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GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL SPORTSGROUND & ASSOCIATED FACILITIES ALLOCATION POLICY

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1. TITLE

Sportsground & Associated Facilities Allocation Policy

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- **Support participation in community sport** by managing and allocating Council's network of sporting grounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure in a way that promotes access to organised sport and active recreation.
- **Promote balanced and sustainable access to Council's sporting infrastructure** by recognising the equal importance of organised sport and broader community use, and supporting the use of sporting grounds, pavilions and associated facilities for both structured sporting activities and informal community recreation where appropriate.
- **Ensure fair and equitable allocation** of sporting grounds and pavilions through clear, consistent and transparent processes for seasonal use.
- **Encourage inclusive participation** by supporting access to sport for a diverse cross-section of the community, including women and girls, juniors, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTIQA+ communities and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- **Promote shared and responsible use of facilities** by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of Council, sporting clubs and other users in the management, maintenance and use of sporting grounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure.
- **Support the sustainable use of Council infrastructure** by encouraging shared use of facilities while balancing the needs of organised sport with other uses of open space such as passive recreation, social activities and maintenance requirements.
- **Support sustainable facility management** by ensuring allocations consider the condition, capacity and maintenance requirements of sporting grounds and pavilions.
- **Maintain a fair and transparent fees and charges framework** that reflects the standard of facilities and the maintenance requirements associated with different sporting codes and levels of competition.
- **Promote safe, healthy and socially responsible sporting environments** by

supporting clubs that demonstrate positive governance practices and contribute to Council's health and wellbeing priorities through preventing and reducing harm associated with activities such as alcohol consumption, gambling and other behaviours that may negatively impact health, wellbeing, inclusion and participation, in accordance with Council's Reducing Harm from Gambling Policy.

3. BACKGROUND

The City of Glen Eira recognises the important role that sport and active recreation play in supporting healthy, connected and inclusive communities. Participation in local sport contributes to the physical and mental wellbeing of residents, strengthens social connections and provides opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to be active.

Council supports the local sporting community through the provision, maintenance and management of sporting grounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure. To maximise the value of these community assets, facilities are managed to encourage shared and multipurpose use wherever possible, while ensuring they remain safe, functional and sustainable for long-term community use.

This policy establishes the framework that guides the seasonal allocation and use of Council sporting facilities. It supports fair, transparent and consistent decision-making regarding access to sporting grounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure by sporting clubs and to provide a balance with broader community use.

The implementation of this policy is supported by the Sportsground, Pavilion and Associated Infrastructure User Guide, which provides detailed operational guidance on allocation processes, facility classifications, roles and responsibilities, and applicable fees and charges.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to the allocation and use of Council-managed sportsgrounds, pavilions and associated sporting infrastructure within the City of Glen Eira. It governs seasonal allocations to community sports clubs and guides decision-making regarding access, use, fees and charges, and shared use of facilities.

The policy applies to all community sports clubs seeking seasonal licences, as well as Council officers responsible for assessing applications and managing allocated facilities. It is supported by an associated User Guide, which provides detailed operational and procedural information.

Where any inconsistency arises between this Policy, the Sportsground, Pavilion and Associated Infrastructure User Guide and Council's Pricing Policy, the Pricing Policy prevails. Fees and charges will be determined in accordance with the Pricing Policy and the adopted Schedule of Fees and Charges.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

Glen Eira City Council is committed to supporting participation in community sport by ensuring the fair, transparent and equitable allocation of sportsgrounds, pavilions and associated facilities. Council will manage its sporting infrastructure to balance the needs of organised sport with broader community use, while ensuring facilities are used safely, inclusively and within their capacity.

In allocating sporting facilities, Council will be guided by principles of fairness, community benefit, gender equity, local priority, continuing allocation and sustainable facility management. Decisions will be made consistently and transparently, having regard to community outcomes, facility condition and capacity, and Council's strategic objectives.

