

ELEMENTS OF BEST PRACTICE
local government
sportsground management



**a tool for more effective management of
recreation reserves and sportsgrounds
in south west Victoria**

Elements of Best Practice Local Government Sportsground Management

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INTRODUCTION

Elements of Best Practice is the second part of the '*Sustaining Sportsgrounds*' study. The first part of the study is reported in the **Sustaining Sportsground Report**. The study was commissioned by six local government authorities (LGAs) in South West Victoria (Warrnambool City Council and Shires of Colac Otway, Corangamite, Golden Plains, Southern Grampians and Surf Coast) and the Barwon Region of Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV).

The LGAs and SRV provided project funding and steering committee representation. The study was completed by the Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT. The aim of the study is to assist Local Government Authorities to develop and implement efficient and effective management and information systems for community sportsgrounds. The study involved: -

1. Practice Review

This initial stage involved a review of current arrangements for sportsground management in each LGA. LGA staff, councillors and community sports representatives were consulted to identify: -

- Nature of sportsground management approach;
- Key issues in relation to sportsground management;
- Capacity and potential for improvement within the municipality; and
- Limits to change.

2. Identification of 'Best Practice'

This stage involved: -

- International and Australia-wide review of sportsground management literature and research;
- Consultation with national, state and peak bodies to identify sportsground management 'Best Practice'; and
- Identification and documentation of case study examples of good practice.

3. Summary of Sportsground Management Models

The summary of sportsground management models was informed by existing LGA arrangements in South West Victoria and the sportsground management 'Best Practice' review. Models were documented and detailed in terms of guiding principles, examples, strengths and weaknesses.

4. Strategies for Change

Strategies for change provides information regarding sportsground management improvement strategies. This includes the provision of specific advice for LGAs regarding; -

- identified areas for improvement; and
- direction for sportsground management improvements.

Elements of Best Practice documents the key aspects of sportsground management, identifies a number of models and provides a range of contemporary practice examples. LGAs are provided with information regarding policy development, fees and charges and other sportsground management topics within a broad framework of change management. A change checklist is provided to assist LGA staff to engage with and effectively implement sustainable sportsground management practice.

Elements of Best Practice is designed as a tool for local government practitioners. To use the tool most effectively we suggest you begin by reading the Change Management section and then proceed to the relevant sportsground management topic. Each topic has a general description and a summary of models drawn from current practice. We suggest that in exploring a topic - do not be locked into the model prescriptions. It is important that you always consider your own context first and use the models to work through the solutions which are most appropriate for your circumstances.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Change, its management and importance is the central theme throughout **Elements of Best Practice**. Throughout the report discussion focuses upon LGAs initiating and implementing change. For some LGAs this will involve comprehensive change in every aspect of sportsground management (see table below). For others change will involve the review and modification of some aspect of sportsground management (eg the review of fees and charges).

Whatever the degree and nature of change, its ultimate goal is to ensure the sustainability of sportsgrounds. This is the light at the end of the tunnel which will result in: -

- Strategically planned sportsgrounds
- Clear and coherent sportsground policies and procedures
- Efficient and effective management and information systems
- Well utilised and well maintained sportsgrounds
- High levels of community and stakeholder satisfaction
- Fair, accountable and open decision-making

Operational policy area	Colac Otway	Corangamite	Golden Plains	Sth Gramps	Surf Coast	Warrnambool
Principles	Develop	Develop	Consolidate existing principles	Develop	Consolidate existing principles	Develop
Sportsground Policy Development	Develop & document	Develop & document	Document	Develop & document	Document	Develop & document
Fees & Charges	Conduct fees & charges review	Conduct fees & charges review	Confirm no fees policy	Conduct fees & charges review	Confirm no fees policy	Conduct fees & charges review
Ground Grading	Review hierarchy	Review model	Develop	Maintain regional/local model	Review hierarchy	Maintain classification
Pavilion Grading	Develop	Develop	Develop	Develop	Develop	Develop
Management	Establish Colac committee structure Develop & adopt model	Develop & adopt model	Develop & adopt model	Maintain sports advisory model	Develop & adopt model	Establish committee structure Develop & adopt model
Club Support	Develop club support	Develop club support	Continue club support	Continue club support	Develop club support	Develop club support
Maintenance	Review responsibility and reporting arrangements	Review responsibility and reporting arrangements	Develop responsibility and reporting arrangements	Review responsibility and reporting arrangements	Review responsibility and reporting arrangements	Review responsibility and reporting arrangements
Capital Development	Review policy	Review policy	Review policy	Review policy	Review policy	Review policy
Ground Allocation	Develop Agreements	Develop Agreements	Develop Agreements	Maintain arrangements	Confirm arrangements	Review arrangements
Environmental Sustainability	Investigate & trial environmental best practice	Investigate & trial environmental best practice	Investigate & trial environmental best practice	Investigate & trial environmental best practice	Investigate & trial environmental best practice	Investigate & trial environmental best practice

MODEL

Elements of Best Practice covers the following areas of sportsground management: -

- Principles
- Policies
- Fees and Charges
- Ground Grading
- Pavilion Grading
- Management
- Club Support
- Maintenance
- Capital Development
- Ground Allocation
- Environmental Sustainability

Each area of sportsground management is reviewed using the following format: -

- Description of the area of change
- Identification of key practice models
- Discussion of guiding principles to inform change management
- Identification of current examples of best practice
- Review of best practice strengths and weaknesses
- Identification of checklist factors to implement best practice
- Identification of issues for further consideration

CHANGE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Timing is everything. LGAs must consider the need to implement change gradually. The vast majority of sports clubs operate on a shoe string budget. In 2000/01 clubs are still planning to manage the financial implications of privatised utilities, increasing insurance costs and responsible serving of alcohol in order to survive. Careful consideration needs to be given to changes which have financial implications due to the financial pressures mounting on both sports clubs and recreation reserve committees of management.

EXAMPLES

The City of Frankston implemented a review of sportsground pricing policies post amalgamation (1994). The new fees and charges were implemented incrementally in 1995 over a 3 year period. The proposed fees and charges (with accompanying rationale) were presented at the Australian Leisure Industry conference in 1996, where professional feedback could be gained. In the Reserve and Pavilion User Guide (2000) the Frankston City Council announced the fees and charges were considered to be “successfully implemented” in 1995. However, it should be noted, this claim could really only be made following the completion of the three year implementation cycle.

Strengths

- Provides a model of incremental change
- Appropriate timing (due to amalgamation)
- Promotion of change strategy in a range of forums

Weaknesses

- No strategy for resistance management

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST – CHANGE MANAGEMENT

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Identify the exact nature of the problem which requires change
- Be clear about the outcomes which are required
- Think through how change might be brought about
- Analyse the financial implications of change for all stakeholders
- Consider the timing of any proposed change
- Develop an implementation plan for proposed change which breaks the change components into a series of small, staggered steps, rather than a comprehensive overhaul
- Discuss change options with other Council staff
- Ensure senior staff and Councillors are informed of proposed change
- Ensure senior staff and Councillors are supportive of proposed change
- Where appropriate and possible, engage key stakeholders in the development of change proposals
- Publicise change proposals to key stakeholders (and where appropriate, to the broad community)
- Anticipate resistance and develop negotiation strategies and flexible options (which might involve trade-offs) to accommodate obstacles

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

For change to be successful it is important to ensure that those who are affected by change are:

- Informed of the rationale for change
- Understand the logic for change and the nature of proposals
- Have sufficient advance notice
- Have an input into change proposals

Change, by its very nature is problematic due to the fact that it will involve and impact upon people. However it is possible to have control over who is involved and the nature of the impact. These aspects can be managed through a mix of careful planning, thoughtfulness and sound judgement, and maybe just a little courage.

PRINCIPLES

DESCRIPTION

It is the responsibility of local government authorities (LGAs) to develop a clear framework and vision which is the linchpin to establishing a sound approach to service planning, development and management. LGAs, their staff and communities require a set of principles to inform day-to-day decision-making and policy development in relation to sportsground management. The LGA Corporate Plan and Business Plan set the scene and direction for Council's underlying principles and service values. These provide a reference point for recreation services and subsequent sportsground management principles, policy and practice.

MODEL



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles should reflect Council's commitment to leisure, recreation and cultural services. Key characteristics of effective guiding principles are: -

- Reference and logical link back to Council mission, vision and/or goals;
- Clear identification of values/principles which provide the logic for recreation/sportsground management and service delivery (eg. access for all, community wellbeing, equitable provision, and/or community collaboration etc.); and
- Statements which are clear, operational, achievable and meaningful.

By articulating and promoting guiding principles, Council staff, Councillors, community groups and residents can develop a clear understanding of what Council values and how these values inform decisions, policies and practices regarding community based sport.

EXAMPLES

The **City of Manningham** has established a clear set of principles to guide decision-making in relation to sports planning, marketing and pricing. These are set out in 12 concise statements. These principles are included in user group information and provide users with organisational and contextual information.

The advantage of this approach is the articulation of a clear direction for sportsground management which logically informs specific sportsground management practice. Council staff have access to a policy framework that specifies Council's priorities and vision for current management and future development.

GROUNDS & PAVILIONS - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When decisions need to be made about sport planning, marketing or pricing the following principles should be used to guide those decisions:

1. Council Role in Sport

The Manningham City Council places a high value in sport and a healthy lifestyle and the range of benefits to individuals and the community derived from participation in sport. Council recognises that it has a primary role in providing positive leadership, environmental conditions and equitable outcomes.

2. Pricing

The pricing policy should provide an economic framework for evaluating the recovery of the cost of maintaining and investing in sporting facilities. It should also assist with the management of sporting facilities and encourage an equitable allocation to user groups and be comparable with fees and charges of neighbouring municipalities.

3. Public Access to Sporting Facilities

As well as being of special use to sporting groups, all facilities considered under this policy are assumed to have potential user value for the broader community. Pricing for allocated user groups should reflect the amount of time that they use the facility and the unallocated time must be available to the public and therefore paid for from the general rate.

4. Support for all levels of Sport

Council will support all levels of sport. Their support will vary depending on need and will be reflected in the pricing policy. Council will provide a hierarchy of sporting fields to ensure sport can be sustained at varying levels of competition.

5. Pricing Policy and Allocation of Resources

A pricing system can assist in the allocation of resources and opportunities. The goal of an allocation system is distributive justice; assisting equality and establishing equity. The system used to allocate sports fields should recognise the different segments of the market and should enable conscious decisions to be made about which market segments should be given priority.

6. Sporting Facilities

Where a sporting facility is provided by Council and it is feasible to introduce a charge for use, the charge should be levied so that users are encouraged to value and take responsibility for the asset. In applying such a charge an evaluation of user demand and levels of use shall be carried out periodically and where practical shall be directed at improving the quality of services provided by both the council and the user group(s).

7. Efficiency and Cost of Pricing and Allocation Procedures

The procedure associated with administering the pricing and allocation system must be simple and cost and time effective.

8. Discount Pricing

Discounting sporting facility prices must reflect council aims and objectives for sport development. Discounting should be applied in order to attract community investment in different sports and levels of sport in the municipality and thus increase the sporting amenity for the residents of the municipality.

9. Managing Price Adjustments

Pricing policy must be set for a determined period of time. During this time price adjustments should be made in line with CPI. If major capital works are to take place on a reserve it will be necessary to re-grade the oval and/or pavilion and adjust rental accordingly.

10. Servicing Capital Cost of Pavilions

The capital cost of constructing a new facility or extending an existing facility should be met through both council contributions and user group contributions.

Rental charged for a new facility should reflect a reasonable return on councils contribution and should take into account the ability of the club to pay, the standard of the facility and the amount of time occupied by the user group. User group contributions must revert to council ownership within twenty years. Rental for existing facilities should be based on valuation less user group contributions in the past 20 years. The rental should reflect the standard of the facility and the amount of time the user group is occupying the facility.

