

Meeting Date: Tuesday 28 February 2012
Location: Council Chambers, Level 6, Civic Centre, 1 Devlin Street, Ryde
Time: Following the conclusion of the reconvened meeting of 14 February 2012

NOTICE OF BUSINESS

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LATE ITEMS

18 BEST VALUE REVIEW - SPORTGROUND ALLOCATION AND
MANAGEMENT 1

LATE ITEMS

18 BEST VALUE REVIEW - SPORTGROUND ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT

Report prepared by: Open Space Planner

Report dated: 15/02/2012

File No.: GRP/11/4/3 - BP12/128

REPORT SUMMARY

The demand being placed on Council's sporting facilities continues to increase due to sports participation and population growth. To assist with the sustainable management of these important community assets, the City of Ryde has undertaken a Best Value Review (BVR) that analyses the approaches used by Council in the provision of community level sporting facilities. The Review compares Council's current approaches with industry best practice and then makes recommendations for Council to achieve standards in line with best practice levels and to improve the service it provides to the community. These recommendations have been informed by discussion with the various clubs and user groups that utilise Council's facilities.

This report provides a summary of the recommendations of the draft Best Value Review reports and seeks endorsement of the year one implementation plan.

To resource the implementation of this BVR Councils endorsement is sought for a change in the fees and charges regime. This will part fund an increase the level of customer service and administration functions provided by the Open Space Team to the community and facilitate an increase in the staff establishment. This will be supplemented by a reallocation of efficiency savings across the Community Life portfolio to support this increase in service level.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) That Council authorise the release of the Best Value Review – Sportsground Allocation and Management for community comment including distribution to the sporting clubs of the City of Ryde.
- (b) That following community comment a report be prepared from the Sports and Recreation Advisory Committee that includes a detailed action plan for the implementation of the Best Value Review recommendations.
- (c) That Council endorse the increase in fees and charges of 21 % above the IPART determination for inclusion in the draft fees and charges for Councils consideration in formulating the Operation Plan for 2012/13
- (d) That Council endorse the increase in staffing to the Unit as detailed in this report, to be funded by savings and increased income to Council from the leasing and hire of sports facilities

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- (e) That Council endorse the year one implementation plan (to June 2012) of:
- (A) The recruitment of vacant positions
 - (B) The development of a Pricing and Equity Policy
 - (C) A detailed review of the Fees and Charges including categories and charging structure.
 - (D) Open Space undertake the development of Service Level Agreements between Open Space and Public Works to define the maintenance requirements of the fields , informed by the hierarchy provided in the Integrated Open Space Plan,.
- (f) That Council nominate the commencement of the Summer 2012 season as the commencement of the changes in procedure nominated in the Best Value Review and that a detailed information session be held with clubs and associations ahead of the commencement of season to ensure the community is informed.
- (g) That the survey conducted as part of this review be repeated in March 2013 to benchmark Councils efforts in improving their service to the community and the sports sector.

ATTACHMENTS

1 Final Ryde BVR Vol 4 Policy and Implementation Plan 20 2 12

Report Prepared By:

Fiona Morrison
Open Space Planner

Report Approved By:

Danielle Dickson
Group Manager - Community Life

ITEM 18 (continued)**Discussion**

The Open Space Team in partnership with @Leisure has completed a Best Value Review (BVR) on the allocation and management of the City's sportsgrounds. The BVR review commenced in June 2011 and provides a suite of recommendations on how Council can improve efficiencies and the service it provides to the Community in the management provision and administration of recreation services.

The purpose of the BVR was to engage and consult with local users, external stakeholders and staff to:

- Determine if Council is meeting the community's expectations in the management and allocation of sportsgrounds
- Define what is considered to be a 'basic standard' of facility provision
- Confirm Council's ability to resource this standard and the community expectations
- Identify opportunities to raise the standard
- Provide direction to Council on policy and procedure to support consistent management and allocation practices

As a part of the Review, @leisure examined:

- What sportsground services Council offers?
- Who is responsible for the management of these?
- How does Council deliver these sportsground services?
- How does Council respond to the needs of the community and sporting associations and organisations?
- What elements of Council's sporting facilities allocation and management can be improved and how?
- Does Council charge suitable fees for the use of sporting facilities?
- How can Council work with the community to encourage and recognise contributions to the capital infrastructure upgrades by sporting organisations

Over the 8 months of the project staff and @Leisure have worked closely with internal stakeholders and user groups to obtain an understanding of their needs and concerns about the allocation and management of sportsgrounds. This has included:

- Internal staff workshops and interviews
- presentations and workshops with the project Challenge Committee
- process mapping
- telephone interviews with key users groups
- an online survey of user groups
- benchmarking of other Councils as nominated in the brief and by the Challenge Committee
- attendance at the preseason Associations forum
- an assessment of the carrying capacity of key sports reserves
- presentation and workshops at the Sport and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Councillor workshop

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The development of the BVR was a staged process that resulted in the production of four key volumes:

- *Volume 1: State of Play* - A report that details the services Council provides and the results of the user survey.
- *Volume 2: Benchmarking Report* – Analysis of the approaches used to allocation, manage and charge for sportsgrounds across a range of Councils in NSW, Victoria and Western Australia,
- *Volume 3: Issues and Options* – A summary of the key issues and options for change to the management of sportsgrounds following consultation with staff, the Challenge Committee, a user survey and the benchmarking.
- *Volume 4: Policy and Implementation Plan* – Discussion and implementation plan listing the improvements and actions needed to provide an improved service to the community).

A Peer Review of the BVR was conducted by Clouston Associates, the consultant team that is preparing the Integrated Open Space Plan for Council. This review was to ensure the alignment of the BVR recommendations with the direction and recommendations of the Integrated Open Space Plan.

What the Sports User Groups told us:

A major component of the BVR was developing an understanding of the user perceptions of the services Council provides and to identify those areas where Council could improve or expand service provision. The key messages from the user groups were as follows:

- More than 55% of users identified that demand for sportsgrounds will increase over the next 5 years.
- Users have indicated that improvements could be made in the provision of clear occupancy agreements for use of Council's facilities.
- Users would like the option to be able to book online
- The condition of Council's sports grounds is of very high importance to users and they believe there is room for improvement
- Ongoing improvements to floodlighting and other facilities is a high priority for user groups
- Providing information to users groups on capital works improvements to sportsgrounds is of high importance
- They would like to see improvements to the mechanisms for reporting on maintenance requests from Clubs.

What the Staff told us:

In addition to understanding what the users concerns and desires are, the BVR also included a comprehensive consultation programme with key recreation staff. The feedback from the staff identified the following challenges for the ongoing management and allocation of the City's sportgrounds

- Under our current management approach the amount of active recreation space only meets current needs,
- We have imperfect information in relation to the management, booking, renewal and maintenance of these assets

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- Council currently has a level of service that doesn't meet the communities expectations

What the industry benchmarking told us:

Following the clarification of the Ryde specific management challenges from the users groups and staff, @Leisure then tested the industry on the level of service, costs associated with recreation provision and the scope of services provide by other local government entities. This process of benchmarking provided detailed analysis of how the City of Ryde currently performs against industry standards and presented a summary of areas for improvement and action, as listed below.

- Changes to the blanket booking approach
- Upgrade and implementation of the full potential of the booking software
- Additional recreation staffing are required to support sportsground management and sports development
- Review of the fees and charges associated with sports
- Centralisation of maintenance requests
- Realise opportunities for partnerships for capital works cost sharing

It is important to note that following the benchmarking process, the City of ryde was found to perform well within its allocated resources.

Best Value Review – Conclusions:

Volume 4 – Policy and Implementation of the BVR (**ATTACHED**) provides a discussion of the steps Council should take to change the manner in which Council provides, manages and administers recreation services for the community. The following conclusions have been developed as result of the feedback from users and recreation staff and the benchmarking of 16 Councils.

The key elements of Council's sporting facilities allocation and management that are suggested for improvements are:

1. Internal financial and administration systems,
2. The documentation of procedures and use agreements,
3. Communication with users, and
4. Increased maintenance and infrastructure development.