Council recognises that community sporting clubs play an important role in community health, wellbeing, inclusion and participation, and in shaping social norms and behaviours. In allocating and managing access to Council sporting facilities, Council seeks to support clubs that foster safe, inclusive and family-friendly environments and that operate in a socially responsible manner. This includes consideration of how clubs manage risks associated with alcohol, gambling and other activities that may impact community wellbeing, particularly for children and young people consistent with Council's public health approach outlined in the Reducing Harm from Gambling Policy.

6. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Active Recreation	Physical activities that involve moderate to vigorous movement and may occur informally or socially, and which may utilise open space or basic recreational infrastructure but may not be part of organised sport. Examples include jogging, casual ball games, fitness training or informal group exercise.
Community sport	Organised sport, informal recreation and physical activity, where the emphasis is on participation and achieving health and wellbeing benefits
Community Sports Club	Any organised group, governed by an established committee, that provides sporting opportunities to the community. Referred to within this policy as "sports clubs"
Community use	Use of Council sporting grounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure by individuals, community groups or organisations for activities other than organised sport, including informal recreation, social gatherings, community programs or events, where such use is compatible with the capacity, condition and scheduled use of the facility.
Organised sport	Structured, competitive physical activity typically integrated with a State Sporting Association

Term	Meaning
Passive Recreation	Unstructured leisure activities that have minimal physical intensity and do not require purpose-built sporting infrastructure, such as walking, picnicking, relaxing, socialising or enjoying open space.
Pre-season	The period prior to the 'sports season' where clubs undertake training utilising sportsgrounds and sports infrastructure
Seasonal licence	Agreement between Council and community sports clubs/groups that permits the use of specific Council managed sports facilities at designated times throughout the winter or summer sporting season.
Sports facilities	The purpose-built pavilions, surfaces or open space where sport occurs
Sports infrastructure	The permanent (e.g. sports ground) or semi-permanent (e.g. goal posts) physical structures that are required for organised sport, including training facilities such as cricket nets and turf cricket wickets
Sports season	Period within the year where sports competition occurs for a particular sport. There are typically two sports seasons each year, split into 'summer' (October to March) and 'winter' (April to September), with some sports occurring on an annual basis
Sportsgrounds	Any part of a park with infrastructure installed with the primary purpose to facilitate organised sport

7. POLICY

The principles below guide Council's decision-making when assessing applications for seasonal allocations and managing the ongoing use of sporting grounds and pavilions.

7.1 Allocation of Council Managed Facilities to Community Sports Clubs

7.1.1 Principle 1: Fairness

Fairness in the allocation of sporting grounds and pavilions ensures that access to Council-managed facilities is equitable, transparent and based on consistent criteria.

This includes:

- Providing equitable access to facilities for clubs and participants
- Addressing historical barriers or disadvantages where appropriate
- Applying clear, consistent and transparent allocation processes
- Recognising and supporting clubs that actively promote inclusive participation

- Encouraging sporting environments that are welcoming and accessible for all members of the community

Council recognises that some clubs provide important participation opportunities and community connections for minority, cultural, faith-based and other under-represented communities. In applying this Policy, Council will have regard to the contribution these clubs make to inclusion, participation and community wellbeing, consistent with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*.

7.1.2 Principle 2: Community Benefit

Community benefit considers the extent to which a sporting club contributes positively to the broader community.

This may include:

- Providing opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to participate in sport
- Supporting inclusive programs and initiatives
- Encouraging participation pathways and community engagement
- Maximising the use of Council-managed facilities to benefit the wider community

Council will prioritise allocations that demonstrate strong community outcomes and support broad community access to sport and recreation.

In assessing community benefit, Council may consider the extent to which a club demonstrates responsible governance, inclusive practices and commitment to supporting community health and wellbeing outcomes, including compliance with relevant Council policies such as the Reducing Harm from Gambling Policy, particularly in relation to gambling-related activities, sponsorship and promotion.

7.1.3 Principle 3: Gender Equity

Gender equity focuses on ensuring women and girls have fair and equitable access to community sport and Council facilities.