11. Servicing Operating Costs of Grounds

The most appropriate way of basing a rent charge is on the amount of time user groups occupy the ground. It is generally accepted that user groups occupy grounds for 20% of the grounds available time and it is therefore appropriate to charge them 20% of the maintenance costs. The other 80% of the maintenance cost is recovered from the general rate. If usage time varies from 20% the rental charge should reflect this.

12. Categories of Sport Fields

It is necessary to grade playing fields so that the playing surfaces match demands of the competition for-which they are used. It also assists with distributing maintenance resources and making a distinction in cost for user groups. A diversity of grade of field should be available that would best meet the different needs of sporting clubs.

**Manningham City Council
Pricing Policy - Sporting Grounds and Pavilions**

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

PRINCIPLES

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate/position recreation services within Council's Corporate Plan
- Locate/position recreation services within Council's Business Plan
- Develop a vision, service values or guiding principles for Council's role in relation to community based sport
- Provide clearly articulated vision, service values or guiding principles of Council's values and responsibilities as they apply to sportsground management
- Provide a clear rationale for Council support and the allocation of resources
- Distribute vision, service values or guiding principles and policy for sportsground management to user groups

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Which areas of Council need to be consulted and engaged in this process?
- Will community consultation be a part of this process?
- What timelines need to be considered (eg when are Council's Corporate Planning and Business Planning processes due for review)
- What is the marketing and distribution capacity of Council for getting this information to the community and user groups? (eg press releases, brochure production)



POLICIES

DESCRIPTION

Policies have two functions. Firstly they provide a statement of intent, which reflects what organisations value. Secondly policies provide a statement of detail which explains how the intent will be operationalised. Establishing a clear link between what Council values (principles) and Council policy is fundamental to establishing an accountable and credible sportsground management system for Council staff, Councillors, community groups and residents.

MODELS

There are a range of policy models which can be identified in current LGA sportsground management practices. The following captures some of the key model types.

Sports Development Model

- Council places a high value on sports development
- Council will encourage sports development by creating a range of facilities for elite athletes and community participation in sport

Healthy Community Model

- Council places a high value on healthy lifestyles and the range of benefits to individuals and the community derived from participation in sport
- Council will subsidise community sport and support opportunities for active participation (eg policies support targeted groups)

Community Management Model

- Council encourages communities to manage sportsgrounds
- Council will support community sport by providing grants which reward or subsidise communities that have an active involvement

Asset Management Model

- Council plays an important role as manager of community assets
- Sportsgrounds and recreation reserves are community assets
- Council will provide a basic level of maintenance for all sportsgrounds and recreation reserves regardless of usage

POLICY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Policies should reflect Council's principles in relation to leisure, recreation and cultural services. Key characteristics of effective guiding principles for policy making are: -

- Reference and logical link back to Council mission, vision and/or goals;
- Clear identification of values/principles which provide logic for recreation/sportsground management and service delivery (eg. access for all, community wellbeing, equitable provision, and/or community collaboration etc.); and
- Policy statements that are clear, unambiguous, uncomplicated, operational, achievable and meaningful.

By articulating and promoting sportsground management policy, Council staff, Councillors, community groups and residents can develop a clear understanding of how Council's values are implemented in regard to community based sport. This then sets a framework for planning, setting of fees and charges and other aspects of sportsground management. Policy is readily understood, well promoted and publicised both within Council and in the community more broadly.

Clearly policy development must be undertaken thoughtfully.

Policy development is necessary to: -

- Formalise Council's position in relation to sportsground management
- Provide an effective management tool for sportsground management and planning
- Determine the level of support and commitment available from Council
- Set appropriate and agreed upon standards
- Provide logic and equity, if appropriate, for the level of support provided by Council to sportsgrounds, user groups and/or committees

EXAMPLES

The policy intention is clearly stated in Mildura Rural City Council's key outcomes for the fees and charges policy.

POLICY MANUAL – KEY OUTCOMES OF POLICY

- **POLICY NO. 9.4 FEES AND CHARGES - KEY OUTCOMES**
- To rationalise the structure under which individuals and organisations will be charged for the use of Council's facilities.
- To ensure that fees and charges for recreation services are equitable and accessible.
- To ensure fees and charges take into account public access or lack of public access to recreation services.
- To ensure that ratepayers' funds are utilised in the provision of public recreation services, and that other fees and charges may apply to specific user services.
- To ensure that all fees and charges take into consideration ability to pay, cost of service, depreciation, etc.
- To allow for special needs groups to not be disadvantaged by an equitable fee structure (or where appropriate a subsidy apply).
- To recognise Council's recreation services can be categorised into three areas:
 - Public Services
 - Merit Services
 - Private Services.
- Hire fees will be categorised into two areas:
 - Community Hire Fee — Activity is of a community nature, e.g; fundraiser.
 - Commercial Hire Fee — Activity is of a commercial nature.

**Mildura Rural City Council
Policy Manual**

Strengths

- Provides clarity of processes and procedures
- Promotes a consistent approach to sportsground management
- Eliminates “backdoor syndrome” in sportsground management decision-making

Weaknesses

- Relies on written word to be consistently interpreted or understood
- Could lead to autocratic bureaucracy without consideration of extenuating circumstances
- Needs regular review to cater for local change/needs

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST - POLICIES

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Identify a vision, service values or guiding principles which clearly articulates Council's values as they apply to sportsground management
- Consult broadly across Council, user groups, key stakeholders and the community
- Identify Council's position in relation to sportsgrounds
- Identify user groups position in relation to sportsgrounds
- Identify key stakeholders position in relation to sportsgrounds
- Develop, analyse and understand the policy impact for each policy option being considered
- Develop sportsground management policy which reflects the vision, service values or guiding principles for sportsground management
- Negotiate a sportsground policy position which is broadly acceptable to each party
- Promote Council's policy approach through a variety of mediums (local papers, Council's newsletter and website, mailouts to user groups and committees of management)
- Ensure all Council staff are familiar and/or engaged with policy shifts and developments via intranet and workshops where necessary
- Establish (via policy) a clear process for handling consumer/customer enquiries regarding sportsground management, where relevant information is readily accessible and Council response consistent, equitable and fair.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Change in policy arrangements may create difficulties for some user groups. Other user groups may have strong objections. Careful thought must be given to what change is necessary and how change will be implemented. Consideration must also be given to the politics of change. Consultation is a key strategy to engage stakeholders and community leaders.

- Will negotiation ensure that different views be incorporated into a shared policy position?
- How will this occur? Who will manage it?
- Should the implementation of the new policy have a staggered introduction? Over what period?
- Will the policy achieve open and transparent management procedures?



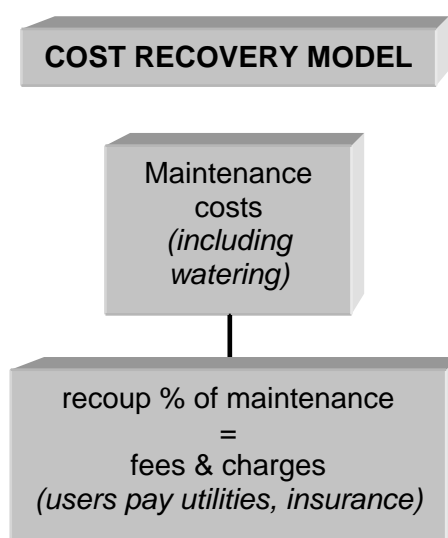
FEES AND CHARGES

DESCRIPTION

In reviewing local government sportsground management practices, fees and charges are often considered the bottom line. Sportsgrounds should be affordable for Council to provide and affordable for the community to access, in recognizing the important social and health contributions of sport and recreation to the community. Some LGAs consider the administration of fees and charges time consuming and an impractical use of human resources given the amount collected from user groups. This is especially the case for many rural Shires, where communities have primary responsibility for maintaining community assets with minimal Council support. In other cases the standard of facilities varies greatly. Higher standard facilities are located in regional centres and larger towns, and lower standard facilities are found in rural settlements.

MODELS

There are many fees and charges models. The relevant strengths and weaknesses of each really depends on both the context and the principles and policies of each LGA. Four key models are identified; cost recovery, target, incentive and subsidy.



At the City of Monash fees and charges are directly linked to the cost of providing maintenance. Annual sportsground maintenance is costed at approximately \$1.2 million. Fees and charges are seen as an important **cost recovery** strategy although the target is to recoup merely 10%. The City of Frankston has set a target of 25% cost recovery. The LGA average is 15% (Parks and Leisure Australia).

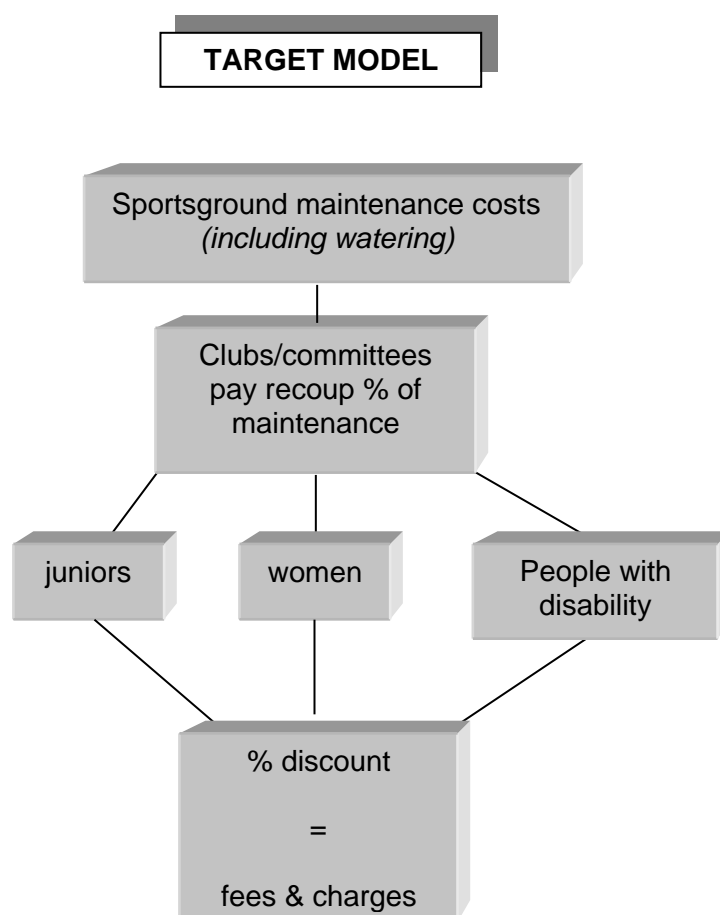
Strengths

- Formula for fees and charges is clear
- Standardised approach
- All user groups are treated the same
- Applicable to all facilities (including those of varying standards)

Weaknesses

- Administration requires staff dedicated to the task
- Not a genuine user pays model
- Only recoups a % of all costs

The **target** model uses a cost recovery approach for general clubs but is specifically concerned to provide juniors, women and/or people with disabilities with improved access through the provision of discounted fees. The model targets those groups who Council identify as a priority for assistance. Many Council's use versions of the target model (ie they may include juniors, but not women).



