

**POLICY NAME**

Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy

**POLICY NUMBER**

FA 003

**DATE ADOPTED**

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**COUNCIL MINUTE NUMBER**

PRC 27

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3733283

**POLICY TYPE**

Council

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June 2020

**RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT**

Facilities

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear direction for the management of Penrith City Council neighbourhood facilities to ensure community needs are met and neighbourhood facilities are operated in accordance with Council's strategic and policy direction and State legislation. This policy provides a management framework and is not intended to address operational matters which will be dealt with through the development, adoption and implementation of the Neighbourhood Facilities Management and Operational Procedures Manual.

**Policy Statement**

Specifically the Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy will:

1. Set out Council's objectives for neighbourhood facilities management
2. Provide clear principles for the management of all neighbourhood facilities
3. Reduce exposure to risk for Council, Council staff, Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies and facility users
4. Set Council's expectations for management of neighbourhood facilities
5. Provide a basis for establishing fees and charges and determining priorities of access
6. Provide a foundation for the development of management agreements, guidelines, templates and training for the management and operation of neighbourhood facilities.

**Scope**

This Policy applies to Councillors, Staff and the Management Committees.

## DEFINITIONS

**Direct management** – neighbourhood facilities directly managed by Council.

**Committee management** (under section 377 of the Local Government Act) - neighbourhood facilities managed by volunteer management committees on behalf of Penrith City Council.

**Licence Agreement** – Neighbourhood facilities managed by community development organisations or other incorporated associations under Licence Agreement on behalf of Penrith City Council.

**Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies** – This is a collective term for management committees or incorporated organisations who have been granted management of a neighbourhood facility by either Section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993 or a Licence Agreement.

**Neighbourhood facilities** – comprises of neighbourhood centres, halls, community centres, youth centres and seniors' centres.

**Neighbourhood Facilities Service** – a section within Council's Public Domain Amenity and Safety Department responsible for the overall management of all neighbourhood facilities.

**Regular hirers** – hirers who hire neighbourhood facilities 12 times per annum or more.

### 1. STRATEGIC AND LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

This policy has been developed with regards to the existing strategic and legislative environment and should be read in conjunction with the following legislation, strategies and policies.

#### 1.1 Legislation

The following legislation impacts on the management of neighbourhood facilities:

- **Local Government Act (1993)** provides the legal framework for an effective, efficient, environmentally responsible and open system of local government in New South Wales ensuring effective management, community responsiveness and encourages and assists the effective participation of local communities in the affairs of local government.
- **Occupational Health and Safety Act (2000)** aims to secure the health, safety and welfare of employees and other persons within the workplace and eliminate risks to health, safety and welfare of employees and members of the public.
- **Disability Discrimination Act (1992)** aims to eliminate forms of discrimination based on the grounds of disability and promotes recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.
- **Anti-Discrimination Act (1977)** renders unlawful racial, sex and other types of discrimination in certain circumstances and to promote equality of opportunity between all persons.
- **Building Code of Australia (BCA)** contains technical provisions for the design and construction of buildings and other structures, covering such matters as structure, fire resistance, access and egress, services and equipment and energy efficiency, as well as certain aspects of health and amenity.

## **1.2 Penrith City Council's Strategic Plan**

Council's vision is one of a sustainable and prosperous region with a harmony of urban and rural qualities with a strong commitment to environmental protection and enhancement. It would offer both the cosmopolitan and cultural lifestyles of a mature city and the casual character of a rural community.

Neighbourhood facilities make a significant contribution towards encouraging and facilitating a sense of community, belonging and participation. Penrith City Council has adopted the United Nations Environment Program Principles for Sustainable Cities through its Community Strategic Plan.

This Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy supports Penrith City Council's Strategic Plan in the following ways by:

1. providing a long term vision for cities based on sustainability, intergenerational, social, economic and political equality. Neighbourhood facilities foster social interaction and are made available to all members of the community irrespective of gender, age, political or cultural and linguistic background.
2. recognising and building on the distinctive characteristics of Penrith, including its human and cultural values, history and natural systems. Community events held and organised in neighbourhood facilities develop social capital and encourage a sense of belonging and ownership to the community.
3. empowering people and fostering participation. Neighbourhood facilities are used for numerous events which support the needs of the community and foster active participation in community life.
4. expanding and enabling cooperative networks to work towards a common, sustainable future. Neighbourhood facilities provide an accessible meeting place for groups which recognise and value diversity and community interaction.
5. enabling continuous improvement, based on accountability, transparency and good governance. This policy provides a management framework for volunteers and community to actively engage in the management of neighbourhood facilities in accordance with this principle.