This includes:

- Supporting equal access to high-quality sporting facilities
- Providing fair allocation of popular training and competition times
- Removing barriers that limit participation by women and girls
- Encouraging leadership and participation opportunities for women and girls in sport

This principle aligns with Council's commitment to advancing gender equity in community sport, as outlined in Council's Fair Access Policy.

7.1.4 Principle 4: Local Priority

Local priority recognises the importance of supporting community-based sporting organisations within Glen Eira.

When allocating facilities, Council will prioritise:

- Clubs that are based within Glen Eira
- Clubs that predominantly service Glen Eira residents
- Activities that support participation by the local community

This approach helps ensure that Council-managed infrastructure primarily benefits the local community.

7.1.5 Principle 5: Continuing Allocation

Continuing allocation provides stability for clubs that have an existing seasonal licence to use a facility, where they continue to meet Council requirements.

Clubs may retain ongoing access to a facility where they:

- Demonstrate continued community benefit
- Comply with licence conditions and Council policies
- Maintain fair and reasonable fee structures
- Support Council priorities such as accessibility, inclusion and equitable participation

Council will periodically review continuing allocations to ensure facilities are used effectively and remain aligned with community needs and policy objectives.

7.1.6 Principle 6: Sustainable Facility Management

Sustainable facility management ensures that Council sporting grounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure are used within their capacity and maintained in a safe, functional and high-quality condition for long-term community use.

Council recognises that sporting facilities are shared community assets that require careful management to balance the needs of organised sport, passive recreation and ongoing maintenance requirements.

This includes:

- Managing the allocation and scheduling of facilities to ensure use remains within the capacity of sporting grounds and infrastructure.
- Protecting the condition and quality of playing surfaces through appropriate maintenance and usage controls.
- Supporting shared and efficient use of facilities across multiple sporting codes and user groups where appropriate.
- Considering the condition, carrying capacity and seasonal requirements of facilities when determining allocations.
- Minimising overuse and inappropriate use that may impact the safety, quality or longevity of sporting infrastructure.

Through this approach, Council seeks to ensure that sporting facilities remain sustainable, accessible and fit for purpose for current and future users. Council will manage allocations to protect ground condition and long-term asset sustainability, recognising that overuse and inappropriate scheduling can undermine safety, participation and facility quality for all users.

Allocation decisions may be adjusted where necessary to respond to surface condition, recovery requirements or asset management needs.

7.2 Allocations

Council sporting grounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure are allocated to sporting clubs on a seasonal licence basis, one season at a time.

Seasonal allocations are made following an application process completed by community sporting clubs prior to the commencement of each season. Allocations are conditional on clubs meeting the eligibility requirements and complying with the User Guide.

Allocations are not transferable. Where a sporting club no longer requires use of an allocated facility, the allocation must be relinquished to Council for reallocation.

Seasonal allocations correspond with the following periods:

- Winter: 1 April – 30 September
- Summer: 1 October – 31 March

Standard operating hours for seasonal allocations are outlined below.

Ground Allocation

Day of the Week	Operating Hours
Monday to Thursday	4pm-9pm
Friday	4pm-9pm
Saturday	7am-9pm
Sunday	7am-9pm

Pavilion Allocation

Day of the Week	Operating Hours
Monday to Thursday	4pm-10pm
Friday	4pm-11pm
Saturday	7am-11pm
Sunday	7am-10pm

Council may approve variations to these hours where appropriate.

Council will allocate sportsgrounds and associated facilities using a fair, transparent and evidence-based framework that is applied consistently across all clubs and seasons.

Allocation decisions will be informed by participation data, demonstrated community benefit, facility capacity and actual utilisation, rather than relying solely on historical arrangements.

Council acknowledges that confidence in the allocation system relies on clear decision-making, consistency over time and visible alignment between policy principles and allocation outcomes.

Council will manage allocations over time through the seasonal allocation and review process, having regard to evidence of actual use, participation demand and facility capacity.

Where under-utilisation or unmet demand is demonstrated across multiple seasons, Council may consider adjusting future allocations to better align access with participation needs, while maintaining stability for existing clubs.

Any changes to allocations will be made in accordance with Council's established allocation processes, informed by data, and communicated in advance of each season.