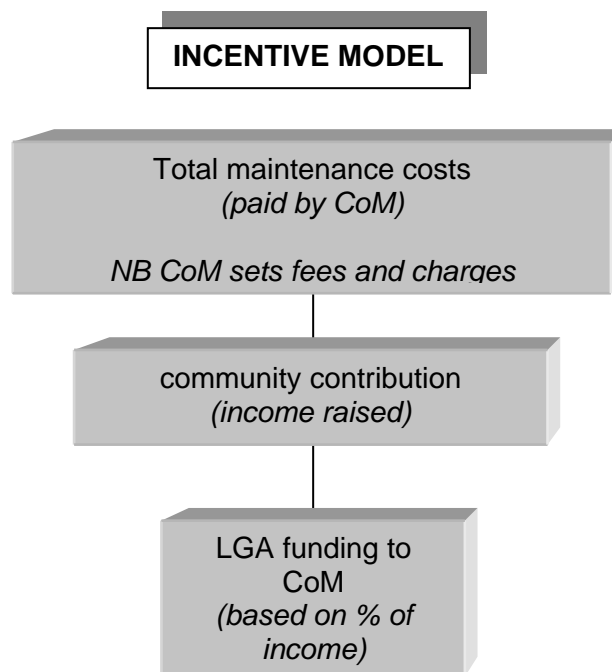
Strengths

- Formula for fees and charges is clear
- Applicable to all facilities (including those of varying standards)
- Council can support disadvantaged groups
- Women's participation rates are statistically lower than men
- Junior sport should be affordable and accessible
- Young people learn from team sports (responsibility, leadership etc)
- Sport should be more accessible for people with disabilities
- Women, young people and people with disabilities have traditionally been denied access to sport

Weaknesses

- Administration requires staff dedicated to the task
- Mix of models
- Requires monitoring and accountability to ensure equity
- Higher level of LGA investment

The **incentive model** is designed to encourage clubs to become more self-sufficient and assume greater responsibility for the management and development of recreation reserves. This model currently operates in Corangamite Shire. Council funding for township reserves is based upon a proportion of user fees raised by each Committee of Management (CoM). Committees submit an audited financial return for the previous year. Council funds a percentage (32.1% in 2000/2001) of the user fees based upon the Council budget (for 2000/2001 this was \$43,043.17). The highest allocation goes to the township able to raise the highest amount.



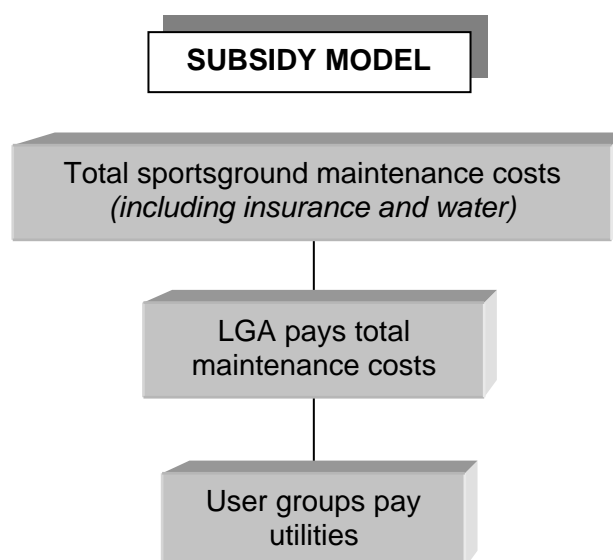
Strengths

- Benefits those Reserve Committees with the greatest capacity to raise funds
- Encourages committees to look for opportunities and to be entrepreneurial
- Promotes a sense of ownership
- Promotes self-sufficiency
- Rewards business-like planning
- Emphasis upon local control

Weaknesses

- Offers limited support to Reserve Committees with limited capacity to raise funds
- Administration requires staff dedicated to the task
- No correlation to standard of facilities
- Does not recognize the difficulties of raising funds when facilities are in poor condition
- Facilities and grounds are more likely to become rundown
- Clubs must provide accurate financial statements
- Doesn't provide a clear logic or equitable model for fees and charges
- Limited opportunity for LGA priorities and targeting of disadvantaged groups

The **subsidy model** places an important emphasis on community sportsgrounds and facilities as community assets. LGAs such as Golden Plains Shire consider that maintaining community assets to a basic level is Council's responsibility. Communities are then able to utilise the asset (either now or in the future). User groups pay for utilities and further costs such as increased levels of maintenance.



Strengths

- Recognises sportsgrounds and recreation reserves as community assets
- Longer term management approach
- Treats all reserves and user groups equally
- Facilities and grounds are less likely to become rundown

Weaknesses

- No correlation between standard of maintenance and standard of facilities required
- Maintenance is at basic level only
- Commits Council to provide maintenance
- Limited capacity for sports club self-sufficiency
- Clubs heavily reliant on Council for support

FEES AND CHARGES GUIDELINES

Key characteristics of effective models are: -

- Clarity – model is straightforward and clear; not overly detailed; all stakeholders can readily work out fees and charges; and the logic is obvious
- Coherence – model is consistent with Council's vision, mission and principles for community based sport and sportsground management
- Justification – model provides a clear rationale for the approach

Whichever model is adopted it must be linked back to a policy – to the intention of what the LGA is trying to achieve (cost recovery, target, incentive and/or subsidy).

EXAMPLES

The **Mildura Rural City Council** policy manual has sought to categorise Council's recreation services into three areas; public services, merit services and private services. This hierarchy represents a useful and significant way to consider recreation and sportsground provision. These areas are defined by the policy and provide a clear framework for Council's commitment to sportsgrounds and rationale for resource allocation.

FEES AND CHARGES POLICY	
Public Services	DEFINITIONS <i>(if applicable)</i> These include parks, playgrounds, bike tracks and walking trails. These services are used by the majority of the public and are seen to be of benefit to the majority of the public. These facilities are subsidised by Council at 100%.
Merit Services	These services include, the Mildura Olympic Swimming Pool, Recreation Programs, Recreation Reserves and Meeting Rooms. These services are used by a sector of the community and for specific purposes. Council aims to eventually subsidise these services at between 40% to 60%, depending on the target group, service group priority as seen by Council, ability to pay, public benefit, avenues of funding, etc.
Private Services	These include the trotting track situated at the Mildura Recreation Reserve, commercial activities on Council facilities, etc. Council to subsidise these activities at 0%.
Mildura Rural City Council Policy Manual	

The City of Manningham has developed comprehensive pricing schedules incorporating pavilion and ground grading fees and charges. City of Manningham pricing policy position (guiding principles): -

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pricing Pricing policy aims to provide an economic framework for evaluating the recovery of the cost of maintaining and investing in sporting facilities. It should also assist with the management of sporting facilities and encourage an equitable allocation to user groups and be comparable with fees and charges of neighbouring municipalities. ▪ Pricing Policy and Allocation of Resources The goal of an allocation system is distributive justice; assisting equality and establishing equity. In the case of sports fields the system should recognise the different segments of the market and should enable conscious decisions to be made about which market segments should be given priority. 	Manningham City Council Pricing Policy
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Mildura Rural City Council has a sportsground fees and charges policy. Here is the formula for determining fee discounts. Council applies a “weighting criteria” which allows deductions from a base level ground rental to clubs (applying for seasonal use of recreation reserves).

MILDURA RURAL CITY COUNCIL	Deduction
No Bar Facility	15%
No Kiosk Facility	5%
Do Not Pay Players and/or Coaches	15%
Do Not Charge Admission Fee	5%
Do Not Have Clubrooms	5%
New Club, ie; 3 years or cater for a special needs group as seen by Council, e.g; people with disabilities	5%
Juniors Represent 25-49% of members	10%
Juniors Represent 50-74% of members	15%
Juniors Represent 75-100% of members	20%
Have contributed to the facility, ie; capital improvements, improvements, or contributed to reducing council's standard maintenance costs as assessed by Council	5-15%

This model could easily be adapted and include other categories such as population characteristics, participation rates, geographic and/or socioeconomic disadvantage etc.

The City of Manningham has developed a framework for three categories of pavilions and their respective charges. Not all pavilions offer clubs the same opportunities. This approach recognises that club facilities (pavilions) can impact on the capacity of clubs to fundraise (ie bar and kiosk takings).

PAVILION CHARGES FOR CLUBS :	
Basic Pavilions	All pavilions in this category charged \$600 per annum - average maintenance cost.
Intermediate Pavilions	All pavilions in this category grouped and an Average Rent calculated (\$1,200 per annum).
Extended Pavilions	Pavilions that provide social facilities that are capable of being sublet shall have a rent calculated at 2.5% of project cost for new pavilions and \$1,200 plus 2.5% of valuation for existing pavilions above \$250,000 after allowing for club contributions to building works to be deducted before the rental is calculated. (Government Grants are not regarded as club contributions).
Normal Allocation	Normal allocation (one weekend day and three training nights) attracts a fee which is 100% of seasonal pavilion rental. Fees for other variations are: Weekend use: 50% of seasonal charge for regular Saturday or Sunday use Weekday use: 20% of seasonal charge for each regular weekday use A pavilion used for alternate matches will have a 50% reduction on the weekend fee
Pavilion Charges for Schools (change rooms toilets/showers only)	\$100 per pavilion for a school term allocation
Pavilion Charges for Casual Users (change	\$75 per pavilion per allocation

rooms toilets/showers only)	
Club Capital Contribution to pavilion building costs	The rated value of existing extended pavilions or the cost of new pavilions, reduced by identified club capital contribution (which does not include government grants), to the building costs of the pavilion. Club contributions are deemed to last for 20 years.
Discount System	Discounts for junior clubs are 50% and are only applied where a junior club exists in its own right or where the junior section of a senior club has exclusive use of a facility Master age groupings new to the municipality may receive a 50% discount for their first year Sports new to the municipality may receive a 50% discount for their first year Special cases are considered on application and are limited to clubs that would be placed at a severe financial disadvantage by the application of this policy. Discounts offered reviewed annually.

The following **selected** examples provide details of the specific charges for each pavilion.

MANNINGHAM PAVILION CHARGES - GROUPINGS						
BASIC PAVILIONS	VAL 96'	RENT	AV. P.A	RENT	NORMAL ALLOCATION PER CLUB PER SEASON	
Boronia Grove	\$15,000	\$600	\$600	\$300	\$303	\$343
Coleman Park	\$80,000	\$600		\$300	\$303	\$343
INTERMEDIATE PAVILIONS						
Bulleen Park Front	\$210,000	\$1,500	\$1,200	\$600	\$607	\$684
Rieschiecks Reserve	\$510,000	\$9,150		\$600	\$607	\$684
EXTENDED PAVILIONS						
Anderson Park	\$500,000	Doncaster Rovers Soccer Club contributed 100% of the social building valuation.		\$600	\$607	\$684
Domeney Recreation Centre	\$800,000	Council funded facility. Managed by the Manningham Recreation Association.		\$20,000	\$20,220	\$22,903
		Cricket and Football Clubs to pay per season		\$1,140	\$1,153	\$1,305
Donvale Reserve (main)	\$610,000	Donvale Sports Club built the social area & pays only for toilets showers and change rooms.		\$560	\$607	\$684
Netball Centre						
Control Centre	Basic	\$97,000		\$2,964 p/a		N/A
Outside Courts				\$1,200 p/a		N/A

City of Manningham has also developed a framework for ground charges. All council grounds are grouped according to facilities and usage. Maintenance costs are averaged for each group of grounds. Seasonal ground charges are based on the following:

GROUNDS CHARGES FOR CLUBS	
Seasonal ground charges for clubs	<p>A normal allocation (one weekend day and three training nights) attracts a fee which is 20% of seasonal ground maintenance costs. Fees for other variations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekend use: 50% of seasonal charge for regular Saturday or Sunday use • Weekday use: 20% of seasonal charge for each regular weekday use • A ground used for alternate matches have a 50% reduction on the weekend fee • Turf wickets do not attract any discounts
Annual ground charges for clubs	<p>A normal allocation (one weekend day and three training nights) attracts a fee which is 20% of annual ground maintenance costs. Fees for other variations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekend use: 50% of seasonal charge for regular Saturday or Sunday use • Weekday use: 20% of seasonal charge for regular weekday use
School Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools located within the City of Manningham may apply for a yearly allocation of council grounds without charge. • Schools located outside the City of Manningham are charged at casual user rates.
Casual Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50 - \$125 per oval per casual use
Netball Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • charge per annum for each outside netball court at the Templestowe Netball Centre is \$150. • casual charge is \$25 per court.
Hockey Pitch (synthetic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees negotiated between the Doncaster Hockey Club and Council
Discount System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discounts for junior clubs are 50% and are only applied where a junior club exists in its own right or where the junior section of a senior club has exclusive use of a facility. This discount does not apply to the athletic facility. • Master age groupings new to the municipality may receive a 50% discount for their first year. • Sports new to the municipality may receive a 50% discount for their first year. • Special cases are considered on application and are limited to clubs that would be placed at a severe financial disadvantage by the application of this policy. • Discounts offered are reviewed annually.

