

Policy No. 56: Sport and Recreation Venues Pricing

POLICY MANUAL

Policy No. 56	Sport and Recreation Venues Pricing
Purpose	The purpose of this Policy is to provide a consistent philosophy to pricing the use of sport and recreation grounds and facilities.
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POLICY

1. Definitions

<i>Sport and Recreation Venues</i>	Includes sport and recreation facilities and grounds which are used for activities such as Australian football, badminton, basketball, cricket, dance, darts, drama, films, martial sport, netball, soccer, squash, table tennis, tennis and touch football.
<i>Recreation Grounds</i>	Includes parklands, sports fields, reserves, Council land provided by the Council for the purpose of recreation.
<i>Lease</i>	A contract under which an agreed fee is paid by a tenant (or lessee) granted exclusive use of ground and/or facility for an agreed period.
<i>Licence</i>	An agreement for permission to enter and use grounds and/or facilities for an agreed purpose for a stated period in exchange for an agreed fee. The licensee does not have exclusive use of the reserve or facility. The Council is able to allocate other user groups or allow the general public to use the reserves and/or facilities at other times.
<i>Regular Hire</i>	A group, individual or organisation that hires a recreation ground or facility on an ongoing basis for a specified minimum number of bookings.

<i>Casual Hire</i>	A group, individual or organisation that hires a recreation ground or facility for casual one-off or specific occasions.
<i>Community Organisation</i>	A not for profit group (eg. Club/Association) established for the benefit of the community.
<i>Commercial Entity</i>	An organisation or individual conducting activities for the purposes of deriving a financial return to the proprietors or shareholders.
<i>Special Committee of Council</i>	Comprises a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and community/council members who are responsible, in conjunction with the Council, for the upkeep and maintenance of the facility/ground for which it has been appointed.
<i>Junior Participants</i>	Sport and recreation participants aged up to 18 years.
<i>Female Participants</i>	Sport and recreation female participants aged 18 years and older.
<i>Inclusion Participants</i>	Sport and recreation by participants with a disability aged 18 years and older and senior aged participants (65 years +).

2. Objective

This Policy intends that users of recreation grounds and facilities have transparent information regarding how much they are required to pay and what they are paying for. The Council is committed to the following objectives:

1. to establish principles for the determination of fees and charges based on support levels for leased, licensed, regular and casual hire of council owned or managed recreation grounds and recreation facilities.
2. to ensure the accountability to the community through an equitable and transparent pricing structure.
3. to provide an efficient and joint management tool in the allocation, maintenance and operation of the Council's recreation grounds and recreation facilities.
4. to promote the level of responsibility of user groups so that recreation grounds and recreation facilities receive optimum use and ratepayers do not bear the whole cost.
5. to provide the incentive for more diverse and joint use of fewer grounds and facilities so that the Council's resources are effectively used.
6. to categorise recreation grounds and recreation facilities for casual/non-regular users and define them in terms of the benefits received by users and the rest of the community (refer to *Sports Grounds/Facilities for Casual Users Classifications* within the Recreation Pricing Policy Guidelines).

This Policy also provides the basis and principles from which the more detailed Meander Valley Council *Sport and Recreation Venues Pricing Policy Guidelines* (the Guidelines) have been developed. The specific detail about how fees for users will be determined and implemented is contained within the Guidelines.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all users, hirers and occupiers of the Council's sport and recreation grounds and facilities.

The Policy does not include the Council's aquatic facilities.

4. Policy

Principles

The Council will be guided by the following principles when determining hire charges and rents:

1. charges are for a specific use on a specific date.
2. user groups should contribute towards the cost of grounds/facilities provided by the Council so that ratepayers do not bear the full cost.
3. hire charges for grounds use by regular seasonal users will be based on a per team charge that is initially set for a period of four years to coincide with policy review and which is then adjusted for CPI or as determined by the Council and approved annually by Council.
4. hire charges for grounds use for casual users will be initially set for a period of four years to coincide with policy review and which is then adjusted for CPI or as determined by the Council and approved annually by Council.
5. hire charges/rents for facilities will be based on a fixed percentage rate of return (11%) for regular users for all facilities and taking account of the average of the previous five years operating, maintenance and depreciation costs. The charges will thus reflect the quality of the facilities, services provided, the nature and pattern of use and the ability of user groups to pay and the terms of any lease agreements with the Council. The charge/rent is initially set for a period of four years to coincide with policy review and is then annually adjusted for CPI or as determined by the Council and approved annually by Council.
6. user groups are encouraged and rewarded for sharing facilities, encouraging new more diverse user groups and new uses, introducing new recreation and sports and involvement in the management, operation, maintenance and clean up responsibilities.
7. responsibilities must be clearly developed in conjunction with user groups and communicated at appropriate times (eg. at Annual General Meetings to new office bearers).
8. if sport and recreation facilities are already provided to the public by the private sector at a reasonable and competitive price with professional, semi-professional or commercial interests in place, then the Council's hire charges at relevant locations shall compete on a commercial market basis and recover the highest level of operation and maintenance costs in a similar manner to that calculated by the competing service.

9. leased facilities will be administered according to the terms and conditions set out in the leases while supporting the community based not for profit organisations as per the pricing policy.

Facility Categories

All outdoor sport and recreation grounds will be categorised according to their level of amenity for the purposes of managing usage by hirers. The charge will reflect the category of the facility/ground. The associated facilities at the outdoor recreation grounds are subject to any lease arrangements in place.

Concessions

Based on the value the Council places on support to junior participation, non-traditional users and innovative scheduling the following concessions will be provided on the hire charges for ground usage only:

10. junior only sports and recreations supported by parental/volunteer administration – 50%.
11. female and inclusion the provision of non-traditional or new recreational opportunities – 50%.
12. off peak use (to be defined by facility manager or management committee, but normally between 9am and 3pm weekdays) which encourages increased use of facilities by enabling better programming of activities – 25%.
13. the participation concessions can be cumulative up to a maximum of 75%.

Based on the value the Council places on self-reliance the following concession will be provided by the Council's Officers on the hire/rent charges for facility usage only:

14. the value of any maintenance by the user group expressed as a percentage within the total Operations and Maintenance costs – up to 25%.

5. Legislation and Related Standards

Local Government Act 1993

6. Responsibility

Responsibility for the operation of this Policy rests with the Director Infrastructure Services.