Council may prioritise or refuse allocations where a club's activities or practices are inconsistent with Council policies relating to harm prevention, including the Reducing Harm from Gambling Policy.

7.2.1 Allocation Process

Sporting clubs may apply to Council for a seasonal allocation of sporting grounds and associated facilities.

Clubs that currently hold a seasonal allocation may apply to retain their allocation for the following season. Council will assess all applications in accordance with the requirements of this policy and the associated User Guide.

To be eligible for a seasonal allocation, a sports club must:

- be a separate legal entity, such as an incorporated association, and operate on a not-for-profit basis
- demonstrate that it provides an inclusive and welcoming environment for the community
- provide evidence of public liability insurance that meets Council's requirements

- provide Council with a financial statement and an annual report from the most recently completed financial year
- have no outstanding debt to Council, or be complying with a Council-approved repayment plan
- be affiliated with the relevant State Sporting Association where applicable.

Where two or more clubs apply for the same sportsground and Council officers are unable to facilitate a shared use arrangement, Council will assess the applications against the principles set out in this Policy and criteria outlined in the User Guide.

Priority allocation will be given to the club that demonstrates the greatest alignment with the assessment criteria and the greatest community benefit.

Council recognises the importance of a consistent home location for sporting clubs and the role it plays in supporting club identity, volunteer capacity, membership retention and community connection. Where possible, Council will take into account a club's historical association with a particular facility when assessing allocation applications, while also balancing broader community access, participation needs and the efficient use of sporting infrastructure.

From time to time, vacancies may arise within Council's sporting facility allocation system due to changes in club demand, participation levels or facility capacity.

Where a vacancy occurs, Council will assess the most appropriate use of the facility using available participation data, strategic planning documents, facility capacity information and identified gaps in local sport and recreation provision.

Council may invite requests for use from existing sporting clubs, new sporting clubs, or sporting clubs located outside Glen Eira where appropriate to ensure the facility is allocated in a manner that provides the greatest community benefit and aligns with Council's strategic objectives.

All clubs seeking an allocation must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in this section.

7.3 Pre-Season

Council manages the use of sporting grounds prior to the commencement of each sports season to ensure grounds are maintained in a safe, playable and sustainable condition.

Pre-season access may be made available to both winter and summer seasonal tenants to support training and preparation prior to the commencement of their respective competition seasons.

Pre-season use will be limited and capped to ensure the sustainable management of sportsgrounds and to minimise impacts on turf condition and ground availability. Council officers will monitor and audit sportsground use during the pre-season period to ensure that use remains within acceptable limits and that ground conditions are protected.

Pre-season use must not impact the ability of current in-season tenants to conduct scheduled training or competition activities. Where conflicts arise, priority will be given to the club holding the current seasonal allocation for that facility.

Council may vary, restrict or cancel pre-season use where necessary to protect ground conditions, undertake maintenance works, or respond to weather conditions or other operational requirements.

Specific dates, conditions of use and applicable fees for pre-season access will be outlined in the User Guide, with all fees determined in accordance with Council's Pricing Policy and the adopted schedule of Fees and Charges.

7.4 Fees and Charges

Community sporting clubs are required to pay seasonal fees for the use of Council-managed sportsgrounds, pavilions and associated infrastructure. Council subsidises community sport in recognition of the significant physical, social and health benefits it provides to the Glen Eira community.

Council recognises the cost pressures faced by not-for-profit community sporting clubs and is committed to maintaining a transparent, predictable and equitable approach to fees that reflects both community benefit and Council's ongoing subsidy of sport.

Waste management associated with the use of sportsgrounds, pavilions and associated facilities forms part of Council's overall operating costs.

Standard waste services are included within pavilion operating costs. Where additional waste services are required due to events, tournaments or other atypical usage, these may be subject to additional charges and advance notice requirements, in accordance with Council's Pricing Policy.

Fees are determined using a consistent, evidence-based methodology and are linked to facility classification, level of access and service provision. This approach ensures fees are applied fairly across clubs and aligned with the standard and use of Council facilities, rather than historical arrangements.