Again selected examples are provided of the **actual** prices charged for grounds.

Sport & Grade	Season Main. Cost	99/00 Season Charge	99/00 Casual Charge	00/01 Season Charge	00/01 Casual Charge
Grade 1 Football Donvale Reserve No.1 Oval (FL)	\$7,000	\$1,415	\$101	\$1,603	\$114.50
Grade 1 Soccer Pitches Anderson Park Res. No.1 Pitch	\$6,000	\$1,213	\$101	\$1,374	\$114
Grade 2 Soccer Pitch Park Avenue Reserve Pitch (FL)	\$4,500	\$910	\$76	\$1,031	\$86
Grade 2 Turf Cricket Schramms Reserve No.2 Oval	\$6,250	\$1,264	\$101	\$1,431	\$115
Wilson Road Reserve Oval - <i>Maintained by club - charge as for Grade 3 Concrete</i>	\$2,400	\$485	\$101	\$550	\$115
Grade 4 Football Warrandyte Reserve No.2 Oval	\$4,000	\$809	\$51	\$915	\$57
Grade 4 Concrete Cricket Bulleen Park No. 4 Oval	\$2,100	\$425		\$481	\$57

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The fees and charges models seek to achieve a mix of outcomes. The City of Mildura's fees and charges are designed to compensate users for particular circumstances, contributions and the absence of what might be considered standard facilities. The advantage of the model is that it is straightforward and user friendly.

The City of Manningham model is more complex because it is framed economically and attempts to do more; cost recovery and provide equitable allocation to user groups.

Clearly there are a variety of approaches to choose from. The examples highlighted here illustrate two contrasting models. LGAs seeking to establish or review fees and charges should explore a range of options.

IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE – FEES AND CHARGES

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate sportsground management within vision, service values or guiding principles
- Identify underlying principles as they may apply to fees and charges for sportsgrounds
- Identify a clear rationale for Council support of and allocation of resources to sportsgrounds
- Identify and review current budget commitments in relation to sportsgrounds
- Develop proposed budget for sportsgrounds
- Determine potential models for fees and charges
- Map out proposed budget commitments to sportsgrounds
- Identify equity issues for each sportsground/recreation reserve

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- What are the financial implications of changes to fees and charges for:-
 - Council
 - Committees of Management
 - Clubs and regular users
 - Casual users
- How will the committees be engaged and consulted? Will this also involve clubs and users?
- Who else from Council (staff and Councilors) needs to be involved in the review process and eventual determination of models and adoption of fees?
- Will broader community consultation be a part of this process? If so, at what point?
- What timelines need to be considered? (eg Council's budgetary planning process)
- If fees are to be introduced or increased, what timelines would be fair and allow clubs/committees to plan appropriately?
- Are staggered arrangements possible?
- What is the marketing and distribution capacity of the Council for getting this information to the community and user groups? (eg press releases, brochure production)
- What linkages, if any, should be made to maintenance costs?



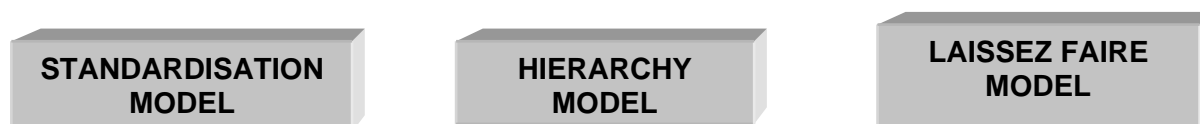
GROUND GRADING

DESCRIPTION

Standards of sportsgrounds vary enormously both from municipality to municipality, and within municipalities. LGAs articulate a concern for equity, that citizens have equal treatment, equal access or equal opportunity. In some cases the provision of sportsgrounds at a variety of standards is a deliberate intention of policy. This approach to sportsground management recognises that user groups have varying needs. Playing surfaces for social competitions may be quite basic whereas higher levels of competition may require playing surfaces and facilities which meet specified standards. Clearly maintenance levels and fees and charges should reflect this. Risk management issues may also need to be considered.

MODELS

There are three key models that can be readily identified in relation to the grading of sportsgrounds. The following attempts to capture some of the key model types.



The **standardisation** model is principally concerned that all recreation reserves or sportsgrounds are regarded equally. Golden Plains Shire implements an approach which seeks to treat all recreation reserves equitably. Reserves are maintained by Council and receive a basic level of service. Contrasting with this approach the Cities of Manningham and Kingston utilise a model which recognises a **hierarchy** of sportsgrounds, concerned to provide a spread of basic sportsgrounds through to higher quality facilities. Similarly Southern Grampians have graded recreation reserves (settlement, township and premier facility) and attempt to allocate resources accordingly.

There is also an emerging premier facility trend. Some LGAs (eg Colac Otway Shire) have sought to develop a “premier” or high quality facility/oval that may create opportunities to host events (eg. AFL pre-season games) and at the same time provide community access to quality facilities and promote pride of place.

A considerable number of LGAs in the study area adopt a **laissez faire** model which treats each sportsground on an individual basis. That is the individual circumstances shape service provision and support. This places greater demands on Council staff, creates political pressure for Councillors and ultimately communities are not clear about the constraints and boundaries for ‘appropriate’ planning and development.

GROUND GRADING GUIDELINES

LGAs need to determine and/or develop a model or approach which reflects Council’s vision and service principles. The approach utilised may represent a mix of models. An LGA may wish to develop an equity approach within a hierarchical model that favours the development of a premier facility.

In developing ground grading procedures careful consideration should be paid to clarity, consistency, safety and risk management.

EXAMPLES

The **Cities of Kingston and Manningham** have developed approaches to ground grading which recognise that ovals, fields, courts and related facilities and amenities vary in quality. Similarly playing field requirements for competitive sports also vary. Some user groups and associations require facilities and ground conditions that meet national, state or regional competitive standards. Other users have a stronger “sport for fun” focus and are not unduly concerned that a playing field may be sub-standard.

The City of Kingston has developed four levels of ground grading with criteria listed in the table below.

GRADE	CRITERIA
A	Excellent quality surface conditions Automatic watering system Good underground drainage system Playing field size to national/international standards Full reserve and playing field fencing Purpose built car parking
B	Good quality surface condition Automatic watering system Playing field size to state/regional competition standards Fenced playing field Good car parking
C	Reasonable surface condition Manual or no watering system Playing field size to or not to standard Fenced or unfenced playing field Reasonable car parking
D	Poor surface conditions; maybe patchy turf cover Poor or nil drainage No watering system No standard size No car parking facilities
City of Kingston Sporting Facility Fees and Charges Policy	

Each oval or playing field is then graded in relation to the conditions relevant for each sporting code (ie football/rugby, cricket, baseball, soccer, athletics, hockey and netball).

Eg	CRICKET	FOOTBALL /RUGBY	BASEBALL	SOCCER	ATHLETICS	HOCKEY	NETBALL
KINGSTON HEATH RESERVE	D		B & C	A & B		A & C	

The City of Manningham has also developed a five level ground grading system for winter sports and six levels for summer sports. Kingston’s model can be readily adapted as a check list.

GROUND GRADING-WINTER SPORTS - FOOTBALL & SOCCER	
Grade 1	These grounds are prepared to the highest standard. They are full sized with boundary fencing, and are suitable for premium grade competition. Most grounds have floodlighting. They have a turf surface of outstanding quality, serviced by an in-ground sprinkler system and a premium drainage system. They are properly graded and have a good depth of top soil. They are regularly mowed, aerated, fertilised, oversown and top dressed. There is an associated pavilion and provision for spectators. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 2	These grounds are full sized with boundary fencing, and are suitable for top grade competition. Most grounds have floodlighting. They have a high grade turf surface serviced by an in-ground sprinkler system and quality drainage system. They are properly graded and have a good depth of top soil. They are regularly mowed, aerated, fertilised, oversown and top dressed. There is an associated pavilion and provision for spectators. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 3	These grounds are full sized generally without boundary fencing and are suitable for grade competition. Some grounds have floodlighting. They have a good quality turf surface, in-ground sprinkler system and drainage. They are properly graded and have a good depth of top soil. They are regularly mowed, aerated, fertilised, oversown and top dressed. There is an associated pavilion. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 4	These grounds are medium sized grounds without boundary fencing and are suitable for lower grade senior matches and junior matches. They may be located at secondary schools or they may be neighbourhood playing areas. Turf cover is generally good to medium quality. These grounds are not watered or drained. Generally there is access to toilets and changing rooms. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club and after school hours.
Grade 5	These grounds are located at primary schools, are small and do not have a boundary fence and are suitable for junior competition. They are not watered or drained and the turf cover may be patchy due to lack of soil depth and irrigation. There is generally not access to toilets and changing rooms. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club and after school hours.
GROUND GRADING-SUMMER SPORTS - - CRICKET	
Grade 1 Turf Wicket	These grounds are prepared to the highest standard. They are full sized with boundary fencing, and are suitable for premium grade competition. They have a turf surface of outstanding quality, with a centralised turf wicket. The grounds are serviced by in-ground sprinkler systems and premium drainage systems. They are properly graded and have a good depth of top soil, regularly mowed, aerated, fertilised, oversown and top dressed. There is an associated pavilion and provision for spectators. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 2 Turf Wicket	These grounds are full sized generally without boundary fencing and are suitable for grade competition. They have a good quality turf surface with a centralised prepared turf wicket, in-ground sprinkler system and drainage. They are properly graded and have a good depth of top soil. They are regularly mowed, aerated, fertilised, oversown and top dressed. There is an associated pavilion. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 3 Concrete Wicket	These grounds are full sized with boundary fencing, and are suitable for top grade competition. They have a high grade turf surface with a centralised concrete wicket suitable for synthetic or matting covering serviced by an in-ground sprinkler system and quality drainage system. They are properly graded and have a good depth of top soil. They are regularly mowed, aerated, fertilised, oversown and top dressed. There is an associated pavilion and provision for spectators. They are accessible to the public when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 4 Concrete Wicket	These grounds are full sized generally without boundary fencing and are suitable for grade competition. They have a good quality turf surface with a centralised concrete wicket suitable for synthetic or matting covering, in-ground sprinkler system and drainage. They are properly graded and have a good depth of top soil. They are regularly mowed, aerated, fertilised, oversown and top dressed. There is an associated pavilion. They are accessible to the public after school hours when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 5 Concrete Wicket	These grounds are medium sized grounds without boundary fencing and are suitable for lower grade senior matches and junior matches. They may be located at secondary schools or they may be neighbourhood playing areas. Turf cover is generally good to medium quality. There is a centralised concrete wicket suitable for synthetic or matting covering. These grounds are not watered or drained. They are accessible to the public after school hours when not being used by the allocated club.
Grade 6 Concrete Wicket	These grounds are located at primary schools, are small and do not have a boundary fence and are suitable for junior competition. There is a centralised concrete wicket suitable for matting covering. They are not watered or drained and the turf cover may be patchy due to lack of soil depth and irrigation. There is generally not access to toilets or changing rooms. They are accessible to the public after school hours when not being used by the allocated club.
City of Manningham Pricing Policy	

Strengths

- Acknowledges that ground standards vary
- Enables targeted maintenance
- Encourages strategic planning of sportsground development
- May reduce over-servicing of grounds which do not require higher levels of maintenance
- Provides a rationale for varying level of fees
- Potential for competition consolidation through targeted facility resourcing

Weaknesses

- May lead to neglect of lower standard grounds
- Allows elite sport to make greater demands for support
- Dedicated usage emphasis for higher standard facilities may limit community access
- Requires monitoring and staffing commitment

Manningham Council has developed a Netball Centre of Excellence and all competitions are played at the centre. Other courts are not maintained for competitive netball, they are only maintained to a safe standard. This approach may lead to a rationalisation of facilities whilst consolidating competition. It enables Council to provide a high quality facility for netball competition whilst scaling back maintenance obligations to a minimum at other sites. This approach enables both elite and community access to high standard facilities.