The following dot points provide an expanded discussion on the main focus areas for improvement. A more detailed discussion of these issues and recommendations can be found in Volume 4 – Policy and Implementation Plan.

- The services that Council provide are highly regarded by user groups and customers and are considered to be of a good value considering that many of the sportsgrounds are impacted on by overuse and an under funded maintenance and capital works programmes.
- Improvements could be made to the marketing and sports development focus of the Recreation Team so as to enhance sporting participation.

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- In comparison with other Councils benchmarked the City of Ryde provides a good suite of sportsground opportunities and considering limited funds, the resource quality and the cost to users the service provided is good value.
- The Open Space Unit is the business manager for the sportsgrounds and the role the unit plays in capital improvements maintenance and programming for the sportsgrounds is undergoing transformation. This is considered desirable.
- The Open Space Unit should have a stronger customer, marketing and planning focus.
- Council should investigate partnerships with other NSROC Councils, sports associations and or peak bodies to fund or undertake non core or supplementary elements of maintenance.
- Many internal systems relied on to deliver the sportsground services are in need of refinement and updating. An upgrade of the CLASS software is required and all booking, referral, reporting and monitoring should be conducted electronically with a user interface.
- A new system to record and analyse costs by playing field, reserve and season is essential to monitor performance and efficiency and make service deliver choices.
- In the delivery of the service a greater focus on communication with sport peak bodies and users, and regular monitoring of the importance of service aspects to users and their perceptions of performance is required.
- Additional staff resources would be beneficial to deliver the sportsground services as well as market available opportunities to residents.
- Overall the greatest gaps in users' expectations relating to capital works and the condition of grounds.
- A stronger understanding and ownership of issues faced by Council in the management of sportsgrounds by the sports associations and users is needed via improved communication.
- To respond to the increasing demand for playing fields and limited available funds, more technical assessments of carrying capacity are required as they will inform the limits on use, in conjunction with development of and programming of any underutilised space.
- Consideration should be given to several synthetic fields to enhance capacity and manage the condition of grass surfaces.
- A new service specification /agreement for maintenance and an update of performance criteria for the maintenance teams are required.

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- Fees and charges are comparable with other Councils.

Implementation of the Best Value Review

The implementation of the BVR will occur in a staged and planned way as there are many actions that have interdependence and or are prerequisite to others. The table below lists the priority actions that should be implemented as a high importance.

Recommended Action	Priority
1. Allocation and booking service for sportsgrounds	
1. Booking and allocations - Prepare a guide to booking and using and caring for sportsgrounds in Ryde, this should include objectives, principles, processes and priorities	1
2. Booking and allocations - Upgrade the CLASS software to provide a user friendly interface for bookings, allocations, payments and collecting data about demand and use of sportsgrounds	1
3. Booking and allocations - Redesign the booking and application process to be online and include information as to how users plan to include people with disability, females and juniors and an agreement to meet Councils sportsground principles, objectives and priorities	1
4. Information management - Enhance the information provided directly to sportsground users to encourage greater knowledge, care and ownership of issues associated with the sportsground service and management	1
5. Information management -Undertake further carrying capacity assessments of all sportsgrounds so as to be able to make informed usage and allocation decisions	1
2. Fees and charges and costs of the service	
6. Fees and charges - Adopt the basis for pricing of sportsgrounds as outlined in the NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy	1
7. Fees and charges - Seek to return approximately 25% of marginal costs through fees and charges to users	1
8. Fees and charges - Prepare a new matrix based on adopted principles, so as to establish a new schedule for fees and charges	1
9. Fees and charges - Introduce a new internal financial system and record keeping to deliver detailed sportsground costs per field, location and season	1
10. Maintenance and service costs - Introduce a new system of accounting and recording and reporting sportsgrounds maintenance, development and asset management costs by field and season	1
3. Sportsground maintenance	
11. Maintenance levels - Determine the budget requirements to enhance maintenance levels following the assessment of all ground carrying capacities, and where possible increase funds available for sportsgrounds maintenance	1
4. Sportsground capital works	
12. Funding capital works - Actively seek partnerships with NSROC Councils, government, schools and educational institutions and sports to provide additional sportsgrounds, several synthetic playing fields and fund improvements to existing facilities, so as to increase the number of people who can play sport, and to improve the condition and performance of facilities	1

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Recommended Action	Priority
13. Capital Improvements - Assess the current “tertiary fields” for their capacity to be reconstructed to provide higher levels of competition and training, as well as any opportunities to develop school facilities for community sporting use	1
14. Capital Improvements - Identify grounds that require irrigation and prepare a priority program for irrigation works	1
15. Capital Improvements - Implement the lighting priorities identified by the lighting audit	1
16. Capital Improvements - Prepare priorities and scopes for a capital improvement program for sportsground fields, lights, irrigation and amenity blocks and associated infrastructure upgrades for the next 10 years, to fit within Council’s four year delivery program, and review annually	1
17. Capital Improvements - Consider establishing a panel of professionals to assist Council with sportsgrounds drainage, irrigation, turf management and lighting capital works projects, in a timely, cost effective and consistent manner	1
18. Capital contributions by sports - Approve the new policy identified in this review concerning capital contributions by users	1
5. The sportsground management service	
19. Staff resources (roles and functions) - Revise the position descriptions within the Recreation Team to consciously support the following functions: communication with users, marketing, information systems, and sports development	1
20. Staff resources (roles and functions) - Employ additional resources over the next six months to prepare new documentation, upgrade systems, prepare new conditions of use agreements, as well as communicate and publish the revised content, seek approvals and publish	1
21. Staff resources (roles and functions) - Increase the level of resources allocated to sportsground maintenance in order to minimise major remediation works and improve condition of grounds	1
6. Usage and demand for sportsgrounds	
22. Carrying capacities - Undertake carrying capacity assessment on all grounds in Ryde to assist with determining sustainable levels of, and managing use	1
23. Carrying capacities - Introduce maximum numbers of participants per hour per field and total hours per week for all fields and include these in conditions of hire	1
24. Ground closures - Seek to enhance the communication to users team managers, coaches, clubs and associations wet weather details and closures through a variety of media including SMS, and social media such as Twitter and facebook updates	1
25. Sportsground usage - Update occupancy agreements to include clear documentation and communication about rest periods and acceptable preseason use dates, as well as associations’ responsibilities with respect to ensuring user groups, coaches and trainers are notified when grounds are too wet or worn to play on	1
26. Sportsground usage - Consider the strategic provision of synthetic surfaces in conjunction with NSROC Councils and relevant sports codes	1
27. Sportsground usage - Seek support and commitment from users and sports to manage ground usage within carrying capacity limits, and introduce relevant requirements and incentives into occupancy agreements	1
28. Sportsground usage - Introduce additional levels of communication with users and associations about wet weather arrangements, and require associations to pass on information to its user groups	1

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The above listed 28 actions are the focus for the first phase year one of implementation by Open Space Team in conjunction with key internal stakeholders from Public Works.

Resourcing the Implementation of the BVR - To enable Council to implement the BVR, there is a need to increase the human resourcing of the recreation unit and consequently, a proposed restructure of the recreation unit to implement the BVR is planned.

All users groups, including clubs and associations will be invited to comment on the findings and implementation of the BVR.

