

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.

WOLLONGONG 2028 OBJECTIVES

Our Wollongong 2028 outlines the community's main priorities for the future and includes strategies for achieving them. This Policy contributes toward Wollongong 2028 Objectives:

- Goal 3: Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city.
 - 3.3 Strong diverse local cultures are supported
- Goal 4: We are connected and engaged community.
 - 4.2 Our residents have an increased sense of community.

POLICY

1. Where appropriate, Council will transfer, by way of allocation, the day-to-day management of community halls, community centres, senior citizens centres and neighbourhood centres to community organisations for the purposes of conducting their activities. The occupant community organisation is to make the premises available for use/hire by other groups, organisations and the general public when not being used for its' core business.
2. Allocation of Community Facilities (under control of the Library and Community Services Division) to community groups will be based on a process of consultation with community groups interested in the occupation of the facilities and a transparent decision-making process in relation to the awarding of leases and licences.
3. 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.

4. Council will work with the community organisations that manage community facilities on our behalf to support their capacity to effectively meet their responsibilities and accountabilities under licence or occupancy agreements, and in compliance with all relevant Legislative requirements.
5. Council will review, consider alternative use options, and, as a last resort, dispose of community facilities that are no longer required for general community use.
6. Council will undertake the day-to-day management of community halls, community centres, senior citizens centres and neighbourhood centres that are not allocated to community organisations.
7. This policy is not applicable to facilities:
 - a. controlled by a Committee of Council;
 - b. by Council directly; or
 - c. earmarked for either 7 (a) or 7 (b) above;
 - d. childcare centres; or,
 - e. community facilities where the licence has expired and the existing licensee:
 - i. has advised Council that the group wants to continue to be the licensee; and,
 - ii. is able to demonstrate that the organisation has the capacity to continue to meet the criteria for effective governance and management, that is required of all licensees at community facilities; and,

is in receipt of grant funding when the licence expires, and the grant funding is being used for the employment of staff to provide community services and those staff have their primary office at the facility, and,
 - iii. has consistently demonstrated adherence to previous licensing requirements.

Definitions

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

Community Facilities are Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens Centres and Neighbourhood Centres.

A *community group* is any organisation, that 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.

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 every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

REPORTING

Library and Community Services Manager will monitor the scope and currency of this policy.

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

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Division	Library and Community Services	
Date/s adopted	<i>EMC</i> 21 July 2022	<i>Council</i> 12 September 2022
Date/s of previous adoptions	17 July 2017, 14 October 2013, 22 July 1986	
Date of next review	September 2024	