By grading grounds Council's are able redirect expenditure to ensure that investment in sportsground management reflects competition requirements, equity and/or community demand. Implementation of an effective ground grading system may help to ensure that sportsground over-development does not occur.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST – GROUND GRADING

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate ground grading within Council's vision, service values or guiding principles for sportsground management
- Identify underlying principles as they apply to ground grading
- Determine if ground grading will assist the equitable allocation of resources
- Identify a suitable model for ground grading
- Establish ground grading criteria (eg City of Manningham)
- Develop an inventory of all grounds and grade all grounds
- Determine level of maintenance for grounds
- Link allocation of resources to grading system

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- On what basis will grounds be graded?
- Should State and/or Regional Sporting Associations be involved?
- If change is implemented what are the implications for user groups?
- What insurance issues need to be considered? By whom?
- Who determines the appropriate level of community/Council/committee investment required to sustain user group involvement in specific competitions?



PAVILION GRADING

DESCRIPTION

Pavilions are an important component of both suburban sportsgrounds and rural recreation reserves. Frequently in the study area of South West Victoria, pavilions reflected the capacity of committees of management and/or user groups to attract income, sponsorship and/or grants. Pavilions tend to be dominated by user groups yet in many cases they are public assets supported, subsidised and/or maintained by Council.

Toilets, kiosks, canteens, bars and function rooms all provide a level of comfort to patrons and users. Affluent clubs are able to attract larger numbers of patrons, sponsors and funding. The more comfortable people are, the more people stay around after games, and the more they spend or invest in the club. These factors have income and expenditure implications for clubs, committees and/or Council.

MODELS

Approaches to the management of pavilions vary greatly. Pavilion planning and development is frequently treated on a merit basis. If the committee of management is proactive then council and/or state government support is often provided in the form of grants. Whilst this approach seeks to help communities that *“help themselves”* this can lead to inappropriate or unsustainable development (over-development). For example this may involve the development of a facility in an area where population decline is experienced or anticipated, or the over-development of a facility where new toilets are required but capital works includes larger change rooms or childcare facilities.

The better models identified in this study utilise a strategic approach to pavilion planning and development. Council has a clear framework for assessing proposed pavilion developments which is linked to a pavilion grading and planning process.

PAVILION GRADING GUIDELINES

Policy development is necessary to:

- Clarify Council's position in relation to pavilions (as community assets, as places of belonging, as social spaces for families, as change rooms and/or as revenue raising opportunities for clubs etc.)
- Determine the level of support available from Council
- Set appropriate and agreed upon standards
- Articulate roles, responsibilities and relationships for use, management and development

The **City of Manningham** has developed a three tiered grading system for pavilions.

PAVILION GRADING	
Basic Pavilions	are those that contain toilets, showers and change-rooms only. In short they only contain the essentials for changing and showering
Intermediate Pavilions	in addition to the above facilities also contain clubrooms and/or a canteen/kiosk. They provide a more substantial amenity for the occupying club and some ability to generate revenue - through canteen sales.
Extended Pavilions	in addition to the above facilities also contain a social area that is capable of being hired commercially. Clubs using these pavilions are in an advantaged position in terms of generating extra revenue.
Manningham City Council	

EXAMPLES

The City of Manningham has a comprehensive approach to the management, planning and development of pavilions. Pavilions are graded and clubs occupying pavilions with similar facilities will be charged the same amount. This is linked to the fees and charges policy and applied to casual pavilion usage and seasonal rental. Pavilion charges are based on building valuations and the concept of average rent.

EXISTING PAVILIONS

- **Pavilion Value:** Pavilions have been constructed by the council over a period of time at most of our sporting grounds. In order that we can achieve equity in charging rental for pavilions it is necessary that we use a comparable base. Maintenance expense is not appropriate for pavilions, as older pavilions attract more costs. Therefore there is a need for a different basis to ground charges. All our pavilions have been given a value by the Property Services Unit and this forms a very equitable comparative basis upon which we can calculate rentals.

- **Club Contribution:** As some clubs have contributed towards the capital cost of the pavilions there is a need for recognition of this amount when calculating the figure to be used for rent calculation. The rated value of each pavilion will be reduced by identified club capital contribution to the building costs of the pavilion

NEW PAVILIONS

New Pavilions shall only be constructed when the user groups have agreed to the conditions of the licence agreement. (The standard licensing agreement shall be used). The rental shall reflect a fair and reasonable return to the council and will be based on the pavilions construction costs less club contribution. New pavilions should revert to existing pavilions for pricing purposes after 10 years.

**Manningham City Council
Pavilion Grading**

Strengths

- Acknowledges that pavilion standards vary
- Enables targeted maintenance
- Encourages strategic planning of pavilion development
- Provides a rationale for varying level of fees
- Potential for competition consolidation through targeted resourcing

Weaknesses

- May lead to neglect of lower standard pavilions
- Allows elite sport to make greater demands for support
- Dedicated usage emphasis for higher standard facilities may limit community access
- Requires monitoring and staffing commitment

Pavilion grading is a useful tool for LGAs and/or committees to:

- Determine the level of maintenance required
- Plan sportsground and facility development
- Monitor the appropriate level of community/council/committee investment
- Achieve sustainability in facility management by ensuring over-development does not occur

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST– PAVILION GRADING

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate pavilion grading within Council's vision, service values or guiding principles for sportsground management
- Identify underlying principles as they apply to pavilion grading
- Determine if pavilion grading will assist the equitable allocation of resources
- Determine a suitable model for pavilion grading
- Establish pavilion grading criteria (eg City of Manningham)
- Develop an inventory of all pavilions and grade all pavilions
- Determine level of maintenance for pavilions
- Link allocation of resources to grading system

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- What might be the potential impact on clubs and other users?
- Should pavilion grading be linked to ground grading?
- On what basis will pavilions be graded?
- If change is implemented what are the implications for user groups?
- What insurance issues may need to be considered? By whom?



MANAGEMENT

DESCRIPTION

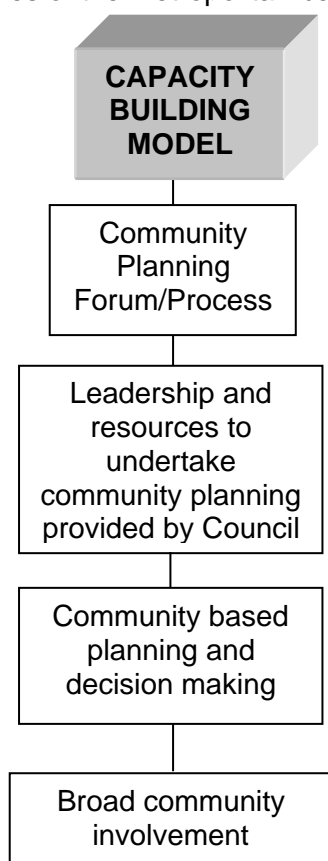
It is imperative that all LGAs develop, at a minimum, effective mechanisms for communication with community groups, regarding day-to-day management issues and strategic planning. Many LGAs have established Committees of Management and advisory committees, which represent the interests of user groups. Where groups operate on Crown Land, a representative committee of management is a requirement of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act. For groups operating on Council owned land, Section 86 committees have been established.

A further layer of representative management is useful for effective community representation across the municipality, which is able to advise council on matters such as:

- community grants allocation
- community demand
- strategic planning
- shared use issues
- club development
- participation
- maintenance
- fees and charges
- facility/ground development

MODELS

In general, metropolitan-based LGAs assume complete management responsibility for sportsgrounds and have established policies, procedures and practices to enable clubs and other user groups to operate within this management system. More intensive LGA management practices in urban areas can be attributed to greater population density, scale of facilities, level of Council investment, availability of Council staff and geographic proximity to facilities. These factors play a significant part in sustaining concentration of usage. Regional centres share some features of the metropolitan-based municipalities.



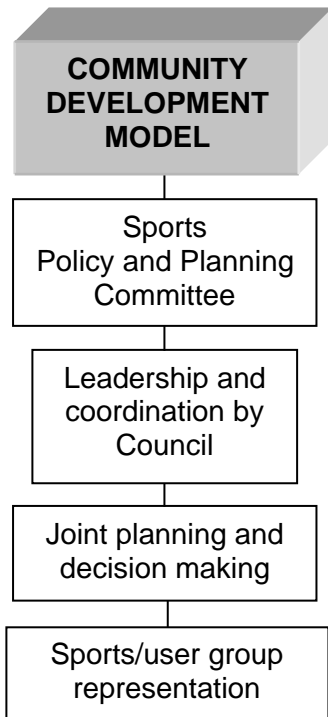
Strengths

- Council supports communities to play a key role in shaping sportsground planning, management and development
- Communities set priorities
- Communities develop greater ownership

Weaknesses

- Requires initial staffing and resourcing commitment with some ongoing support/liaison
- Communities may not have the skills to plan for the long term
- Community politics may be played out behind closed doors (does not necessarily eliminate bully tactics)
- Communities may not be able to achieve planning outcomes

In rural localities circumstances are somewhat different and there is a greater need for and reliance upon community based management. Two specific approaches can be identified in the study area which apply a capacity building and/or community development model to sportsground management. Here communities and/or community representatives play an active role in decision-making.

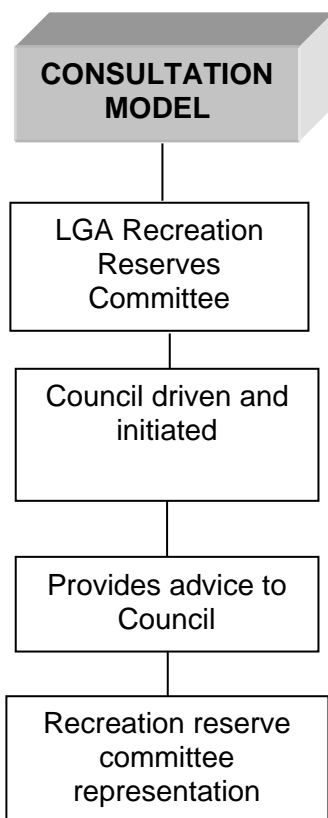


Strengths

- Joint planning and decision-making which involves both Council and sporting groups
- Fosters better understanding between Council and sporting groups
- Sporting groups develop greater understanding of resource/financial limits
- Council is bound by decisions and potentially more accountable to sporting groups
- Promotes openness and accountability for all parties involved

Weaknesses

- Requires some staffing commitment
- Requires commitment and involvement from sporting groups
- Requires acceptance of process
- Many not be a genuinely representative process



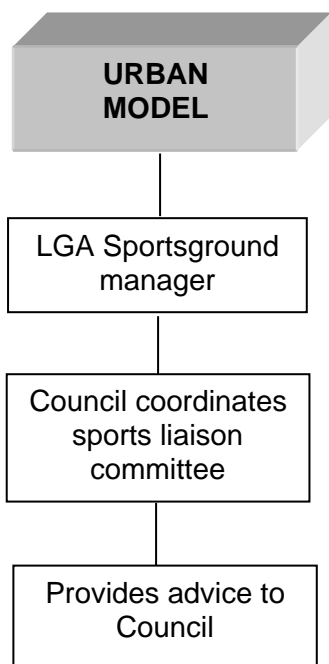
Strengths

- Council controls sportsground management and development with advice from recreation reserve committees

Weaknesses

- Council controls sportsground management and development with advice from recreation reserve committees
- Requires some staffing commitment
- Council involves community at arms length and on terms determined by Council
- Council is not bound by consultation outcomes

The model frequently seen in urban or metropolitan areas is quite simple. Council undertakes a pivotal role sportsground management. User groups are consulted through sports liaison meetings.



Strengths

- Council controls all aspects of sportsground management and development
- Council places high importance on community sport and recreation
- Long term asset management
- Council assumes total risk management
- Sports clubs focus on club management and development

Weaknesses

- Council controls sportsground management and development
- Council determines priorities
- Limited community/stakeholder involvement
- Requires on-going staffing by Council officers
- Requires total resource commitment from Council

The key question for local and state government is how much responsibility for day-to-day management can be expected of communities or user groups? Remote rural localities present a sportsground management dilemma. Which model, if any, fits?