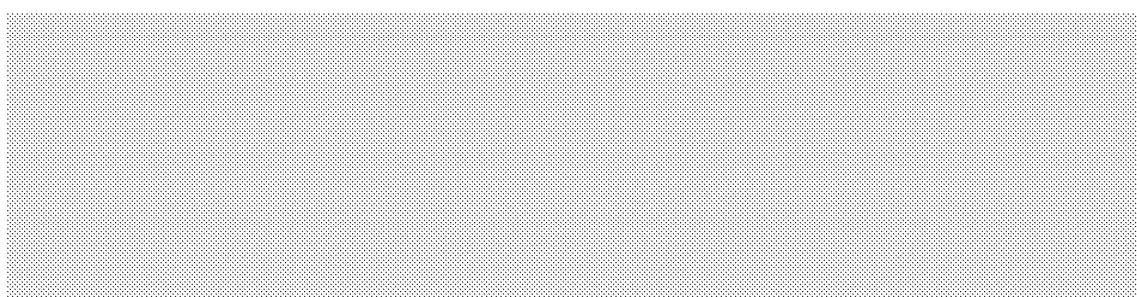
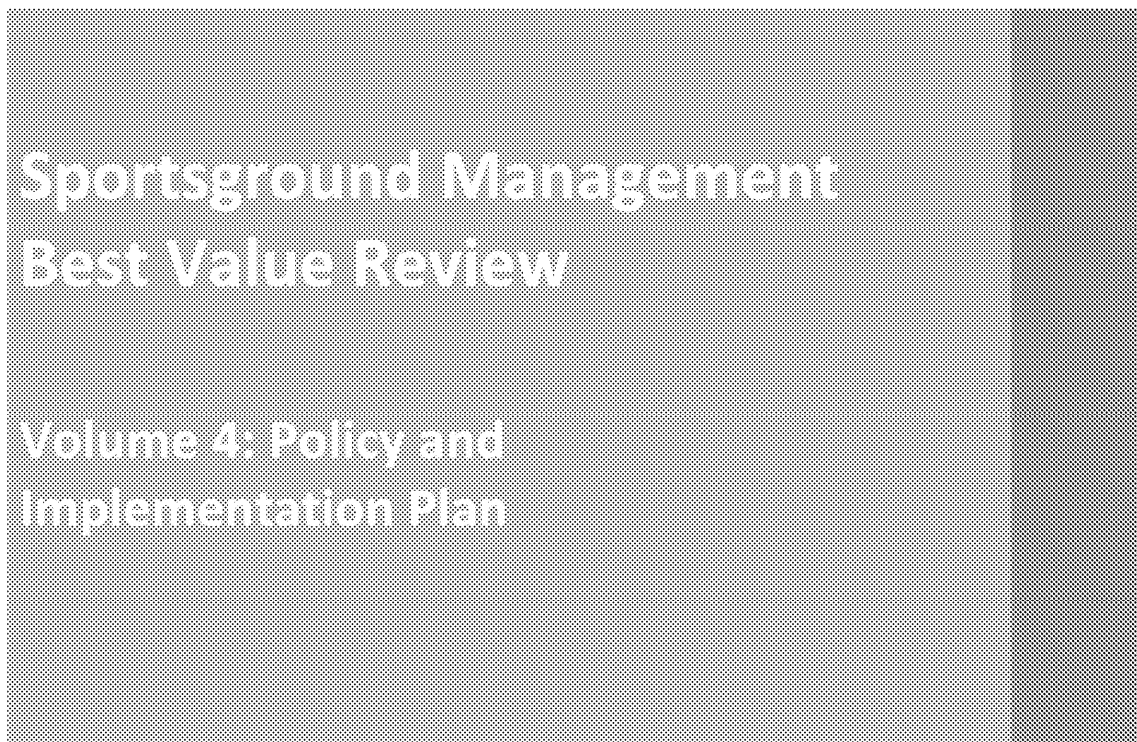
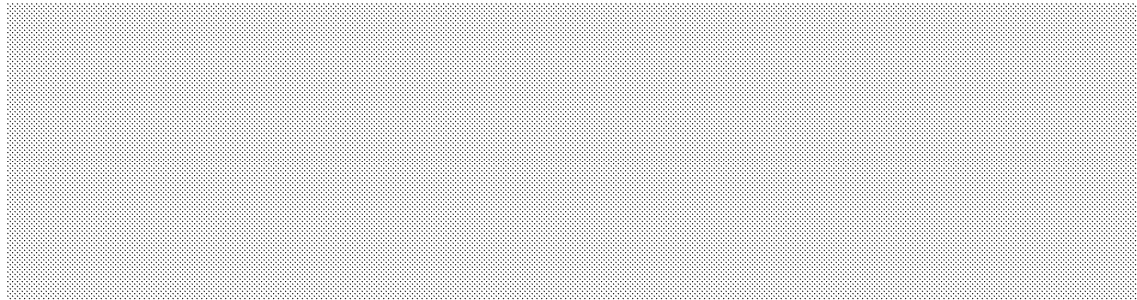
Financial Implications

The implementation of the BVR recommendations will be funded from a proposed 25% in fees and charges for the use of sportsgrounds within the City of Ryde. The additional income raised will be used to fund additional staff resources that will

- improve customers service
- coordinate maintenance reports
- develop policy and procedures
- assist in the development of maintenance service level agreements to meet community expectations for sportsground quality
- prepare occupancy and other agreements in readiness for the Summer 2012/13 season where the roll out of the *Booking and Allocation* recommendations will commence.

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ATTACHMENT 1



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About this document

This is Volume 4: Policy and Implementation is part of a series of documents produced for the Best Value Review: Allocation and Management of Sportsgrounds for the City of Ryde.

Note there are intentional duplications of policy and action as they relate to more than one issue. The other documents prepared for this project are:

- Volume 1: State of Play Report
- Volume 2: Benchmarking Report
- Volume 3: Issues and Options

References made in this report to NSROC refer to the NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy 2011.

Acknowledgements

@leisure wishes to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by City of Ryde staff and sports clubs and associations who provided information and / or answered surveys about sportsgrounds in the City of Ryde.

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1. The project

The Ryde Best Value Sportsgrounds Management Review brief called for a review that:

- Challenged why, how and by whom the services are being provided
- Compared the performance of the City of Ryde with other Councils, and considered other stakeholders views
- Engaged and consulted with local users, external stakeholders and staff

@leisure examined:

- What sportsground services Council offers?
- Who is responsible for these?
- How does Council deliver these?
- How does Council respond to the needs of the community and sporting associations and organisations?
- What elements of Council's sporting facilities allocation and management can be improved and how
- Does Council charge suitable fees for the use of sporting facilities?
- The value of contributions to the capital infrastructure upgrades by sporting organisations

Process

The process included:

- a number of staff workshops and interviews
- documenting current processes (listed in Appendix A of Volume 1. State of Play)
- telephone interviews with key users groups
- an online survey of user groups nominated by Council (see findings located in Appendix C of Volume 1. State of Play)

- benchmarking of other Councils (nominated in the brief and the Challenge Committee)
- attendance at the preseason Associations forum
- an assessment of the carrying capacity of key sports reserves (see full audit report prepared by LivingTurf in Volume 1. State of Play - Appendix D)
- a meeting with the Sport and Recreation Advisory Committee, and the Challenge Committee

It was proposed that the discussion paper be circulated to user groups prior to the preparation of the policy framework and implementation plan. Due to altered Council timeframes this did not occur.

Outputs

Documents required by the brief and provided by @leisure included the following:

- Return Brief
- User Survey Analysis (Appendix D, to Volume 1. State of Play report)
- State of Play Report (Volume 1.)
- A technical assessment of selective field carrying capacities (prepared by LivingTurf); provided in Volume 1. State of Play Appendix D.
- Benchmarking Report (Volume 2.)
- Options / Discussion Paper (Volume 3.)
- Policy and Implementation Plan (Volume 4.)

Sportsgrounds in the City of Ryde

A list of sportsgrounds in the City of Ryde and who they were allocated to are provided in Appendix B in Volume 1. State of Play.

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2. Summary and conclusions

The sportsground services Council offers include an enquiry, booking, allocation, maintenance service as well as the management and development of sporting infrastructure.

In general the service is highly regarded by customers and the outputs could be considered to be good value considering that many sites are affected by encumbrances, are overused, and that maintenance and capital works are underfunded.

In future this service should aim to embrace a stronger marketing and sports development focus, to enhance sporting participation.