Fees and charges are approved annually through Council's budget process and are determined in accordance with Council's Pricing Policy, having regard to affordability and access considerations, the balance of public and private value, and Council's long-term financial sustainability objectives.

In addition to seasonal allocation fees, clubs may be charged for pavilion utilities and sport-specific costs, including but not limited to lighting, turf wicket preparation and other facility-specific services, where applicable.

All charging arrangements are undertaken in accordance with Council's Pricing Policy and the adopted Schedule of Fees and Charges.

Tiered Charging Framework

Council applies a tiered charging framework to reflect differing levels of community benefit, commercial activity and impact on Council-managed facilities.

In determining the appropriate fee category, Council may consider factors including:

- the extent to which the organisation operates on a not-for-profit basis
- the level of commercial or revenue-generating activity undertaken
- the degree to which activities are accessible to the broader community
- whether participants are paid or remunerated, including the presence of salary caps or professional competition structures
- the impact of activities on community access to facilities, including use outside standard seasonal allocations
- alignment with Council's objectives for equitable and inclusive community participation

Council may apply different fee structures or additional charges where activities are conducted on a commercial basis or where they limit broader community access to Council facilities.

7.4.1 Charging Principles

The following principles guide the calculation and application of fees and are applied in conjunction with Council's Pricing Policy:

1. **Equity**

    - Fees are applied fairly across all clubs.
    - Community benefit and the level of service provided to clubs are considered in determining charges.

2. **Consistency**

    - Fees are calculated and applied using a standard methodology for all licensed sporting clubs and across all Council-managed sporting facilities.

3. **Participation**

- Fees are set to ensure community sport remains accessible to all residents, supporting broad participation in active recreation.

4. **Financial Sustainability**

- Fees are set to ensure that Council can maintain and improve sporting facilities over time.
- Clubs are expected to be financially viable and capable of delivering sustainable sport and recreation opportunities for the community.

7.4.2 Charging Methodology

The charging methodology used to determine a clubs seasonal fee will give effect to the charging principles by considering, in accordance with Council's Pricing Policy:

1. **Quality and Functionality of Facilities, including any relevant facility classification**

- The standard, condition, and capacity of allocated sporting grounds, pavilions, and associated infrastructure.

2. **Cost to Council**

- The cost of maintaining and operating facilities, including ongoing maintenance, utilities, and sport-specific requirements.

3. **Level of Use**

- The amount of access allocated to the club, including training sessions, competition times, and any additional approved use.

Fees may be reviewed and adjusted annually or as required to reflect changes in costs, facility improvements, or allocation levels. Council may provide additional guidance on fees and charges in the User Guide, including payment processes, discounts, and casual hire arrangements.

Application of Tiered Charging

Fees are determined using a consistent methodology that reflects facility classification, level of access and service provision.

Where relevant, fees may be adjusted to reflect the nature of the user group or activity, having regard to factors including:

- level of community benefit

- extent of commercial or revenue-generating activity
- impact on community access to facilities
- intensity and duration of use

This approach ensures that Council's pricing framework remains equitable, transparent and aligned with both community participation objectives and financial sustainability requirements.

8. LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

This policy has been assessed as being compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

In line with the *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic),* a Gender Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy.

This policy will also be administered in a manner consistent with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*, including Council's commitment to fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory access to community sport and recreation opportunities.

9. ASSOCIATED COUNCIL DOCUMENT

- Sports Ground & Facility Allocation User Guide
- Sports Clubs Conditions of Use - Sportsgrounds and Pavilions
- Provision of Sportsground Lighting Policy
- Open Space Strategy
- Fair Access Policy and Action Plan
- GET Active Report
- Community and Wellbeing Plan
- Council Plan
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Reducing Harm from Gambling Policy

10. EXTERNAL REFERENCE/RESOURCE

- The Victorian Government's Fair Play Code
- Active Victoria 2022-2026: A strategic framework for sport and recreation
- State Sporting Association Strategies

GLEN EIRA
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