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

LGAs need to have a clear sense of what they are seeking to achieve and the extent to which they are prepared to collaborate with or exclude stakeholders from decision-making processes.

EXAMPLES

Golden Plains Shire have developed a township approach to planning. The Shire supports communities to become involved in prioritising service development (including sport and recreation). Community capacity building is an important principle underpinning this approach. Communities are supported by the Shire, to participate in community recreation planning, development, management and resource allocation.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	
Strategic Direction 4	Golden Plains communities will play a critical role in planning, development and management of recreation resources
	Golden Plains Shire Recreation Strategy Plan 2000

In contrast Manningham articulates an important management role for Council in recreation support, service, facility provision and need identification.

4. SUPPORT FOR ALL LEVELS OF SPORT

Council will support all levels of sport. Their support will vary depending on need and will be reflected in the pricing policy. Council will provide a hierarchy of sporting fields to ensure sport can be sustained at varying levels of competition.

Manningham City Council
Grounds & Pavilions - Guiding Principles

The Golden Plains Recreation Strategy Plan has articulated specific strategies to achieve objectives relevant to the stated strategic directions. For recreation services at Golden Plains Shire there are three specific strategies.

OBJECTIVE 2	TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITIES TO PLAN FOR AND PRIORITISE RESOURCES
3.2.1	Endorse and promote the process undertaken with Council's recent community development program that resulted in Community Plans being developed from within the community
3.2.2	Facilitate the "Town Committee" cooperative planning model in communities that view this approach as advantageous
3.2.3	Prioritise Community Grant funding projects that stem from either of the above processes

The Shire Recreation Reserve Committee in **Southern Grampians Shire** has representatives from township progress associations, recreation reserves and Shire representatives. The committee meets annually to assess and prioritise capital works applications from reserve committees for recommendation to Council. This community development approach has proved to be an important and equitable system for the development of an informed and shared understanding of the needs of each community. Committee members have also gained an insight into the challenges and demands of recreation planning and a broader view of recreation provision, demands on Council resources, needs and issues across the Shire.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST - MANAGEMENT

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate sportsground management within Council's sportsground management policy
- Identify the level of support from Council to sport and sportsgrounds
- Consult broadly across Council, user groups, key stakeholders and the community
- Identify Council's position in relation to sportsground management
- Identify responsibilities in relation to sportsground management
- Develop, analyse and understand the impact for the management option being considered
- Develop effective mechanisms for communication with committees of management and/or community groups regarding day-to-day management issues and strategic planning
- Promote Council's sportsground management approach through a variety of mediums (local papers, Council's newsletter and website, mailouts to user groups and committees of management)

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- How skilled are community members in sportsground management?
- How can these skills be better utilised or enhanced?
- How can Council's review of sportsground management practices draw upon the experience and skills of community sportsground managers?
- Is it necessary to utilise a mix of management approaches? Should this be linked to ground and pavilion grading?



CLUB DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

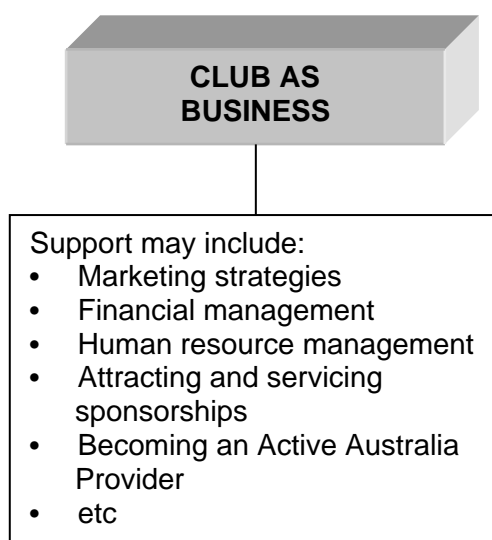
DESCRIPTION

Sports clubs rely on their membership base to undertake tasks and responsibilities that sustain club activities. Clubs require players to play sport, coaches to develop skills, umpires to undertake umpiring commitments and treasurers to manage financial matters (affiliation fees, insurance, fees and charges etc). As clubs grow and the number of teams increases, club management becomes increasingly complex. A plethora of tasks and responsibilities develop which are commensurate with club growth. Fundraising for uniforms, sporting equipment, clubroom improvements (or development), competition fees and coach payments can lead clubs into other club management issues such as food handling, liquor licensing, sponsorship agreements and increased responsibility for legal liability and insurance matters.

In many rural communities add to this the need to mow ovals, undertake line marking, watering, maintenance tasks and in some communities develop strategic planning processes for facility development. At the same time the people undertaking all of these tasks are, in the main, volunteers who may or may not have any previous experience in managing duties of this nature. The expectations of Federal, State and Local Government of clubs are that they operate as businesses, yet many clubs just want to play sport and perhaps have limited capacity and/or desire to operate as a business.

Sports clubs vary greatly in their needs, resources, volunteer capacity and the management issues they encounter. Many clubs can and do successfully operate as business enterprises. However while there may be expectations that clubs be self-sufficient, this is not always possible.

MODELS



Throughout the study two club models stand out; those which operate as businesses and those which operate as a community resource. These models are not mutually exclusive. However those clubs which operate as a community resource are more likely to be inclusive, incorporating juniors, people with disabilities, families and others who may otherwise be excluded from community activities. Given that both types of clubs operate on public land and receive and seek support from LGAs (eg reduced rates or no rates) it is important to consider how different clubs might benefit from LGA support.

CLUBS AS BUSINESS

Strengths

- Council provides support to clubs with a view to supporting their self-sufficiency
- Clubs derive tangible benefit from Council support
- Potential to share information and experiences between different types of clubs thereby improving the practices of all clubs

Weaknesses

- Assumes clubs can be sustainable
- Requires some staffing commitment
- Council supports clubs which may have exclusive practices
- Indiscriminately utilises Council resources
- No guarantee of community involvement, benefit or community outcomes



CLUBS AS COMMUNITY RESOURCE

Strengths

- Council provides support to clubs with a view to supporting their self-sufficiency
- Support to clubs produces broad range of community benefits
- Opportunities for linkages with other community resources

Weaknesses

- Assumes clubs can be sustainable but provision of support may be required on a regular and on-going basis
- Requires some staffing and resource commitment
- Council supports clubs which may have unsustainable practices and limited target markets

CLUB SUPPORT GUIDELINES

There are three key questions for LGAs to consider in relation to club support: -

- which clubs should be supported?
- how should clubs be supported?
- who should provide the support?

The first question can be answered with ready reference to Council's mission, goals and sportsground principles. Here Council's values (access for all, community wellbeing, equitable provision and/or community collaboration) will assist staff to determine which clubs should be supported.

Similarly the second question of how clubs will be supported will in part be determined by Council's policy position (sports development, healthy communities, community management and/or asset management). Is the club operating as a business (with paid coaches, players, administrators and exclusive membership and club facilities) or does the club provide important community infrastructure, that is an inclusive place, relying primarily on a volunteer base with a fundraising rather than a sponsorship emphasis? How do the activities of the club fit with Council's service values and principles?

The question of who should provide support raises an important issue for LGAs. This is not simply a matter of choice over best provider (consultants, community groups etc.) but a question of who is actually responsible for club support. Both the federal and state governments provide funding to a mix of organisations with responsibility for the provision of club support and training (eg Active Australia, Regional Sports Assemblies, Access for All Abilities etc.) as well as the National and State Sporting Associations. LGAs have to ensure that the provision of club support and training does not 'reinvent the wheel' but taps into existing networks and organisations with both expertise and responsibility for community based club support.

EXAMPLES

The **City of Monash** have developed an approach which supports club development. This is specifically addressed in the Recreation Strategy 1999-2001. Monash recognises the role of volunteers in community sport and identifies a critical role for LGAs in supporting clubs and community volunteers.

ACTION PLAN 2000 – Sports Liaison	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage and support sport and recreation clubs in becoming Active Australia providers • In accordance with legislative requirements continue to support sports clubs with the development of food safety programs and information • Continue to define the respective roles of peak sporting bodies and Council in the support and promotion of organised sport • Facilitate the City of Monash Sport and Recreation Grants Program • Coordinate a training workshop for sports clubs that focuses on increasing the participation of people with disabilities in recreation activities and promote awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act • Promote established awards programs acknowledging the support and contribution of volunteers to sport and recreation • Review the good neighbour guidelines to include the encouragement of a code of conduct for sport and recreation clubs 	<p>City of Monash Recreation Strategy Action Plan 2000</p>

Three further documents provide detailed information to clubs:

- Fees and Charges for Sporting Reserves and Pavilions
- Good Neighbour Guide
- Tenancy Agreements

Whilst the Good Neighbour Guide has been specifically developed to promote good relations between tenant sports clubs and residents living near reserves, the guide also addresses other issues such as; the role of the Club Community Liaison Officer, alcohol, social events etc.

The Tenancy Agreement outlines the responsibility of user groups and locates the agreement as a tool to strengthen the partnership between sporting clubs and Council for the benefit of the community. The amount of detail provided in these documents provides clubs with contextual information in relation to local government and sportsground management.

The **City of Greater Geelong** distribute a comprehensive **Sporting Club Resource Book** covering a broad range of issues in the one document.

SPORTING CLUB RESOURCE BOOK – SUMMARY OF CONTENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Greater Geelong Open Space and Development Section (including vision, purpose statement, goals, section structure, recreation link newsletter, sporting club information forums) • Contact List (Council, community and external agencies) • Open Space and Development Policies and Procedures (including tennis and netball court policy, club/Council contributions for recreation projects on Council owned or controlled land, turf wicket maintenance and development agreement, fees and charges, advertising signage, debt reduction policy for sporting clubs, ground allocations, reserve and pavilion use agreements, management committee guidelines for Council sporting reserves) • Parks Contract - scope of works (identifying what works are to be undertaken and the quality or standard of work) • Grants (including COGG, SRV, VicHealth, SSAs and Philanthropic Trusts) • Other Useful Information/Resources (including food handling, Active Australia, Codes of Behaviour, Playing Fair - Tackling Discrimination, Masters Participation, Coaching Athletes with Disabilities Courses, Going Smokefree, Good Sports Accreditation Program, Volunteer Management and Club/Association Management Program) 	<p>City of Greater Geelong Sporting Club Resource Book</p>

LGAs and sports assemblies (and State Sporting Associations to a lesser extent) provide training and support to clubs. Are these efforts coordinated and implemented strategically to maximise the benefit to club development? Or does this happen in an unplanned and ad hoc manner?

IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE – CLUB DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate club support and development within Council's mission, goals and sportsground principles
- Identify the level and scope of support Council provides to clubs which operate as businesses
- Identify the level and scope of support Council provides to clubs which operate as community resources
- Work collaboratively with clubs, committees, sports assemblies and State Sporting Associations to develop a more strategic approach to club support and development
- Develop a Club Support Strategy for Council

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Open discussion with clubs is vital to any support strategy being developed

- How much work is involved in running sports clubs? If support is provided (eg in the form of training) is it useful to club volunteers or a burden?
- If clubs could receive support from Council, sports assemblies and State Sporting Associations, who should provide what sort of support?
- Could support roles be structured to reflect the skills and core business of support agencies? Who should coordinate this?
- How should support be implemented?
- Does Council have the human resources to undertake this work?