In comparison with other Councils benchmarked the City of Ryde provides a good suite of sportsground opportunities and considering limited funds, the resource quality and the cost to users the service provided is good value. Like most other Councils refinements are required due mostly to changing professional practices, financial pressures and increasing expectations of users.

The Open Space Unit is responsible for the delivery of these services with the exception of maintenance and capital improvements. The unit plays a minor role in capital improvements. In future it would be desirable for these aspects to be managed from the same unit, and this unit to have a stronger customer, marketing and planning focus. Whilst Council should retain turf and infrastructure management as a core service partnerships with other NSROC Councils and sports associations or peak bodies to fund or undertake non core or supplementary elements of maintenance should be considered.

Many internal systems relied on to deliver the sportsground service are in need of refinement and updating. An upgrade of the CLASS software is required and all booking, referral, reporting and monitoring should be conducted electronically with a user interface.

A new system to record and analyse costs by playing field, reserve and season is essential to monitor performance and efficiency and make service deliver choices. The absence of this information prevents this review from recommending more specific actions in relation to maintenance, and comparing costs with other providers.

In the delivery of the service a greater focus on communication with sport peak bodies and users, and regular monitoring of the importance of service aspects to users and their perceptions of performance is required (rather than satisfaction measures). An additional staff person would be beneficial to deliver this aspect as well as market available opportunities to residents.

Overall the greatest gaps in users' expectations relate to capital works and the condition of grounds. This is unlikely to be resolved without significant additional funds. In relation to how the service is delivered; users identified gaps in communication and in considerate and friendly staff.

There needs to be a stronger ownership of issues faced by Council, by sports associations and users, with respect to managing the condition and use of grounds. This needs to a focus in communication efforts and documenting revised policy and procedures.

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In responding to the increasing demand for playing fields and limited available funds, more technical assessments of carrying capacity are required as are subsequent limits on use, in conjunction with development of and programming of any underutilised space. Several synthetic fields would be a valuable investment to enhance capacity and manage the condition of grass surfaces.

A new service specification /agreement for maintenance and an update of performance criteria for the delivery team are required.

Fees and charges are comparable with other Councils. Council current recoups approximately 24% of administration and maintenance costs of the service through fees and charges. Twenty five percent of costs should be the target of cost recovery. However there are considerable benefits of encouraging sports peak bodies and associations to contribute to capital infrastructure improvements.

In summary the key elements of Council's sporting facilities allocation and management that can be improved are: internals financial and administration systems, the documentation of procedures and use agreements, communication with users, and increased maintenance and infrastructure development.



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3. Allocation and booking service for sportsgrounds

The issues

The City of Ryde hires out sportsgrounds on a casual or seasonal basis to user groups. Sportsgrounds are not formally advertised and users are not able to book or pay online.

Better internal information systems would: enable efficient storage and analysis of information about use; complaints and enquiries; and deliver booking information to maintenance staff.

Given the competition for grounds, users have suggested Ryde residents should have priority use, and schools need to book.

The City of Ryde utilise the CLASS software system for sportsgrounds bookings. It has additional capabilities for data analysis that should be embraced.

Fields are primarily allocated through sports associations rather than clubs. This is cost effective, but limits direct communication, care and ownership of facilities by clubs. Importantly they book a ground for season and yet it may not be required every week. This can be addressed by new conditions of hire that do not allow seasonal blanket bookings, rather: allocate on the basis of fixtured games. There are benefits of Council continuing to develop relationships with associations over dealing directly with individual users. One such benefit is the reduced administration and another is the opportunities to partner sports in improving facilities.

Seasonal users currently pay for a season of weekends for competition and then separate hours for weeknight training for specified grounds. Other options for allocation include hourly hire, a package of hours per team per ground per week, or hours equivalent to one match and up to four training sessions per fortnight for home and away .

Council holds a pre-season forum with representatives from peak sporting associations, however there is further demand for and advantages of having more direct communication with actual users. This would in turn allow the City of Ryde to achieve one of Council's defined roles in sport; to support clubs, as outlined in the NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy.

Council has prepared a set of principles to assess applications for seasonal hire of sportsgrounds. These could be advertised to engage users about management issues.

The system for invoicing and payment for casual and seasonal use of sportsgrounds are slightly different. These can be streamlined by a new online booking and payment system.

Users ranked "Getting good information from Council about wet weather closures and grounds that are available" as the most important aspect of pre-use service, and users ranked the provision of this service highly. The greatest gap in expectations by users in this area of service was "not being sent a clear occupancy agreement promptly".

The lowest rated pre-use sportsground service was being able to book online and the ease of floodlighting bookings. These need to be addressed.

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Council requires users to report their usage numbers at the end of season. This information could be utilised for additional planning and management purposes and enable Council to assist sporting codes with strategic planning, a principle outlined in the NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy.

More formal occupancy agreements (than a permit letter) are warranted with clear conditions and policy stipulated. Occupancy agreements can take the form of: a lease; (for exclusive use) a multiple year licence (shared use, for specified times per season or year for multiple years); or a seasonal or casual licence (or permit).

Staff indicated many clubs have casual agreements between each other. Preseason allocations policies are not currently stipulated in the letter of hire issued to clubs.

There is evidence to suggest that grounds currently leased are not being maintained well and the need to have exclusively used sportsgrounds under lease, (that cannot be shared with other users is questioned).

 **Booking and allocations**

Policy principles: Booking and allocations

- Users should be able to book and pay for sportsgrounds (for casual and seasonal use) online
- Ryde residents should have priority over users from outside the municipality, if the same ground is sought by more than one group
- Sports associations that provide for people with a disability, females and juniors will be given priority over others
- Volunteer sports organisations providing sports will be given priority over commercial entities

- All casual and seasonal allocations and enquiries including those online should, where possible be directed to the Recreation Team
- Council should continue to allocate grounds directly to casual users and through associations who will fixture use by clubs
- Associations will be required to submit fixtures prior to the final approval of allocations. No blanket bookings of grounds for the whole season will be allowed
- Allocations for weekday evening training will remain separate from seasonal weekend competition allocations
- The CLASS software is the preferred sportsground booking allocation system and Council will continue to upgrade the software to enhance its capabilities relating to data analysis and online services
- Light preseason training will be encouraged to maintain fitness and as an important injury prevention mechanism. This may be off-ground or allocated to low grade or non-competition sports venues. The in-season club should have priority on competition fields
- Council will meet with associations, schools and other regular users prior to finalising season sports allocations
- The Open Space Unit manager should have delegated authority to alter allocations as required in accordance with adopted principles and policy
- Council will support sports providing opportunities for people with a disability, juniors, females and emerging sports to access necessary playing fields so as to grow and develop sport for all the community
- Those grounds not suitable for club competition sport or not required for seasonal allocations in any one season should be advertised as available for hire



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- Seasonal users will have a priority over casual and commercial hirers
- Winter codes will have the priority in winter and summer codes in summer.