## **1.3 Social Planning Framework**

The 2009 amendment to the Local Government Act no longer requires councils to develop a social plan but rather address social issues through the Community Strategic Plan process. In addition to the Community Strategic Plan, Council will continue its strategic approach to social planning based on the ongoing development and use of a social planning framework. This framework encompasses all of Council's activities that have social implications.

In setting access and equity objectives Council recognises a number of particular groups who may have special needs or issues and will ensure all members of the community have fair access to neighbourhood facilities based on social justice principles.

## **1.4 Code of Conduct**

Council's Code of Conduct details behaviour and expectations of all staff members and standards of conduct required by Council when performing all duties. This code shall also apply to Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies.

## 1.5 Delivery and Operational Plans

Council's four (4) year Delivery Plan and one (1) year Operational Plan specify Council's activities including strategic direction, actions and key performance indicators.

## 1.6 Purchasing Policy

Council's Purchasing Policy sets terms for efficient, sustainable and economical procedures and processes in all procurement and purchasing activities.

Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies procurement shall comply with the provisions of Council's Purchasing Policy.

## 2. NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

To help guide the interpretation of the Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy the following principles will apply to the management of Council neighbourhood facilities:

- **Accountability** – Council's neighbourhood facilities will be managed transparently and Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies are accountable for compliance with this policy and other legislative requirements.
- **Customer Service** – Council's Customer Service Charter applies to the management of all neighbourhood facilities. Customers will be treated fairly with respect and courtesy and their personal information will be protected.
- **Compliance** – Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies and Council will comply with relevant regulatory and legislative requirements to effectively minimise and manage risk.
- **Transparency** – All neighbourhood facilities financial transactions will be recorded and documented appropriately in accordance with Council's requirements and legislative requirements.
- **Access and Equity** – Equitable and non-discriminatory access will be provided for all members of the community. Priority access is given to identify target groups having regard to building usage, availability and other user needs.
- **Diversity** – Neighbourhood facilities will promote an inclusive environment where diversity is supported and encouraged.
- **Healthy Communities** – All neighbourhood facilities will encourage safe and healthy communities.
- **Health and Safety** – Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies will report and identify risks to ensure safety, and limit risk for Council, staff and community members.
- **Sustainability** – Neighbourhood facilities will be managed and operated to minimise any environmental footprint in accordance with government regulations and guidelines and Council's strategic direction.

## 5. FACILITIES COVERED BY THE POLICY

The Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy encompasses the management, ownership, usage and allocation of Council's neighbourhood facilities including neighbourhood centres, community centres, youth centres, senior citizen centres and halls. The policy applies to neighbourhood facilities that are directly managed by Council, committee managed and managed under Licence Agreement as listed in Clause 12.

## 6. COUNCIL'S NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITIES MANAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

### 6.1 Expectations that Apply to all Neighbourhood Facilities

#### 6.1.1 Access Priorities

The NSW Department of Local Government has identified eight (8) groups who may have special needs or issues. These groups include:

- Children
- Young people
- Women
- Older people
- People with a disability
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People for culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People from diverse sexualities.

Council shall ensure that in addition to these groups other residents of Penrith City also have reasonable access opportunities to neighbourhood facilities. In order to achieve equitable access across all neighbourhood facilities the following access criteria shall apply:

1. Council and Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies will prioritise access for targeted groups during Monday to Friday
2. Private Events / Functions will receive prioritised access during weekends
3. This policy will not prevent targeted groups from having occasional access during the weekend
4. To facilitate equitable access all neighbourhood facilities shall operate under an annual expression of interest booking process for regular hirers.

Once sufficient user data has been collected, more specific expectations for access criteria will be developed with the objective of maximising the use of all neighbourhood facilities while maintaining and ensuring equitable access for all users.