MAINTENANCE

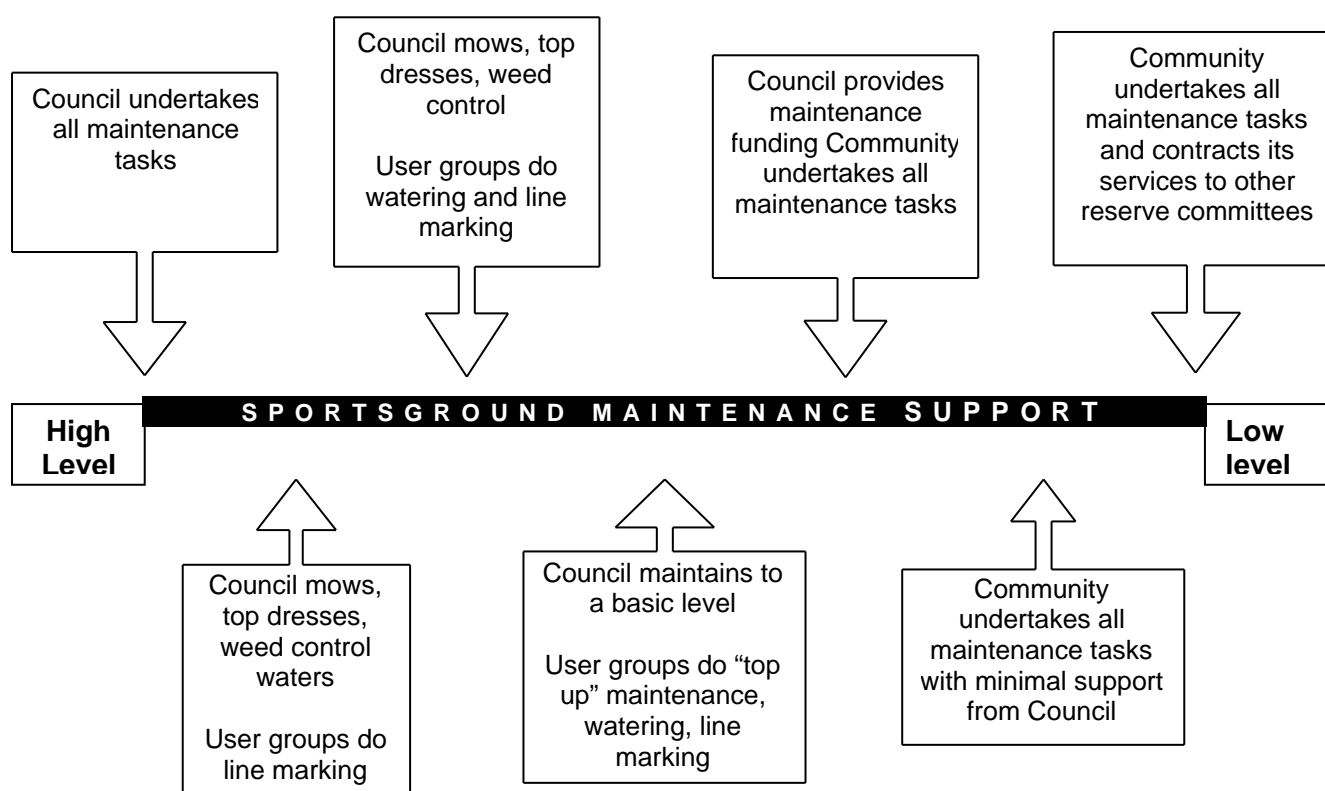
DESCRIPTION

Maintenance is fundamental to effective sportsground management and utilisation patterns. The central issue is who should assume responsibility for maintenance. Inevitably decisions regarding sportsground maintenance are closely linked to the issue of human and financial resources and expectations of Local Government.

Who undertakes responsibility for maintenance and how it is carried out is also governed by how an LGA regards community sport and recreation. Where sportsgrounds and/or recreation reserves are viewed by LGAs as a community resource, Council may assume the role of asset manager and provide comprehensive maintenance. Alternatively committees of management may be expected to undertake sportsground maintenance. Regardless of how community sport is viewed by LGAs, maintenance arrangements need to be clear, coherent and consistent.

MODELS

A range of maintenance models operate which sit across a continuum. The determining feature of maintenance arrangements is the level of LGA responsibility dedicated to maintenance. Some LGAs assume full responsibility for maintenance while others accept no responsibility for maintenance.



The strengths and weaknesses of each approach are measured in terms of:

- Cost to council
- Cost to community (time and resources)
- Community enterprise
- Standardised approach to maintenance across LGA
- Risk management
- Maintenance of community asset
- Capacity of user groups to meet fees and charges
- Capacity of user group to undertake maintenance

MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

An important task in sportsground management is to identify maintenance costs, tasks, responsibilities and obligations. This will be guided by Council's mission, goals and sportsground principles.

"The cost of developing the sporting facilities will be funded through Council's rate base, while the cost of using and maintaining the facilities will be met by the user groups. It is acknowledged by Council that it is not possible to recover the total cost of providing sportsgrounds and pavilions. The seasonal allocation fees and charges attempt to recover a reasonable percentage of the maintenance costs associated with each individual sportsground and pavilions."

**City of Kingston
Sporting Facility Fees and Charges Policy**

EXAMPLES

The **City of Kingston** estimates that the maintenance cost for one sporting oval Category B (see City of Kingston ground grading table) will cost \$20,000 per annum (not including maintenance of the surrounds). Components of sportsground maintenance are identified in the City of Kingston Sporting Fees and Charges Policy.

SPORTSGROUND MAINTENANCE COSTS include a proportion of the following works:

- mowing
- rolling and de-thatching
- fertilisation
- replace/remove goal posts
- testing
- gypsum treatment
- top dressing aerating
- disease treatment
- maintenance of fences/cricket nets
- seeding
- watering
- covering/uncovering concrete cricket wickets

**City of Kingston
Sporting Facility Fees and Charges Policy**

The **Policy for Maintenance of Sporting Facilities** sets out the maintenance obligations of both the City of Kingston and sporting clubs. Tasks and responsibilities are clearly articulated under the following:

POLICY FOR MAINTENANCE OF SPORTING FACILITIES

- Pavilion
- Ground
- Goal posts
- Security lighting
- Fences
- Carparks/drive ways
- Rubbish collection
- Public toilets
- Fire prevention
- Training lights
- Signs
- Scoreboards/coaching boxes

**City of Kingston
Maintenance of Sporting Facilities Policy**

The City of Frankston produces and distributes a **Reserve and Pavilion User Guide**. In addition to stipulating the conditions of use for seasonal tenancy, the guide also identifies maintenance tasks and specifies maintenance obligations of both user groups and Council. It has the capacity to function as a comprehensive management tool.

The guide covers a broad range of issues, beginning by outlining the cost of sportsground maintenance. Community groups gain a clear sense of the tasks involved in sportsground management. Further, the document articulates the specific pavilion maintenance obligations of both Council and user groups in a schedule format covering maintenance tasks such as fire extinguishers, graffiti, plumbing, gutters, skylights and exhaust fans.

In some areas guidance provided is quite detailed. For example users are given strict guidelines in relation to watering of grounds:

*If the temperature is above 30 degrees clubs are not to water the ground
Clubs are only to water the ground during late afternoon / early evening.*

RESERVE AND PAVILION USER GUIDE - CONTENTS

- Reserve and pavilion allocation
- Fees and charges
- The cost of maintenance
- Additional charges
- Deductions
- Playing field maintenance (line marking, watering of grounds, rubbish removal, covering and uncovering concrete wickets, maintenance/replacements of synthetic wickets, turf wickets, pre-season/training matches, playing surface)
- Pavilion maintenance
- Food safety
- Reserve infrastructure (fencing, coaches boxes/dugouts, goal posts, scoreboards, lighting, concrete wickets, practice facilities)
- Telecommunications towers
- Usage issues (use of playing fields, subletting playing fields, use of pavilion, subletting of pavilion, insurance, contents insurance, liquor licence, gaming licence, advertising, signage, public toilets, public health, car parks, smoking in pavilions, animals)
- Grants (including local and state government grants)
- Capital improvements
- Key Council contacts
- Further reading (Council policies covering: advertising, fees and charges, individual financial assistance in sport, naming playing fields and pavilions and best practice manual, signage for reserves)

Frankston City Council
Guide

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST - MAINTENANCE

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate sportsground maintenance within Council's mission, goals and sportsground principles
- Identify and review the financial resources allocated to sportsground maintenance
- Determine Council's responsibilities in relation to sportsground management
- Determine community responsibilities in relation to sportsground management
- Determine user group responsibilities in relation to sportsground management
- Determine the level and nature of support Council is willing to provide to clubs that are required to maintain sportsgrounds
- Determine the capacity of clubs to undertake maintenance tasks

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Are sportsgrounds and recreation reserves community assets?
- What style of consultation will assist Council to identify appropriate maintenance roles, obligations and responsibilities?
- Should maintenance be linked to ground and/or pavilion grading?
- To what degree can communities undertake effective sportsground maintenance?
- What incentives exist for communities to implement more efficient maintenance practices? (eg watering, weed control)
- To what degree should Council provide labour, expertise or specialised equipment?
- What risk management issues need to be considered?
- Should all sportsgrounds be treated equally?



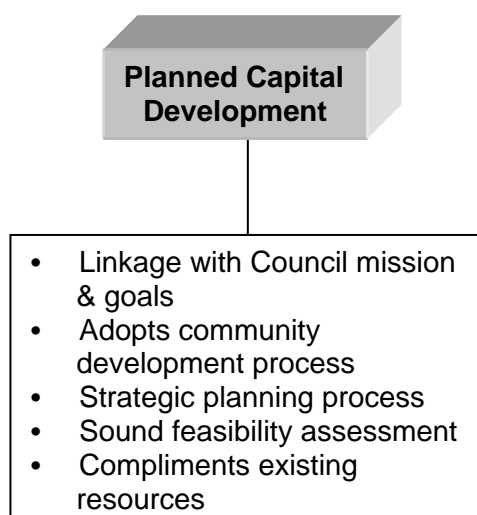
CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

DESCRIPTION

Capital development refers to the allocation of funds for specified projects designed to develop new sportsgrounds or facilities and/or upgrade existing sportsgrounds and facilities. Funds can be raised from LGAs own sources, community fundraising and/or via SRV major and minor works grants.

MODELS

Differences in capital development models are a reflection of different perceptions regarding the role of planning. Some LGAs are limited in their program of capital development by financial considerations. Others use planning and policy considerations to determine the extent of capital development. Traditionally capital development has been informed by demonstrated community need. SRV is often the final arbiter of capital development proposals.

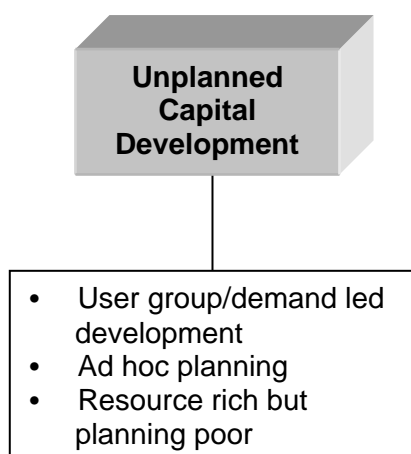


Strengths

- Builds upon and links with existing LGA agendas and resources
- Strategic and systematic planning processes limit ad hoc developments
- Greater potential for sportsground and facility viability and sustainability

Weaknesses

- Requires significant amount of time and resources dedicated to planning processes
- No guarantee of successful funding
- Costs of planning (eg. feasibility studies)

**Strengths**

- Few additional planning costs
- Direct linkage and potential ownership of development by user group/s
- Straightforward process
- Satisfies influential interest groups

Weaknesses

- Not based upon demonstrated community need
- Potential for community exclusion
- Continues the pattern of unplanned, ad hoc developments
- Meets short-term demands but fails to consider long-term usage, funding and development considerations
- Highly political process which satisfies the demands of influential interest groups
- No guarantee of successful funding
- No evidence of viability or sustainability

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

In initiating capital development projects LGAs have a responsibility to consider the future. Questions of viability and sustainability must be at the forefront of such projects. This is particularly important given the current patterns of sports participation where team based and structured activities are less popular. Activities which may have been very popular in the past have no guarantee of being popular in the future. For rural and regional communities demographic profiles and the resource base of communities are changing highlighting the need for linking social planning to capital development projects.