Occupancy agreements

Policy Principles: Occupancy agreements

- All users including schools should have a formal occupancy agreement (a lease, multiyear licence, seasonal or casual permit) for use. This must spell out roles and responsibilities, Council objectives, and conditions of use. Key information to be included in each, (consistent with that identified by NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy p41) is as follows:
 - Type of occupancy covered: i.e. lease, multi year, license seasonal permit, casual permit
 - Tenure; agreed period of hire including approved dates and time
 - Roles and responsibilities of Council and the hirer regarding the management, maintenance and care of the sportsgrounds, amenities and associated infrastructure
 - Areas to be used including practice facilities
 - The maintenance activities Council will undertake (such as wicket preparation, goal post installation, line marking, maintenance of practice facilities), and those clubs elect and are required to do
 - Arrangement for keys and floodlights etc
 - Duties of care with respect to the playing surfaces: spreading wear, not overusing grounds, or using the ground in wet weather, and capacity limits
- Payment of utilities or ancillary costs i.e. floodlighting
- Permitted activities upon the sportsground and within the amenities i.e. standards of behaviour
- Dispute management process
- Wet weather policy
- Codes of conduct
- Communication with Council related to requests and complaints, and hiring enquiries
- Subletting
- Responsibilities for any damage to facilities
- Work health and safety, Incident reporting
- Vehicles on grass
- Erection of signs structures / banners, animals, circuses racing etc
- Electrical equipment tagging
- Glass and dogs at sportsgrounds
- Licenses (which are for non exclusive use, and for specified times and locations for a short duration i.e. year, season or session) are the preferred form of occupancy agreement for sportsgrounds over leases (that tend to be long term and for exclusive use)
- Club rooms and administration offices on sportsgrounds that are leased should, if they can be shared, be managed under a licence, or they should attract market rent
- Future occupancy agreements need to stipulate dates and conditions regarding preseason hire and mandatory rest periods for grounds

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 Information management

Policy principles: Information management

- Council will provide a clear sportsground presence on Council's website directing potential users to a guide to use, care and management of sportsground, conditions of use, codes of conduct, the booking and payment form, links and information on sports, clubs and fields that may be available for use
- Council will require better lines of communication from associations to clubs and coaches, on issues such as wet weather closures, allocation priorities, capital works and ground maintenance
- Occupancy agreements will require associations to convey all Council communication regarding sportsground use, maintenance policies and procedures directly to the appropriate individual user groups
- A forum for all users (including clubs and schools) will be held prior to the commencement of each season
- Prebooking information will include Council's principles for evaluating allocation requests
- Usage data by field will be compared to carrying capacity data to inform ground allocations
- The carrying capacities for all sportsgrounds will be estimated and occupancy agreements should specify maximum hours of use in accordance with those capacities, and weather conditions



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4. Fees and charges and costs of the service

The issues

Generally there is a benefit of having fees linked closely with the ground quality and hence maintenance cost. Inline with NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy principles,(NSROC pg 40) a hierarchy of grounds is desirable. However the current hierarchy does not reflect the standard of play, quality of the playing surface (except for cricket), or maintenance regimes.

Revenue and expenditure is not recorded accurately by each specific sportsground, separable from other activities. Only seven sportsgrounds have their own job numbers. Income from other sources is not separated from sportsground use fees.

User groups do not appear to have a clear understanding of the basis for fees. A practical and fair basis for fees is a proportion of the cost of use. Lights are currently charged for by the hour. This is common practice.

The income received from sportsgrounds hire is approximately 24% of overall cost of maintaining and administering the sportsground service, this is in line with most surrounding Councils (20-25%) and the goal of 25%.

Currently there are no reimbursements for seasonal users for wet weather cancellations, however make up games are provided where possible.

Users ranked “being charged reasonable fees for sportsgrounds and associated amenities” as the most important aspect regarding sportsground hire. However, users ranked Council’s performance of this service lower than the “regularity or timing of invoices and amount or quality of information provided from Council”.

Greater clarity on specifics related to price and conditions of use are required in a refined fees and charges policy.

 **Sportsground grading**

Policy principles: Sportsground grading

- Sportsground fees and charges will be set inline with the grading of grounds
- Sportsground fees and charges should be based on factors including: maintenance costs, and the standard facilities at the ground as well as competition that the ground can accommodate
- Council may need to upgrade the standard of some grounds to be consistent with the standard and grades of grounds as determined

 **Fees and charges**

Policy principles: Fees and charges

- The objectives underpinning sportsgrounds fees and charges in Ryde are to:
 - Encourage and enhance participation in sport
 - Encourage the development and viability of new sports in the City
 - Provide opportunities for schools, sports clubs and other users to find playing surfaces that meet their requirements at a price they are willing to pay
 - Increase the proportion of students, females, older adults, and people with a disability playing sport
 - Promote choice, and ensure the standard of play matches the nature of the facility provided
 - Maximise the sharing and use of grounds without exceeding the carrying capacity of the resource



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- Be simple, equitable, fair and transparent, and cost effective to administer
- Encourage users to contribute to facilities development and protection, and minimise waste of energy and water
- Equitably distribute the costs of use to those who benefit most
- Ration or better distribute use inline with the carrying capacity of grounds
- The City of Ryde shall adopt the basis for pricing of sportsgrounds as outlined in the NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy (see NSRC pg 40)
- In setting a schedule of sportsground fees and charges the following should be considered:
 - **Ground graded / quality / level of use** – Higher quality grounds should cost more to use. For casual and sessional users, fees should be consistent for the same grade of ground anywhere in the City
 - **Season of use:** i.e. preseason, and summer / winter- Preseason should be charged on a casual rate; turf wickets charged separately and the cost for both seasons averaged over the year, per grade
 - **Regularity and frequency of use** i.e. casual, term or seasonal. Separate rates would apply for one-off use, and sessional or term use for trainers (for example). Seasonal rates will remain
 - **Time of day and day of the week** i.e. weekend versus week day; during the day, late afternoon or night weekdays; and weekend morning or afternoon. Day rates assume they are non-peak, and would be charged less. Evening rates reflect off peak time slots for training. Nights and weekend is a time of high demand for training and competition, which would be charged at higher rates
 - **Size of field** i.e. junior / mod, mini, full sized smaller areas required could be charged at lesser rates
 - **Nature, scale and intensity of use** i.e. social/non competitive activities and training, local home and away club competition, versus regional and carnivals / tournaments. Number of participants per hour per field. Regional competition and carnivals would be charged at a higher rate as they require additional services
 - **In addition to fees, limits on the number of player per fields per hour should be included in the conditions of use**
 - **Support facilities** i.e. access to toilets, change facilities, canteen, lights and spectator facilities. Lights would continue to be charged separately. With further budget constraints Council could apply additional charged to higher standard facilities where these are available
 - **Training facilities** e.g. practice nets, batting cages, turf wickets or goals. Practice facilities of a basic standard should have free community access. Those used exclusively by clubs and maintained by Council should attract separate fees
 - **Need for line marking and other services.** Council could line mark for the first match of the season and allow users to line mark thereafter for a reduced rate
 - **Waivers and incentives** i.e. capital or maintenance contributions; or discounts associated with social disadvantage or school use
 - **Commerciality** i.e. commercial, not-for-profit or volunteer sports

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- Fees for non volunteer sports could be higher. No refunds provided for seasonal users in wet weather. Other social disadvantage / new sport concessions offered on a case by case basis. Agreements for rental rebates after user contributions, to be negotiated on a case by case basis
- Fees and charges shall be presented to users as a proportion of cost of use. This may be averaged for a ground over the full year and apportioned over shared users
- Fees shall be the same for both City of Ryde and non-City of Ryde user groups, however City of Ryde user groups are to be given priority of use
- Schools shall remain free of charge for daytime use if the school does not have equivalent facilities, with the exception of turf wicket use or carnivals
- Competition and training times will be priced differently and separately
- Incentives will be provided to use low grade, and non-competition grounds, and to use grounds in non-peak times
- Incentives will be provided to schools with grounds to encourage them to provide access to community clubs

 **Maintenance and service costs**

Policy principles: Maintenance and service costs

- Council will aim for 25% maintenance cost-recovery in line with other NSROC Councils
- Costs and income for all sportsgrounds and maintenance works will be recorded accurately for each ground to enable accurate planning and pricing

 **Concessions and subsidies**

Policy principles: Concessions and subsidies

- In line with NSROC Regional Sports Management Strategy principles, user groups who contribute to capital works upgrades shall be eligible for rental rebates for a specified time (see NSROC pg 41)
- Authority to approve fee waivers, reductions, rebates and subsidies shall be the responsibility of to the Open Space Unit Manager, and based on set conditions, and criteria related to incentives to participate, social disadvantage, and contributions made
- Where necessary, Council could distinguish fees paid by sports run by volunteers from those to be paid by commercial entities
- Incentives through fee subsidies could be introduced to manage use and wear of grounds and to train off competition grounds



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5. Sportsground maintenance

The issues

Users indicate 'Condition and maintenance of sportsgrounds' was the most important element of the service Council provides regarding sportsgrounds, however Council's performance was higher than the perception of most other sportsground related services.