#### 6.1.2 Training and Development

Council shall ensure all facility users receive quality and consistent experiences when using a Neighbourhood Facility by ensuring all Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies and the Neighbourhood Facilities Service undergo adequate training. Council will identify training needs and coordinate training for Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies and the Neighbourhood Facilities Service in:

1. Legislative requirements
2. Council procedures for maintenance requirements
3. OH&S Requirements
4. Role specific skills (e.g. chairperson, secretary and treasurer)
5. The collection and reporting of key information
6. Committee member recruitment, development and retention
7. Other identified training needs as required.

#### 6.1.3 Neighbourhood Facility Maintenance

To ensure clarity of responsibilities for building maintenance and planning, the Neighbourhood Facilities Service shall ensure user requirements are planned and prioritised when new work or maintenance is undertaken on neighbourhood facilities. Council's Building Projects and Maintenance section shall provide specialist technical advice and ensure both urgent and routine maintenance are carried out within agreed timeframes.

Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies building maintenance responsibilities will be defined in a Service Level Agreement between the Neighbourhood Facilities Service, Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies and Building Projects and Maintenance section of Council. These agreements will identify which maintenance tasks are to be dealt with by which body and who is responsible for the cost of this maintenance. In addition, the agreement will identify the process for undertaking a particular maintenance task and performance criteria.

#### 6.1.4 Neighbourhood Facility Performance Management Data

To ensure Council has the appropriate information for future strategy and policy decision making for neighbourhood facilities, the Neighbourhood Facilities Service, in conjunction with Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies, shall collect and report the following information:

1. Financial performance
2. Utilisation data (who and how many)
3. Customer feedback
4. User profile information
5. Usage profile (when the facility is used)
6. Capacity and asset performance information (when spaces are not available due to excess demand or are not suitable for the proposed use).

This data will provide accurate information on utilisation and performance for all neighbourhood facilities and assist with strategic, operational and budget planning and minimise reactive decision making.

The Neighbourhood Facilities Service will investigate and report on simplified processes or systems that will enable the collection and reporting of performance data to minimise the work requirements for Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies.

#### 6.1.5 Medium Term Management Plans

In addition to having accurate performance management data for individual neighbourhood facilities, the Neighbourhood Facilities Service will prepare medium term management plans in consultation with Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies to assist the decision making processes for future funding of both asset and operational requirements. This process will provide the Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies with an opportunity to engage with Council on their current challenges and future plans and contribute to an overall understanding of issues across the entire portfolio. A template framework for Medium Term Management Plans will be included in the Neighbourhood Facilities Management and Operational Procedures Manual. Medium Term Management Plans will be used to guide Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies budgeting, Neighbourhood Facilities Service budgets, Building Projects and Maintenance budgets, the application of reserves and the development of Council Asset Management Plans for neighbourhood facilities.

Medium Term Management Plans should contain information on:

- Community served
- Major challenges facing the Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies and/or Neighbourhood Facilities Service
- Planned response to those challenges
- Anticipated usage
- Estimated income and expenditure for the period of the plan (financial plan)
- The purpose for which any reserves are held or are to be used
- Potential asset requirements and any significant repairs and maintenance
- Marketing Plan
- Sustaining the Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies structure.

### **6.2 Expectations that apply to all Committee and Licence Agreement managed Neighbourhood Facilities**

#### 6.2.1 Management of Neighbourhood Facilities

Council expects all neighbourhood facilities to be managed consistently using sound well recognised management practices. These practices will be detailed in the Neighbourhood

Facilities Management and Operational Procedures Manual and shall include, but not be limited to:

1. having a current constitution or terms of reference acceptable to Council
2. having a current management or license agreement with Council
3. keeping separate financial operating accounts for the management of neighbourhood facilities and provide this information to Council
4. having all financial accounts that apply to the management of a neighbourhood facility and be audited annually and forwarded to Council
5. complying with Council's Code of Conduct
6. complying with other Council policies as set out in a management agreement
7. participating in training opportunities offered by Council
8. ensuring they have a renewal and development plan to attract new and retain existing volunteers
9. conducting an Annual General Meeting and forwarding the minutes of this meeting to Council
10. forwarding a copy of all management committee meeting minutes to Council
11. ensuring all meetings comply with standard meeting procedures, ie: quorum, etc
12. having a current Council approved Medium Term Management Plan (including financial plan) in place.

