Purpose

To provide fair and equitable access to the community for the occupation and management of Wodonga Council's (the council) community facilities with the aim of achieving optimum benefit from these facilities for the community.

Scope

This policy and framework will establish a formal process and set of guidelines for the allocation of council facilities to be used by community organisations on a long-term basis. This policy relates to the allocation of existing facilities when they become vacant, or when lease agreements become due for review or renewal. The policy also relates to new facilities that are developed or that are acquired by the council.

Currently, there are a number of agreements that exist in relation to access and allocation of council facilities for different groups and entities. The occupancy agreements made with groups and/or entities include leases, licences, seasonal allocations and regular hire agreements. These agreements will be reviewed as they become due under the direction of this policy.

This policy and framework will address any anomalies that currently exist in relation to the allocation of community facilities to community groups or commercial use on a long term basis. It will also support a more transparent and inclusive approach to access to community facilities.

The policy and framework will identify the eligibility criteria, assessment areas and operational considerations for partners.

Definitions

Community Facility: For the purpose of this policy and framework a 'community facility' refers to buildings that are owned and/or managed by the council and utilised on a regular basis by community members and groups, services providers and organisations. The exception to this is for Crown land under Crown leases.

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Community facilities covered under this policy include a range of council owned or managed facilities that may have been built by the council for a particular purpose, inherited, received as a donation, acquired by way of community infrastructure contributions, transferred with management responsibility or purchased and be available to be allocated to another user on lease or licence agreements.

Shared Community Facility: For the purpose of this policy and framework, a 'shared community facility' refers to community buildings that are utilised by multiple community groups, and services providers and organisations. Shared community facilities may be used by multiple groups at the same time.

Partnerships: Partnerships are relationships between the council and a stakeholder, club or group that involves an ongoing financial or in kind commitment detailed in an agreement signed by both parties.

Principles

Good governance involves sound decision making and accountability mechanisms. Wodonga Council has identified the following principles of good governance for community facilities:

Transparency: decisions will be based on clear criteria and will be consistently implemented;

Accountability: responsibilities will be clearly allocated and communicated to each partner and/or user;

Efficiency: facility management and use will support responsible operation and maintenance;

Accessibility: community facilities will be governed in a manner that supports and enables appropriate accessibility by the community. Community groups and organisations will not be discriminated against because they lack an ability to generate a financial return;

Inclusiveness: facility management committees and user groups will be encouraged and supported to create new and creative partnerships within the community leading to improved social connectivity and increased participation;

Co-operation: community facilities will be multi purposed and multi use to encourage co-operation between groups and maximise accessibility;

Innovation: improved coordination and communication will support flexibility and opportunities in facility use, program development and social interactions; and

Communication: regular, clear and open methods of communication between council and users will be imperative to the effective usage of all community facilities.

Policy

The shared use of community facilities will assist in building stronger communities through:

- The efficient use of infrastructure;
- Accessibility for the community to facilities that benefit community programs, activities and interactions; and
- Maximising the financial resources of the council and the community.

Council has identified the following objectives of the policy and framework:

- Foster a sense of community identity and improve and maximise access for individuals who may have limited opportunities to participate;
- Strengthen community networks by supporting and encouraging communication and cooperation between community groups and organisation to maximise community resources;
- Encourage cooperation between community groups and organisations leading to enhanced programs, activities and resources;
- Provide access that supports community groups and organisations to remain viable as community based and not for profit groups; and

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- Provide multipurpose and flexible community facilities, that are able to adapt to changing community needs and provide a range of spaces and functions in one building.

Attachments

There are no attachments.

Related policies

Recreation fees and charges policy

Related legislation

There is no related legislation.

References

Governing Community Facilities Framework.

Review

The council may review this policy at any time but unless otherwise requested at least every four years from date of adoption. Minor amendments to the policy may be authorised by the CEO at any time where such changes do not alter the substance of the policy eg: typographical errors, a change to the name of a related policy, or a change to the name of legislation.

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Category:	Policy
Version:	Two
Approved By:	Council at its meeting of November 16, 2015
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