A 'level playing surface' and 'irrigation' were considered the major gaps by users in the sportsground maintenance service offered by Council. Some grounds do not have irrigation. Rabbits are a major issue on some grounds, as are ground conditions. Many grounds are located on former tip sites or land subject to flooding.

The maintenance of sportsgrounds is not the Open Space Unit's responsibility, and yet they are responsible for the outputs and communication with users about this service.

The Internal Service Level Agreement formerly between the Parks Asset Unit and the Operations Service Unit for the management of sportsgrounds (excluding surrounds of facilities) has expired and needs to be reviewed. A new specification for the service with the new provided is required.

The assessment prepared by LivingTurf indicated that some grounds are being overused and the cost to repair these fields is greater than increased maintenance costs to keep these in a good condition for an identified number of hours per week. There is a need to upgrade levels of turf management on some grounds in order to enhance the performance of the turf.

The level of maintenance of a ground is principally determined by the level of use, rather than level of competition played.

There is a need for a better online system for recording sportsground maintenance requests and monitoring progress and completion of works to avoid double handling.

Council has asked "whether users should be allowed to maintain and improve our sportsgrounds". There are core aspects of turf management that should be undertaken by Council and clear specifications are required as well as considerations such as impact on other shared users. Maintenance arrangements with other Councils and associations who have the skills and resources that can reduce costs, enhance playing conditions and generate economies of scale should be investigated.

Some sporting clubs with existing licenses are responsible for facility and / or ground maintenance and have contributed to capital improvements without rebates on rent. However not all improvements made by sports have been in keeping with Council planning and design standards and this prompts a review of the process for similar situations. Council could however specify additional tasks and improvements that can be undertaken by users. A clear policy is required on these matters.

Service Level Agreement

Policy principles: Service level agreement

- The Service Level Agreement between Council's administration and the maintenance service should be revised to stipulate new levels of maintenance required to enhance carrying capacity, and be based on the sportsground grading, as well as the desirable level of use for each ground

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⊗ Allowing users to maintain and improve sportsgrounds

Policy principles: Allowing users to maintain and improve sportsgrounds

- Council will encourage sports associations to contribute to higher standards of maintenance or to take over key components of work, such as turf wicket maintenance, where it is practical and efficient to do so
- Any maintenance or improvements to be undertaken by a sports association or user must be in accordance with Council strategic planning priorities, to Councils specification and be given formal approval pending agreement on issues such as: master planning; insurance; work practice and qualifications of those undertaking the works (if necessary); alterations to hire fees; carrying capacities; and consideration of the impact on shared users

⊗ Sportsground maintenance requests

Policy principles: Sportsground maintenance requests

- A trackable system for logging, monitoring and reporting on enquiries, complaints and maintenance requests, should be established so these can be recorded by any staff member
- Maintenance requests for sportsgrounds should be directed through the Open Space Unit

⊗ Maintenance levels

Policy principles: Maintenance levels

- Maintenance will be increased to keep sportsgrounds in a good condition for an identified number of hours per week, in line with the identified carrying capacity. This is in preference to undertaking remediation to repair overused grounds



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6. Sportsground capital works

The issues

With additional sportsground demand, increasing construction and maintenance costs, rate caps and Section 94 contribution caps, Council will have limited capital to undertake major works necessary to existing sportsgrounds, as well as provide new facilities.

“Capital improvements to grounds and facilities” was identified as having the greatest gap between importance and users perception of Councils provision of service. This service additionally received the lowest performance rating of Council services rating overall (in comparison with other elements of service such as information, booking and allocation, fees and charges, maintenance and customer service).

Ongoing funds are required for remedial works on sportsgrounds due to many being provided on land susceptible to flooding and subsidence. The cost of maintaining these in good condition will be higher than grounds that have been well constructed on unencumbered land.

A transparent system for prioritising capital works would be beneficial.

Council currently requires clubs to contribute to the cost of new floodlights although this will not necessarily ensure floodlights that are strategically important to meet increasing demand, will be funded. In actual fact many of the “club contributions” for lights are funds from Council and state government grants which Council has helped secure.

In the absence of a clear policy it will be difficult to attract capital contributions from sports, and avoid potential issues where clubs may attempt to achieve ownership of sportsgrounds following capital contributions.

Council have a four-year delivery plan that stipulates funds for capital improvements / ground restoration. However there is: a need to improve the provision of lights, amenities and the condition of playing surfaces; a back log of works; and no asset management plan for sporting infrastructure, to fund and schedule replacement.

Where users are undertaking capital improvements these projects need to undergo the same planning, design, management scrutiny as those funded by Council.

Sportsgrounds capital works planning and scheduling is conducted outside the Unit responsible for the delivery of the sportsgrounds service and this creates inefficiencies.

Policy principles: Capital works

Funding capital works

- Floodlighting is now a core requirement for sportsgrounds with winter sport use and should be provided by Council
- Floodlighting that is strategically important and identified in the floodlight audit should be the priority over projects initiated or sponsored by user groups
- Sports may contribute to lighting or other Council approved capital works to bring identified projects forward, based on the principles outlined regarding sports contributions to capital works
- Council will take over the maintenance of floodlighting, however the cost of use will remain with users
- Council will continue to pursue opportunities for joint sportsground developments with schools, and provide incentives for educational institutions to make their facilities available for community sport

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- Council will seek to creatively package funds from multiple sources to fund sports facility capital works projects and support the development of a NSROC Sports Foundation to assist in funding regional sports related works
- Where possible Council will support volunteer based sports to fundraise through having canteens, sponsorship signage, fixture and facility naming rights, and displaying advertising subject to Council and all necessary approvals

Capital works priorities

- Council will determine the priorities for funding sportsground capital works based on the following:
 - 1. The demand for the sports played / opportunities to increase participation and use**
 - the numbers of likely participants and players to be catered for
 - opportunities to add to the diversity of sports overall, and
 - the need to serve target population groups, as well as future population growth etc.
 - 2. Risk and benefits**
 - how urgent is the work?
 - how important is the work?
 - who will benefit most; are they a target group?
 - what are the consequences of work not done?
 - 3. The current condition of facilities**
 - the provision and quality of support facilities
 - non-compliance, functional obsolescence, or the need for repair

4. Long term potential of the site

- the potential of the site to provide high quality facilities
- a multiple field, multiple codes, multiple season venue that meets sports requirements and is cost effective to maintain
- land capability i.e. topography, encumbrances, location, size, access etc

5. Likely cost of works and ability to fund these within a reasonable timeframe

- capital cost
- funding availability
- potential contributions from sport
- the practicality of being able to deliver works quickly

6. Locational issues

- considering the existing supply of facilities
- other political issues related to the locality

Capital improvements

- Council will continue to fund sportsgrounds surface and infrastructure improvements in conjunction with turf maintenance to enhance this aspect of service
- Capital contributions funded and conducted by sports on sportsgrounds managed by Council will undergo the same planning, design and project management scrutiny as those funded by Council
- Council will seek to provide an alternative ground to grounds where capital works are being conducted, where such a ground is available

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 **Asset management**

Policy principles: Asset management

- An asset management plan will guide future cyclic management and budget priorities for sporting infrastructure
- Council will identify opportunities for sports to raise revenue at grounds, and provide clear guidelines for what is acceptable to Council for each

 **Capital contributions by sports**

Policy principles: Capital contributions by sports

- Sports will be encouraged to make capital contributions to sporting infrastructure developments (such as a lighting, as well as sport facilities and field upgrades) that will enable works to be completed before they would otherwise, or at a standard over and above the base currently possible
- Council's preference is for "user" contributions to be provided by a sports peak body or a regional association, rather than a local sport club or user group
- The City of Ryde will encourage one-off capital contributions by "users" on the basis that the facility or development:
 - is in accordance with Council's sporting and recreation objectives
 - is consistent with Council's strategic intent and any necessary feasibility studies, master plan or concept plan
 - is likely to attract a grant or any other external funding if the contribution is not sufficient to fund the required percentage of cost
 - works and land remain in Council ownership