Council will assist Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies with these responsibilities through the provision of templates and ongoing training, support and the development and adoption of the Neighbourhood Facilities Management and Operational Procedures Manual.

## **7. FEES AND CHARGES**

The Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy will guide the establishment of an equitable fees and charges framework. The fees and charges framework will recognise Council's social obligations for the provision of and access to neighbourhood facilities by setting a process for determining the level of subsidisation for use while minimising the overall cost of providing neighbourhood facilities to ratepayers.

## **8. IMPLEMENTATION**

This policy shall be implemented over the two (2) year period from the date of adoption. Steps in the implementation process to be completed over this period will include the:

1. adoption of the Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy
2. development of Service Level Agreements for building maintenance
3. development of a fees and charges framework to support and enable the access provisions of this policy and provide for fair and equitable recovery of costs while maintaining a commitment to Council's social objectives
4. development of the Neighbourhood Facilities Management and Operational Procedures Manual, including guidelines and templates to support the implementation of this policy and ensure consistent management of neighbourhood facilities while simplifying or minimising work inputs for Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies
5. provision of training for Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies and the Neighbourhood Facilities Service.

## **9. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS**

Full compliance with this policy will not occur until the implementation phase is complete; however, the Neighbourhood Facilities Service and Neighbourhood Facilities Management Bodies should be operating within the intent of this policy from the date of its adoption. Notwithstanding the implementation period, the Neighbourhood Facilities Management

Bodies should make progress in the following key initiatives over the first twelve (12) months:

- Separate neighbourhood facilities management accounts (for Licence Agreement managed neighbourhood facilities)
- An annual booking expression of interest process for regular users
- Systems or processes for collecting and reporting performance data.

## **10. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The Neighbourhood Facilities Service shall review and report annually on the implementation of this policy. This will include the status of the implementation process, outstanding tasks, accomplishments, issues or challenges that have arisen out of the implementation and matters requiring Council's attention or clarification.

## **11. REVIEW**

The Neighbourhood Facilities Management Policy will be reviewed on or before 30 June 2012.

## 12. NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITIES COVERED BY THIS POLICY AS AT 1 MAY 2010

Name	Location
Andromeda Community Centre	Andromeda Drive, Cranebrook
Arthur Neave Memorial Hall	Parkes Avenue, Werrington
Autumnleaf Neighbourhood Centre	Autumnleaf Parade, St Clair
Berkshire Park Hall	Sixth Road, Berkshire Park
Cambridge Park Hall	Oxford Street, Cambridge Park
Castlereagh Hall	Castlereagh Road, Castlereagh
Claremont Meadows Community Centre	Sunflower Drive, Claremont Meadows
Colyton Neighbourhood Centre	Corner of Jensen and Willoughby Streets, Colyton
Cook Parade Neighbourhood Centre	Cook Parade, St Clair
Coowarra Cottage	Coowarra Drive, St Clair
Cranebrook Neighbourhood Centre	Hoskings Street, Cranebrook
Emu Heights Neighbourhood Centre	Wedmore Road, Emu Heights
Emu Plains Community Centre	Lawson St, Emu Plains
Erskine Park Community Centre	Peppertree Drive, Erskine Park
Erskine Park Community Hall	Peppertree Drive, Erskine Park
Floribunda Community Centre	Floribunda Avenue, Glenmore Park
Glenmore Park Youth & Community Centre	Luttrell Street, Glenmore Park
Harold Corr Community Hall	Cottage Street, Werrington
Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre	Bringelly Road, Kingswood
Londonderry Neighbourhood Centre	Carrington Road, Londonderry
Melrose Hall	Corner of The Great Western Highway & Park Street, Emu Plains
Mulgoa Hall	Littlefields Road, Mulgoa
Namatjira Neighbourhood Centre	Henry Lawson Drive, Werrington County
North Penrith Community Centre	Illawong Avenue, Penrith
North St Marys Neighbourhood Centre	Debrincat Ave, North St Marys
Regentville Hall	Jeanette Street, Regentville
Penrith Valley Seniors Citizens Centre	Station Street, Penrith
Ridge Park Hall	Woodland Avenue, Oxley Park
South Penrith Neighbourhood Centre	Corner of Trent Street & Birmingham Rd, South Penrith