In addition to consideration of sports trends and population profiles, Council's need to consider the level of commitment they are able to make over both the short and long term. Capital development projects require intensive investment initially, and must then be supported and maintained over the longer term. Councils also need to consider the balance between the interests of particular sports and clubs, and the wider sports community. Development of major facilities have to be balanced against the development of minimum standard facilities across communities. Council mission, goals and plans provide useful reference points for these sorts of policy decisions.

LGAs should establish a capital development or capital improvement policy in relation to sportsgrounds and recreation reserves. Current practices are characteristic of unlimited development and are unsustainable. A capital development policy would assist Council, clubs and committees to:

- Ensure a basic or minimum level of sports facilities
- Identify priority capital improvement projects
- Develop strategic planning processes for capital works

EXAMPLES

While most Council's have some form of capital development formula which identifies the criteria for grant allocations, few Council's have located capital development within an overall sports development framework. **Frankston City Council** have developed a Capital Works policy which goes some way to achieving this. The policy sets limits in relation to facility development and clearly identifies the level of Council support for capital improvement.

Council's Capital Works policy is aimed at providing facilities to a basic level and includes the involvement and input of clubs to increase the standard of those facilities.

Where possible, Council will provide change rooms and toilets in a pavilion. In higher standard facilities, pavilions also include showers, storage and umpires facilities.

Any additional facilities that are required exclusively by the club or association shall be funded 100% by the club. These include such things as social facilities, training lights and coach boxes. Council will not fund the installation, relocation or maintenance of practice facilities such as cricket nets or baseball nets.

**City of Frankston
Reserve and Pavilion User Guide**

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Develop a capital development policy which identifies a clear rationale for development and improvement works
- Identify a capital development planning process
- Ensure that social, environmental, cultural and financial planning are incorporated into this process
- Ensure that key stakeholders (including relevant state government departments and state and national sporting associations) and the broad community are actively engaged in planning processes
- Involve Council staff and Councillors in planning processes
- Provide sound evidence that all capital development projects will meet demonstrated needs, are environmentally, socially and financially viable and sustainable

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Will the development contribute to Council's mission and policy in relation to sportsgrounds?
- Is the development viable?
- Does the development have widespread support?
- Can Council justify this level of development and expenditure?
- Is this the best use of available resources?
- Are there other options (eg. competition rationalisation, facility regionalisation, joint development)?
- Is the development a community asset, a Taj Mahal, a site of economic and sports development or a place of exclusive activity?
- Will this be a vibrant development in the future?



GROUND ALLOCATION

DESCRIPTION

Ground allocation is particularly important where there is competition for facilities or ovals. It also provides an opportunity for sportsground managers to formalise management and user obligations via Tenancy or Occupancy Agreements.

MODELS

There are numerous approaches to ground allocation. These range from no formal agreements being in place (Colac Otway has examples of this) to a 50 page Tenancy Agreement (City of Monash) which includes a “Formal Instrument of Agreement”. In some cases Committees of Management have authority to arrange tenancy agreements and (with Council approval) set fees.

GROUND ALLOCATION GUIDELINES

Where possible, Councils should enter into some form of agreement which stipulates conditions of use, responsibilities etc. Council or committees can advertise ground allocation annually and implement short-term annual agreements. However it is more desirable for user groups to have the capacity to plan for the future (eg 3 year Occupancy Agreements).

Where possible, LGAs and committees require a transparent process for the equitable allocation of grounds and pavilions. Formal allocation procedures and tenancy agreements are highly desirable in order to:

- Ensure responsible use of community facilities
- Ensure equitable access to community facilities
- Clarify expectations of co-tenants (eg season change over)
- Identify conditions of use for grounds and pavilions

EXAMPLES

City of Kingston sets out the terms and conditions of use for Council sporting reserves. The terms and conditions outline: -

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Seasonal dates | • Closure of grounds |
| • Process and requirements for ground allocation | • Damages/security |
| • Change over procedures | • Insurance |
| • Issue of keys | • Cleaning and rubbish collection |
| • Payment of fees and charges (including utilities) | • Local laws (advertising, liquor licence, gambling, selling of goods etc) |
| • Casual hirers and sub-letting | • Maintenance |
| | • Withdrawal of grounds |

The **City of Frankston** also outlines reserve and pavilion allocation procedures. Allocation is dependent on a number of factors, which include but are not limited to: -

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Record of payment of rental fees to Council | • Contributions to capital improvements |
| • Previous club history | • Availability of facilities |

The strongest advantage of a system for ground allocation is that all parties are clear in relation to expectations, charges, responsibilities and processes. These systems are not only fair, they provide a clear set of requirements for users and identify Council obligations. In the event of disputes and/or litigation ground allocation agreements provide a key reference point for settlement. Ground allocation systems can ensure that decisions and arrangements are accountable. This moves sportsground allocation away from entrenched and informal practices to more formal arrangements.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST – GROUND ALLOCATION

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Consult with Council staff, Councillors, committees of management, sports clubs and other user groups
- Canvass a range of Tenancy Agreement options
- Identify the sorts of information, obligations and responsibilities for inclusion
- Include some documented process for monitoring and review
- Specify and document all requirements
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of implementing formalised agreements
- Determine what impacts (including benefits) this may have on specific clubs and user groups
- Consider the administrative implications and identify human resources and support required
- Promote any proposed changes through newsletters, local media etc to encourage community input and debate
- Be clear about the outcomes required of Tenancy Agreements (eg cleaning responsibilities, good neighbour relations etc.)
- Ensure that processes and documentation are clear, workable and achievable
- Ensure that processes are both public and accountable

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- What procedures need to be put in place to ensure that documentation is clear, workable and achievable?
- What procedures need to be put in place to ensure that processes are both public and accountable?
- Who should be involved? At what point?



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

DESCRIPTION

Sustainable Development Defined

The view of sustainable development at the core of Global System for Sustainable Development (GSSD) centres on human activities, and places human beings in social systems at its core, while into account and respecting the imperatives of nature and natural systems.

We define sustainable development as the process of meeting the needs of current and future generations without undermining the resilience of the life-supporting properties or the integrity and cohesion of social systems. Extending this definition further, we differentiate among four dimensions of sustainability as follows:

- ecological configuration*
- economic activity & output*
- governance & politics*
- institutional capacity & performance*

To become sustainable, a system must meet four "conditions" -- the quotes are to remind us that we are dealing with processes, not discrete outcomes -- which consist of:

- (a) ecological systems exhibiting balance and resilience;*
- (b) economic production & consumption that does not undermine ecological systems*
- (c) governance modes reflecting participation and responsiveness, and*
- (d) institutional performance which demonstrates adaptation and feedback.*

This view posits that if, and only if, these conditions hold will a system dispose toward sustainability.

*<http://202.205.252.19/GSSD/GSSDen.nsf/searchFrameset?OpenFrameSet>
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Global System for Sustainable Development (GSSD)*

Sportsgrounds are inextricably linked to the natural environment. Water quality and availability, and soil quality are crucial ingredients for ground playability. If sportsground water management practices are unsustainable (either financially or environmentally) then long term viability is brought into question. If soil quality is degraded by ground maintenance and/or management practices, this also impacts on the standard of facility and long term viability. Poor environmental practices are leading to increasing costs for clubs.

MODELS

Some golf courses are utilising grey (reclaimed) water, however this is not common practice as yet. Few facility developments or improvements are prioritising environmental best practice but are more likely to prioritise short-term financial efficiencies rather than long term cost savings to users.

In **Planning Policies for Sport** (1999) Sport England advocates development plans that *“encourage the wise use of non-renewable resources in the development of new facilities for sport and by making good use of existing buildings, including re-use and dual use”...and the development of facilities ...” which use sustainable construction techniques and materials which are durable and long lasting”*.

This approach may seem “out of touch” with current sportsground management practices (and constraints) in Victoria, however LGAs and clubs should consider the cost savings of solar heating (including passive solar energy), dual flushing or composting toilets (rather than flushing), instantaneous hot water (rather than constant) etc.

Here there are few models to draw on.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES

“There is a need to reconcile environmental protection with economic, equity, and participation issues and the needs of future generations” Sport England (1999).

Clearly the development of environmentally sustainable sportsground management requires a significant commitment from communities, Councils and State and Federal Government. Local action needs to be supported by research, trials and capital works funding at both State and Local Government levels.

EXAMPLES

The **City of Manningham** is committed to an Environmental Management System and environmental sustainability. Recreation staff work closely with the City Parks Unit to implement environmentally sustainable sportsground management practices.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – SPORTSGROUND MANAGEMENT

Recycling Of Sportsground Generated Rubbish

Manningham is currently addressing rubbish recycling on all sporting grounds. This will involve having separate bins for: cans, bottles and plastic; paper and cardboard; and general rubbish.

This is consistent with Council's domestic waste collection. Currently clubs are encouraged to take recyclables off site and deposit them in the domestic collection.

Tennis Strategy and Water Use

A new tennis strategy is before Council and it addresses tennis playing surfaces. At present the vast majority of tennis court surfaces are en-tout-cas. The maintenance of this surface requires a large volume of water. In view of current and future water shortages the tennis strategy will encourage clubs (with Council financial assistance) to change their playing surfaces to ones that do not require large volumes of water.

Centralised Ground Watering System

The majority of Manningham's sporting grounds are watered using a centrally controlled watering system. Watering of these sporting grounds is programmed for night time and all grounds where this system is installed are monitored for moisture content and watered accordingly. As a result of the installation of this system there has been a 30% reduction in the amount of water used for watering sports grounds.

The total budget for maintaining Manningham's sporting fields is \$400,000. This includes \$80,000 for the supply of water.

Construction and Refurbishment of Sporting Pavilions

The construction and refurbishment of sporting pavilions involves the following installations:

- Instantaneous (on demand) gas hot water service - no stored hot water
- Natural lighting - roof skylights and larger aluminium windows
- Upgraded fluorescent lighting - reduced electricity use
- Upgraded shower roses to restrict water flow - lower water consumption
- Ceilings and roof Insulation - reduce heating/cooling costs
- Reverse cycle heating and cooling systems - reduce electricity use
- Dual flush toilets - reduce water consumption

Floodlighting

Installation of new floodlighting or upgrading of existing floodlighting ensures that lower power consumption units are used. New light heads use less power and produce more light than units that have been installed for some time.

Grey Water

In conjunction with Yarra Water, Council is examining the issue of "Grey Water" - water discharge from showers wash basins and kitchen sinks. The possibility of storage and reuse of grey water on a regional scale is being investigated.

Ground Fertilisation, Pest Eradication and Weed Control

Despite an extra 30% cost, slow release fertiliser is used exclusively. This ensures that the nutrients stay on the ovals and minimal amounts find their way to the surrounding streams City Parks (the unit that controls the maintenance of sporting grounds) has a policy that ensures minimal use of insecticides and weed control chemicals.

Solar Lighting

Council has installed solar powered pathway lighting at three venues. This lighting is very expensive to install, but of course the power is from a renewable source. As the cost of these installations is reduced, Council will continue with this program.

**City of Manningham
NB Status Report to Sustaining Sportsgrounds**

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

To be consistent with best practice in this area an LGA will:

- Locate environmental sustainability within Council's mission, goals and sportsground principles
- Work collaboratively with clubs, committees, local environmental groups and State Government to develop a more strategic approach to environmental sustainability
- Investigate more environmentally sustainable practices in community facilities
- Develop an environmental management system applicable to sportsground management
- Begin implementing small scale changes which are understood, achievable and supported by communities and/or committees

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Should LGAs support communities to sink bores without adequate cost benefit and environmental impact analysis?
- Could an environmental management system be linked to ground and/or pavilion grading?
- Has Council raised the issue of environmental sustainability with clubs and committees?
- What local and regional initiatives (eg Land Care, Friends Groups) exist which could provide linkage points for the development of environmental awareness and sustainable practice?
- Could Council support experimentation or trialing of more virulent or drought resistant grass types?