- is available for shared use and is accessible to other community users
- is consistent with the state or regional peak sporting body's strategic objectives
- is funded prior to construction works commencing for of the element or whole development
- has an occupancy agreement between the contributing sport and Council prepared prior to construction. This agreement:

1. may include consideration of the contribution as a rental advance, a rental rebate, rent free period or extended tenure commensurate with the funds provided or a term of occupancy sufficient to amortize investment
2. must not be for exclusive use
3. must be consistent with other Council or government policy, management plan
4. be for a finite period of less than 10 years
5. related the capital contribution being offset by a reduction in rental or license fees (or other arrangements) and in relation to such works must have a sunset clause

- The desirable maximum period of any rental rebate as a result of a capital contribution shall be 5-10 years
- Should the demand change for a sportsground or amenity block over time and a one-off contribution has been made by a sport, Council will find equivalent facilities for the contributors use, if required
- Users contributions to works can be acknowledged through naming rights to the facilities, with Council approval



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- Under no circumstances will user groups be allowed to undertake or manage any capital works at Council facilities
- Council must: approve the siting, design and selection of contractors; project manage the works and supervise the construction of all works to be funded by the sport; Council and any other source
- Council will not act as a guarantor for any financial contributions or commitments made by a club
- An application by a sport to make a capital contribution for a new facility or upgrade will be assessed having regard to the community benefit of the works, the likely impact on other users or community use, and the extent to which the sport or association and this or related projects has already received funding



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7. The sportsground management service

The issues

Council’s Recreation Team is currently under resourced to provide the current service to the standard expected by users (or any enhancement to the service recommended as well as the implementation of findings of this review). Additional communication with direct users however, may assist Council in ensuring users better understand the value of what is provided and the constraints of the resource.


A high degree of co-operation and co-ordination is required with other staff outside the team for invoicing and financial information, design and planning, costing and scheduling of works as well as maintenance, all which impact on the service delivered to users.

The location of maintenance staff in a separate unit, managed by others, creates a major a problem, as ultimately the Recreation Team cannot easily control the delivery of the required standard of grounds to their clients.

Service level enhancements desirable in future relate to:

- greater communication with a broader range of direct users, enabling more and easier access to information and booking, service requesting, and payments on online, and marketing
- sports development and demand management
- cost planning and analysis, and
- asset management (this and the cost planning function rely on enhancement of financial and asset condition and management systems and modelling provided by others

The Recreation Teams Key Performance Indicators (KPI’S) need to be refined to include: achievable targets and reflect current demand; the need for closer relationships with users; and the carrying capacity of sportsgrounds in Ryde.

 **Staff resources (roles and functions)**

Policy principles: Staff resources

- Sportsgrounds services shall include resources to support: communication with users, marketing, information systems and sports development as well as infrastructure and asset management planning
- Sportsgrounds capital works planning, design, construction asset management and maintenance shall be clearly documented in service agreements

 **Performance criteria**

Policy principles: Performance criteria

- Performance indicators shall be set for the Recreation Team with realistic targets addressing the following aspects of service:
 - Information about sports participation and sportsgrounds
 - Sport development and demand management
 - Allocation and booking processes of sportsgrounds
 - Sportsgrounds occupancy agreements
 - Fees and charges for hire of sportsgrounds
 - Customer service
- Additional performance criteria should be devised for infrastructure development, asset and turf management and carrying capacities management regardless of where these functions are located in Council



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8. Usage and demand for sportsgrounds

The issues

There is an ever-increasing demand for sportsgrounds in the City of Ryde, particularly for junior sport. Overall some 28,000 people play sport on grounds in Ryde each week in winter and approximately 10,000 in summer.

The sportsgrounds within Ryde are currently being over used in winter, and to meet demand additional facilities and an increased carrying capacity of grounds will need to be achieved.

Users perception of Council's current service is unlikely to improve without an improvement in the availability and quality of grounds and support infrastructure, including lights.

Carrying capacities need to be estimated for all sportsgrounds in Ryde. Additionally, some tertiary fields should be assessed for their capacity to be reconstructed to provide higher levels of competition and training; opportunities to use of school facilities should be investigated and the strategic provision of synthetic surfaces considered to enhance opportunities for increased participation.

Occupancy agreements conditions need to include requirements to limit peak and wet weather use, spread wear and use across available time, grounds and areas of grounds, to maintain ground quality and maximise participation. These agreements need to provide clarity around specific seasonal dates and expectations about use in preseason.

Council currently communicates any ground closures that are due to wet weather via updates on their website, phone service and emails. Additional communication through Twitter, SMS and facebook is warranted and required for associations to broadcast this information more effectively to users.

There is concern regarding unauthorised use of grounds that can lead to overuse and disadvantage those who are authorised users. A consistent policy and the education of users and enforcement of that policy is required.

Sportsgrounds usage

Policy principles: Sportsground usage

The definition of seasons

- The summer season is defined at the first weekend of April to the last weekend in August
- The winter season is defined at the first weekend of October to the last weekend in February
- The remaining months of March and September shall be defined as Preseason
- Council requires a minimum of two weeks rest for grounds in March and in September
- Where possible the City of Ryde will align its sports competition seasons with all other NSROC Councils
- Where there is high demand from one code to play in two seasons a year winter each code may need to be restricted to one season, and have preference be given to winter codes in winter and summer codes in summer.

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Carrying capacities

- Carrying capacities for each sportsground will be assessed in Ryde and these will be communicated to associations and users
- Users will be required to play a greater role in limiting use at peak times and wet weather, spreading use across multiple grounds and areas of grounds, training off field, and respecting rest periods between seasons, to minimise the impact of use on grounds

Closure procedures

- Council will introduce a consistent process to monitor sportsground conditions, based on carrying capacity, use and weather conditions to inform closures
- Council reserves the right to close a ground at any time should the condition be considered too poor to play, or detrimental to the integrity of the ground
- Council will decide which grounds are to be closed and when, based on wet weather for all weekday and night use, and on weekends in both the summer and winter seasons, and both preseasons. The exception is for cricket games on concrete wickets where associations with summer allocations can make the decision to close a ground in poor condition or due to wet weather
- Wet weather closures will be posted on Council's wet weather website, and the wet weather hotline at 9am and 2.30pm each weekday for activities on the following evening, weekend or long weekend

- Council will also SMS closures to relevant associations with allocations and casual users. Associations will be responsible for contacting all users groups and ensuring all clubs, team managers and coaches are provided with the wet weather hotline and website details, and that they check closures before training and competition
- Association fixtures and seasonal rates for grounds should accommodate the possibility of two additional weekend match days for catch up matches on the basis of possible ground closures due to wet weather
- No refunds for wet weather closures will be provided for seasonal allocated users. Council will seek to provide alternative, or off field training venues and options for make up games. Casual users will be offered an alternative date or venue or a refund for wet weather closures

Unauthorised use

- Council will communicate to users the importance of maintaining use within the identified carrying capacity of the field and the implications of unauthorised use on long term condition of sports surfaces
- Targets will be included in internal Service Level Agreements and users occupancy agreements related to hours of use and the quality of playing surfaces
- Occupancy agreements will include: incentives for users to spread use and wear and train off grounds; season dates, preseason use and mandatory rest periods; and wet-weather / ground closure procedures and consequences of unauthorised use



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- In addition to managing the use and wear on grounds. Council will seek to increase the availability of and carrying capacity of some grounds through lighting, additional maintenance and capital works, and seek to provide some all weather surfaces (synthetic) especially for training
- Council will continue to provide rangers with booking information, and rangers will monitor and report to staff on unauthorised use of sportsgrounds.






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9. Implementation Plan

The following priorities are based on likely impact on the service to the customer and contribution to the over all goal. Following review, costs will be included.







