



**Policy Owner:** Director Corporate Support

**Category:** Operational

**Direction:** 5. Our Civic Leadership

## 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 To provide a bookings system for North Sydney Council's sporting facilities that is fair and transparent for all users and which prohibits exclusive use.
- 1.2 Council adheres to the principles of a child safe organisation and is committed to the care and protection of all children and young people. These principles also apply to any event organisers who are holding events in parks, open spaces or streets under the ownership and/or control of the Council.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all hirers of Council sporting facilities as defined below.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Hirer - is a school, club, association or individual.
- 3.2 Commercial Hirer - is a company or a business.
- 3.3 Sporting facilities - includes ovals, netball courts and practice nets; it excludes North Sydney Olympic Pool, North Sydney Oval, North Sydney Indoor Sports Centre and passive parks.
- 3.4 Local - refers to a resident or hirer who resides or is located, or whose members generally reside, in the North Sydney local government area.
- 3.5 High impact sports - are defined as hockey, oztag, all football codes or any other sport that is deemed to have a heavy impact on the sports field surface.
- 3.6 Low impact sports - are defined as traditional summer sports such as cricket or any other sport that is deemed to have a low impact on the sports field surface.

## 4. PROVISIONS

- 4.1 Booking of sporting facilities is to be made on a seasonal basis in the first instance.

- 4.2 Seasonal hirers of Council's sporting facilities will be given preference over occasional hirers.
- 4.3 Bookings are not based on precedent.
- 4.4 Preference will be given to local hirers.
- 4.5 Schools, sporting clubs and sporting associations will have priority over commercial hirers.
- 4.6 Hire/use of Council facilities including Filming and Media launches - the hire/use of community, recreational or sporting facilities managed by Council cannot be used for the promotion, advertising or displaying of any services or products related to gambling, tobacco, vaping or alcohol.
- 4.7 Schools and junior clubs will have priority for bookings between 7.00am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.
- 4.8 Applications for seasonal bookings will close each year as follows:

Summer Season: First Friday in August  
Winter Season: First Friday in February

Late applications will only be dealt with after bookings have been allocated to on-time applicants.

Traditional summer sports have priority during the summer season e.g. cricket, as do traditional winter sports e.g. all football codes and hockey have priority during the winter season.

- 4.9 In determining the allocation of requested bookings, Bookings staff will take into consideration:
  - a) the number of players/participants represented by the hirer;
  - b) if the booking is for training/competition/social (priority to will be given to training/competition over social);
  - c) a fair distribution of hours between the respective hirers;
  - d) whether the hirer has previously complied with Council's bookings conditions of hire;
  - e) the impact of a particular sport on the grounds during the maintenance and growing periods. Council Officers will advise the applicant of the current terms and conditions; and
  - f) special events such as holiday camps will be considered on a case by case basis.

4.10 In accordance with Council's *Fees and Charges Schedule*, permanent hirers that pay the entire season bookings seven days in advance of the season commencing will receive a 10% reduction on the scheduled fee.

4.11 Dispute Resolution - where there is a conflict in relation to dates and/or time slots of the requested bookings, Council Officers will contact the hirers and attempt to work out a compromise arrangement with them on an individual basis.

Where attempts to find a compromise have failed, the parties will be invited to attend a pre-season hirer meeting in order for Council Officers to mediate a solution with the parties. Council's Manager Parks and Reserves will chair the meeting assisted by Customer Services and Records Department staff.

If the impasse cannot be resolved, Council will hold a ballot to allocate the disputed times or Council staff will determine allocation having taken into consideration the needs of the parties.

4.12 Communication with Stakeholders - Council's Manager Parks and Reserves will maintain contact with the various stakeholders on a formal basis, through the Sport and Recreation Reference Group.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY**

5.1 Customer Service and Records Department (Bookings Section) are responsible for processing applications for seasonal hire of sporting facilities.

5.2 Council's Manager Parks and Reserves is the point of contact with stakeholders to address sport and recreation matters.

5.3 Council's Manager Parks and Reserves is responsible for chairing meetings to resolve conflicts between hirers.

## **6. RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION**

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents/legislation:

- Child Safe Policy
- Fees and Charges Schedule
- Recreation Needs Study
- Smoke Free Environment Declared Public Areas Policy
- Terms and Conditions/Permit for Use of Sporting Resource

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<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Resolution No.</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
1	5 June 2006	Council	412	2008/09
2	16 February 2009	Council	61	2012/13
3	18 February 2013	Council	61	2016/17
4	25 June 2018	Council	214	2020/21
5	8 May 2023	Council	144	2024/25