
- Hire agreements apply to casual and ongoing bookings that do not require a lease or licence. Council's Lease and Licence Policy sets out the approach to leasing and licensing community facilities.
- Hire agreements define the terms and conditions of hire including usage, payment terms, liability for damage and insurance responsibilities. Council approval is required to hire a community facility, and the terms and conditions of hire must be acknowledged and accepted before access to a community facility is granted.
- Council will manage occupancy agreements to ensure all parties are aware and undertaking their roles and responsibilities (the terms and conditions) associated with usage.
- Fees for hiring community facilities will be determined as part of Council's annual budget process and specified in Council's Annual Fees and Charges Schedule.

3.3 Category of Occupant

Council will allocate access to community facilities under the four categories identified in Table 3. Where an Occupant may be considered to fall within more than one of the above categories, the proper determination for the purpose of this Policy will be determined by the Responsible Officer.

Table 3 – Category of Occupants

Category	Description
Clubs and associations	A community group or association that operates primarily for sport and recreation purposes.
Community groups	Local not-for-profit organisations offering social, cultural, recreational or interest-based programs and services. Does not distribute profits to members, directors or shareholders.
Commercial	A person or organisation who conducts activities primarily for profit.
Private Hirer	An individual

3.4 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to hire a Council owned and managed community facility, groups applying for hire must:

- Be a registered legal entity such as an Incorporated Association or a Proprietary Company, and;
- Carry the level of public liability insurance cover specified in an occupancy agreement.

Private hirers are not eligible to hire sport and recreation facilities.

Priorities for the allocation of community facilities to eligible groups will be determined in accordance with the Allocation Framework described in this Policy.

3.5 Allocation Framework

- Requests for use of Council's community facilities must be submitted through a formal application process. Applicants must provide Council with all information requested to consider the application.
- Council will invite groups to apply for access to community facilities on an ongoing basis via an Expression of Interest process. The Expression of Interest periods will be conducted by facility type and advertised on Council's website.
- Casual bookings will open once allocations for ongoing hire are completed.
- Allocations describe the days and times a group or individual may occupy a community facility and the permitted use.
- Council will consider all issues associated with a request to access a community facility including the availability, suitability, capacity and condition of the facility for the intended use.

3.5.1 Community Centres and Libraries

Requests for access to community centres and libraries will be prioritised as follows:

- Priority 1 – Programs and services that align with Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan and strategic priorities for a particular facility.
- Priority 2 – Community groups based in the City of Melton
- Priority 3 – Community groups primarily servicing City of Melton residents
- Priority 4 – All other use including commercial and private hirers and other community groups.

Where more than one application is received for a particular facility, priority access will be provided to groups that:

- deliver programs and services to underrepresented groups; and
- can demonstrate that they have a higher proportion of participants that live in the City of Melton than other applicants.

In determining priorities, Council will limit the number of bookings per organisation per venue to ensure no one group monopolises the use of a facility. Limits may also be placed on the types of activities that can be carried out in Council facilities on certain days to ensure mixed use and co-sharing.

3.5.2 Sport and Recreation Facilities and Indoor Stadiums

This policy will support the implementation of the Victorian Government Fair Access Policy Roadmap which aims to develop a statewide foundation to improve the access to, and use of, community sports infrastructure for women and girls.

Community sporting clubs and associations identified as home clubs and associations at a specific facility will be invited by Council to submit an Expression of Interest for the ongoing hire of sport and recreation facilities and indoor stadiums prior to the commencement of the forthcoming sporting season. The Expression of Interest period will be advertised on Council's website. Bookings for all other groups will open once allocations are completed for existing home clubs and associations.

Requests for access to sport and recreation facilities and indoor stadiums will be prioritised as follows:

- Priority 1 - Seasonal / annual allocations. Priority access will be given to home club/s and associations at a facility. Competition use will be prioritised over training.
- Priority 2 - Pre-season training / matches for home clubs and associations. In-season use will be prioritised over pre-season use..
- Priority 3 – Other City of Melton based community groups and schools.
- Priority 4 – Remaining spaces for all other use including commercial activities such as group fitness and personal training, coaching academies and non-City of Melton based community groups, clubs and schools.

In implementing the above prioritised allocation criteria, where more than one application is received for a particular facility, priority access will be provided to clubs and groups that:

- deliver programs and services that align with Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan and strategic priorities for a particular facility;
- can best demonstrate alignment with the Fair Access Policy Roadmap;
- are affiliated with the relevant State Sporting Association;
- can demonstrate that they are inclusive by ensuring people living with disability can fully participate as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator; and
- can demonstrate that they have a higher proportion of players that live in the City of Melton than other applicants.

3.5.3 New Club Establishment

- As Council delivers new sport and recreation and indoor facilities in the City, the development of new clubs is the preferred model for allocating access to new facilities. Relocation of existing clubs to new facilities will only be considered where this will improve access to and use of community sporting infrastructure.
- It is encouraged that new club names reflect the local geographical region the club represents and do so in a way that is welcoming and inclusive of all people.
- Where Council's strategic priorities have identified the need to form a new club, Council will engage with the relevant State Sporting Association to initiate the process of working with the community to form new clubs.
- Council will invite new clubs established under this model to submit an allocation request for a new sport or recreation facility prior to the commencement of the forthcoming season.

3.5.4 Refusal to Allocate

Council reserves the right to decline requests to access its community facilities where:

- A facility is unavailable or unsuitable for the intended use.
- An individual or group has not met its obligations under previous occupancy agreements to maintain the cleanliness or condition of facilities being hired.
- An individual or group has a history of substantiated complaints regarding their behaviour.
- An individual or group has an outstanding debt with Council or is in arrears with an agreed repayment plan.

4 Definitions

Term	Definition
Council	Refers to Melton City Council.
Fair Access Policy Roadmap	The Fair Access Policy Roadmap aims to develop a statewide foundation to improve access to, and use of community sports facilities and infrastructure for women and girls.
Hire Agreement	A casual or ongoing agreement entered into between Council and another party for the use of a community facility.
Home clubs and associations	Priority users of a particular facility due to the facility being designated by Council as the club or association headquarters or home.
Underrepresented groups	Groups whose participation, visibility or influence is lower than that of the broader population, often due to structural barriers, discrimination or unequal access to opportunities. For example cultural groups, people with disability, youth, older adults, diverse genders.

5 Related documents

Name	Location
Lease and License Policy	Lease and Licence Policy
Group Fitness and Personal Training – Use of Public Open Space Policy	Group Fitness and Personal Training – Use of Public Open Space Policy
Fair Access Policy Roadmap	https://sport.vic.gov.au/resources/fair-access-policy/roadmap
Fair Access in Sport and Recreation Action Plan	Fair Access in Sport Action Plan