Recommended Action	Priority <i>(Importance and Urgency)</i>
1. Allocation and booking service for sportsgrounds	
 <i>Booking and allocations</i>	
1. Prepare a guide to booking and using and caring for sportsgrounds in Ryde, this should include objectives, principles, processes and priorities	1
2. Upgrade the CLASS software to provide a user friendly interface for bookings, allocations, payments and collecting data about demand and use of sportsgrounds	1
3. Redesign the booking and application process to be online and include information as to how users plan to include people with disability, females and juniors and an agreement to meet Councils sportsground principles, objectives and priorities	1
 <i>Occupancy agreements</i>	
4. Review current sportsgrounds under lease and consider converting such occupancy agreements to a seasonal or three year license to encourage sharing, and so as Council can manage the playing surfaces to a standard consistent with all other sportsgrounds	3
5. For any remaining leased sites ensure service objectives, principles and any performance criteria are included in leases and that rental is based on outputs, degree of community access, any capital contributions made by the tenant and maintaining the condition of the playing surfaces to an agreed standard	3
6. Prepare a new formal license template for seasonal and casual hirers, that includes additional information such as: goals and objectives; clear roles and responsibilities; users obligations to spread wear; dates and conditions regarding preseason hire; mandatory rest periods for grounds; and appropriate usage limits	2
7. Phase out the practice of lessees and licencees undertaking core turf management tasks, and return these to Council. Allow tenants to provide additional turf management over an above core service levels, by agreement only.	3
 <i>Information management</i>	
8. Enhance the information provided directly to sportsground users to encourage greater knowledge, care and ownership of issues associated with the sportsground service and management	1
9. Include additional sports, schools and other sportsground users in preseason forums	2
10. Undertake further carrying capacity assessments of all sportsgrounds so as to be able to make informed usage and allocation decisions	1



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Recommended Action	Priority (importance and urgency)
2. Fees and charges and costs of the service	
 Sportsground grading	
11. That a new sportsground grading be introduced that relates to the quality of the playing surface and the standard of competition playable	2
 Fees and charges	
12. Adopt the basis for pricing of sportsgrounds as outlined in the NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy	1
13. Seek to return approximately 25% of marginal costs through fees and charges to users	1
14. Prepare a new matrix based on adopted principles, so as to establish a new schedule for fees and charges	1
15. Introduce a new internal financial system and record keeping to deliver detailed sportsground costs per field, location and season	1
16. Devise a staged approach to transition users to the new fees and charges schedule	2
 Maintenance and service costs	
17. Undertake a detailed analysis of the costs of sportsground service delivery in addition to maintenance costs by field and season and associated lighting, public toilets and amenity blocks including utility costs	2
18. Introduce a new system of accounting and recording and reporting sportsgrounds maintenance, development and asset management costs by field and season	1
 Concessions and subsidies	
19. Document a clear set of conditions and criteria related to: concessions and incentives to participate, social disadvantage; and capital contributions made	2
3. Sportsground maintenance	
 Service Level Agreement	
20. Revise sportsgrounds maintenance requirements to reflect advice provided by LivingTurf. (These include the extent of tasks, more specific tasks, the carrying capacity and level of use of each ground)	2
21. Revise the performance measures in the service agreement. See chapter 5.2	2
22. Prepare a new service agreement for the management of sportsgrounds	2
 Allowing users to maintain and improve sportsgrounds	
23. Investigate the opportunities of increasing efficiencies in sportsgrounds maintenance by combining the service with other NSROC Councils	2



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Recommended Action	Priority (importance and urgency)
24. Discuss the options of associations contributing to the maintenance of sportsgrounds at preseason forums	2
25. Following the detailed collection and separation of costs, analyse the cost of reducing line marking to once at the beginning of the season, and excluding the maintenance of the turf table on cricket wickets during summer	3
 Sportsground maintenance requests	
26. Establish an online tracking system for maintenance requests, or utilise an existing Council system that generates a work request and provides the enquirer with a reference number to track the action	2
27. The point of contact for maintenance inquiries should be the Team Manager Recreation	2
 Maintenance levels	
28. Determine the budget requirements to enhance maintenance levels following the assessment of all ground carrying capacities, and where possible increase funds available for sportsgrounds maintenance	1
4. Sportsground capital works	
 Funding capital works	
29. Actively seek partnerships with NSROC Councils, government, schools and educational institutions and sports to provide additional sportsgrounds, several synthetic playing fields and fund improvements to existing facilities, so as to increase the number of people who can play sport, and to improve the condition and performance of facilities	1
 Capital works priorities	
30. Develop a weighted criteria using the criteria provided in this plan to prioritise capital works projects for sportsgrounds	2
 Capital Improvements	
31. Assess the current “tertiary fields” for their capacity to be reconstructed to provide higher levels of competition and training, as well as any opportunities to develop school facilities for community sporting use	1
32. Identify grounds that require irrigation and prepare a priority program for irrigation works	1
33. Implement the lighting priorities identified by the lighting audit	1
34. Prepare priorities and scopes for a capital improvement program for sportsground fields, lights, irrigation and amenity blocks and associated infrastructure upgrades for the next 10 years, to fit within Council’s four year delivery program, and review annually	1
35. Consider including the management of the sportsgrounds capital works, planning and design and implementation in the same team as the other sportsground service elements	3
36. Consider establishing a panel of professionals to assist Council with sportsgrounds drainage, irrigation, turf management and lighting capital works projects, in a timely, cost effective and consistent manner	1



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Recommended Action	Priority (importance and urgency)
 Asset management	
37. Prepare an asset management plan to guide the budgeting, cyclic maintenance and replacement of sporting infrastructure	2
 Capital contributions by sports	
38. Rescind the current policy with respect to requiring a 40% contribution from users for the provision of sportsground floodlights	1
39. Approve the new policy identified in this review concerning capital contributions by users	1
5. The sportsground management service	
 Staff resources (roles and functions)	
40. Provide a minimum of three core staff for sportsground bookings / allocations, planning and management	2
41. Revise the position descriptions within the Recreation Team to consciously support the following functions: communication with users, marketing, information systems, and sports development	1
42. Ensure that: infrastructure; capital works; funding support and asset management planning functions for sportsgrounds are provided under the management of the Open Space Unit (in addition to the sportsground planning and management service functions above)	2
43. Employ additional resources over the next six months to prepare new documentation, upgrade systems, prepare new conditions of use agreements, as well as communicate and publish the revised content, seek approvals and publish	1
44. Increase the level of resources allocated to sportsground maintenance in order to minimise major remediation works and improve condition of grounds	1
45. Revise and introduce new performance criteria for the Recreation Team based on the principles provided	2
6. Usage and demand for sportsgrounds	
 Carrying capacities	
46. Undertake carrying capacity assessment on all grounds in Ryde to assist with determining sustainable levels of, and managing use	1
47. Introduce maximum numbers of participants per hour per field and total hours per week for all fields and include these in conditions of hire	1
48. Consider prioritising allocations based on codes have one priority season. The priority for winter codes will be in winter, and for summer codes; in summer	3



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Recommended Action	Priority (importance and urgency)
 Ground closures	
49. Seek to enhance the communication to users team managers, coaches, clubs and associations wet weather details and closures through a variety of media including SMS, and social media such as Twitter and facebook updates	1
50. Introduce a ground condition rating system to assist with making the decision to close a ground	2
 Sportsground usage	
51. Update occupancy agreements to include clear documentation and communication about rest periods and acceptable preseason use dates, as well as associations' responsibilities with respect to ensuring user groups, coaches and trainers are notified when grounds are too wet or worn to play on	1
52. Consider the strategic provision of synthetic surfaces in conjunction with NSROC Councils and relevant sports codes	1
53. Seek support and commitment from users and sports to manage ground usage within carrying capacity limits, and introduce relevant requirements and incentives into occupancy agreements	1
54. Introduce additional levels of communication with users and associations about wet weather arrangements, and require associations to pass on information to its user groups	1
 Unauthorised use	
55. Refine the requirements of Council rangers in monitoring the use of sportsgrounds, ensure they are provided with bookings information and that they submit all details of unauthorised use of grounds to the Recreation Team	3

