

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: 17 MARCH 2025

PURPOSE

Council manages and maintains numerous Community Facilities across the Wollongong Local Government Area, acting as the custodian of these assets on behalf of the community. The value of these assets to Council and to the community is maximised when the community is engaged in their operation and activation.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Maximise the community benefit and use of Community Facilities.
2. Reduce the net cost to Council associated with the maintenance and operation of the Community Facilities.
3. Increase the sustainability of community facilities to contribute toward emissions reduction targets and maximise their resilience to climate change

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

Our Wollongong 2032 outlines the community's main priorities for the future and includes strategies for achieving them. This Policy contributes toward Wollongong 2032 Objectives:

- Goal 1: We value and protect our environment.
 - 1.3 Increase our resilience to natural disasters and a changing climate to protect, life, property, and the environment.
 - 1.4 Work together to achieve net zero carbon emissions and reduce waste going to landfill.
- Goal 3: Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city.
 - 3.4 We work in partnership to reduce inequity and build on opportunities to strengthen vulnerable communities.
 - 3.5 Provide communities with access to quality local spaces and places to meet, share and celebrate.
- Goal 4: We are connected and engaged community.
 - 4.11 Quality services, libraries and facilities are available to communities to access and gather.
- Goal 5: We have a healthy community in a liveable city.
 - 5.4 Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community.

POLICY

1. This policy applies to the leasing or licensing of Community Facilities where:
 - a. the existing occupancy arrangement or agreement is due to expire, OR
 - b. a building becomes available for community use through:
 - i. vacation by the existing occupant
 - ii. acquisition by Council, or
 - iii. new construction.
 - c. and it is determined to allocate occupancy to a community group.
2. Council will undertake a vigorous and transparent selection procedure to transfer the day-to-day management of buildings under the control of the Libraries and Community Facilities Division to the successful community group.
3. Conditions of occupancy vary dependent upon the building categories. Refer to building categories below for further details.
4. Council will collaborate with the community organisations that manage community facilities on our behalf to support their capacity to effectively meet their responsibilities and accountabilities under lease, licence or occupancy agreements, and in compliance with all relevant Legislative requirements.
5. Council will review and dispose of community facilities that are no longer required for general community use.
6. Council will undertake the day-to-day management of community facilities that are not allocated to community organisations, or may, at its absolute discretion, consider alternate use options.
7. Council will seek to increase the sustainability of community facilities and where relevant work and support community organisations to deliver sustainable outcomes.

This policy is not applicable to facilities:

1. controlled by a Committee of Council
2. managed by Council directly, or
3. earmarked for either 1 and 2 above.
4. where Council has determined the granting of the occupancy to be under the Leasing and Licensing Policy.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms are used:

Community Facilities are Council buildings intended for wide community use, including multipurpose community meeting spaces, halls and cultural spaces, and are utilised by the community for a variety of activities. *Community Facilities* are either managed and operated directly by Council, or managed on behalf of Council by a *community group* under a lease or licence

A *community group* is any organisation, which is legally constituted, engaged in charitable or other community-based activity operating under Australian law and not established for the purpose of making a profit.

An *occupant organisation* is the body that enters into a lease or licence agreement at a community facility and in doing so takes on the responsibility for the day-to-day management of that facility.

A *tenant organisation* is a body that has an agreement with the occupant organisation to be housed and to operate from the facility on a long-term basis.

Building Categories

Category A – Building allocated to a community organisation for the purposes of conducting their activities. The occupant community organisation must make premises available for use/hire by other groups, organisations and the public when not being used for its' core business.

Category B – Building allocated to community childcare provider for the purposes of undertaking preschool/childcare services.

Category C – Building leased or licensed to community organisation for sole use only.

RELATED LEGISLATION

This policy complies with the following, but is not limited to:

- Crown Land Management Act (2018)
- Local Government Act
- Child Protection (working With Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018
- Child Protect (Working with Children) Act 2012
- Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed a minimum of once every term of Council, or more frequently as required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Divisional Manager is responsible and accountable to ensure that this procedure is implemented in their areas of responsibility.

Middle Management/Coordinators/Supervisors will ensure that this procedure is implemented and communicated to staff responsible for conducting the allocation process as per Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups Procedures.

RELATED PROCEDURES & POLICIES

- Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups Procedure.
- Child Safety – Working with Children Management Policy
- Leasing & Licensing Policy

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Libraries and Community Facilities
Date adopted by Council	17 March 2025
Date/s of previous adoptions	12 September 2022, 17 July 2017, 14 October 2013, 22 July 1986
Date of next review	17 March 2028