

<b>Use of Council Facilities</b>	Document No:	SCS - 033
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Responsible Officer:	Manager Recreation & Open Space Planning	
Authorising Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles that underpin Council's approach to identifying and prioritising appropriate users of Council owned and /or managed facilities.

## 2. Scope

### Includes:

Community facilities:

- Council owned or managed open spaces and community buildings.

### Excludes:

- Council facilities where Council has exclusive use and operates services such as Council Civic Office, Council Depots and waste centres or other buildings for municipal purposes.

## 3. Application

- Council, its employees, volunteers (s86) and contracted service providers
- Tenants of community facilities
- Seasonal user groups of community facilities
- Casual users (including schools) of community facilities
- Private infrastructure on Council owned or managed land.

## 4. Definitions

**Community Facilities** – Council owned and/or managed buildings and open space.

**Optimise** - To appropriately use the facilities to their fullest extent.

**Tenant** - A person who occupies land or property rented from a landlord being the Surf Coast Shire Council.

**Booking Requests** - Requests for use from potential users of community facilities owned and/or managed by Surf Coast Shire.

**Municipal Purposes** – Council managed services that are provided from Council community facilities including maternal & child health and kindergarten services (including fee for service providers).

**Non-Commercial Groups** – Not-for-profit community based groups and funded organisations and agencies that service community members that live, work or have a connection with Surf Coast Shire.

**Commercial Occupiers** – Any occupier who operates a business or commercial enterprise with the intent to generate profit.

**Private Infrastructure** - Non-Council owned infrastructure. i.e. Barwon Water, Powercor, private utility providers.

## 5. Context

A community facility is a focal point for community interaction; a place where people can build relationships and a community identity; where residents can meet and carry out activities; a place that strengthens the life of a community; and where residents can access community services.

The Surf Coast Shire views the sustainable use of community spaces as integral to the Surf Coast community having access to a variety of social, cultural, educational and recreational opportunities. The provision of community facilities contributes to enhancing community connection and is consistent with Council's purpose. Community facilities are recognised as an important means of creating capacity within the community. This policy has been developed to:

- Define Council's policy position relating to access and use of community facilities.
- Ensure that Council provides a consistent and transparent approach for access to and management of community facilities across the organisation.
- Enable the allocation of community facility spaces in an appropriate, equitable and fair manner.
- Optimise opportunities for local communities to access facilities for social, cultural, recreational and other activities as required.
- Promote, encourage and facilitate multi-use intergenerational facilities.
- Encourage and support existing organisations and activities and the emergence of new groups and activities that address community needs.
- Encourage groups and organisations that improve individual and community health and wellbeing to access community facilities.
- Optimise the use of the community facilities and maximise the outcomes from Council's financial and community investment.

## 6. Policy

Council aims to optimise the use of its community facilities and set a framework for a consistent, transparent and fair approach for providing access to community facilities. In prioritising access to community facilities, Council will have regard to the following guiding principles:

### 6.1 Guiding Principles

- *Appropriate*

Council facilities will enable the delivery of a mix of Council and community programs, activities and services in response to local need that will promote social, health and wellbeing outcomes to the Surf Coast community.

Assessment of booking requests for use will include consideration of the suitability of the facility and the surrounding community and compatibility with other users in the facility for the type of activity required.

Council may refuse or limit access to a community facility if the intended use does not support the strategic direction of the Council Plan, this Policy, and the best interests of the Surf Coast community.

- *Equitable and Fair*

Council will consider booking requests from all sections of the community in an equitable and fair manner that promotes optimum use of community facilities. Council may limit the use of space by some groups/organisations to ensure that facilities are not dominated by one type of user group.

- *Local Priority*

Groups and organisations that live, work or have a connection with Surf Coast residents and those that service the local community surrounding the facility (including regional groups and organisations providing services for Surf Coast residents) will have priority over groups and organisations providing services for people outside of the municipality.

### 6.2 Priority of Use

- *Priority One: Municipal Purposes*

Services directly provided by Council will have primary use of Council's community facilities where appropriate, and be given the highest priority in their access and allocation. However, this does not exclude these facilities from being accessed by the community if available. For example, a consultation room can only be hired externally where a Maternal and Child Health service does not need access to deliver their services (i.e Kurrabee Myaring Community Centre).

- *Priority Two: Non-Commercial Groups*

Booking requests that fall within this category will have priority of access to community facilities over those that fall within the commercial occupier category, but after municipal purposes.

- *Priority Three – Commercial Occupiers*

Booking requests that fall within this category will have priority of access where municipal purposes and non-commercial groups are not using these spaces.

### **6.3 Implementation**

Council will attempt to negotiate an outcome for all booking requests that may include exploring alternative options in-line with the principles of this policy.

Where there is an existing agreement, Council will honour the existing arrangement until the expiration of that agreement and then review the agreement in-line with the principles of this policy and other policies and procedures approved by Council.

Regular, medium or long term bookings will have priority over booking requests for less than 3 months or on an adhoc basis.

Where there is competing demand for use of facilities between non-commercial groups and an outcome is unable to be negotiated in-line with the principles of this policy, officer discretion will be applied considering the objectives of the current Council Plan to determine the most suitable applicant.

Council will provide tenant and management committees of community facilities with assistance and support in understanding and complying with this Policy.

Rent for all lease and licence agreements are guided by Council's Property Agreements Policy (SCS-034).

User group contributions (cash or in-kind) to capital improvements of facilities does not entitle exclusive access to that facility.

### **7. Records**

Not applicable.

### **8. Attachments**

Nil

### **9. References**

- Council Plan 2013-2017
- Community Buildings Study 2015
- Open Space Strategy 2016-2025
- Property Agreement Policy SCS-034