


STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

**EVENTS IN COUNCIL
PARKS &
COMMUNITY
FACILITIES POLICY**

3 NOVEMBER 2023



	Events in Council Parks and Community Facilities Policy		
RESPONSIBILITY	Manager Engineering		
DATE ADOPTED	3 November 2023	MINUTE	230/23
CM10 No	23/72941		
ASSOCIATED POLICIES	Sporting Grounds Allocations Policy Parks Plans of Management Council Fees & Charges		
ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION	Local Government Act 1993 Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 Food Act 2003 Smoke-Free Environment Act 2000		

1. Introduction

1.1. Title and Commencement

Strathfield Council's Events in Council Parks and Community Facilities Policy was prepared and placed on public exhibition from 12 September 2023 to 9 October 2023. It was adopted on 3 November 2023.

1.2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to assist community Event Organisers by guiding them through the approval process for events that take place in Council parks and community facilities in Strathfield.

1.3. Objectives of the policy

Council is responsible for the management of all activities within parks, reserves, sporting grounds and public open space and within Council community facilities. There is an ongoing high demand for open space and facility resources within the Strathfield Local Government Area, particularly with increasing densities. Council must actively manage access to the parks and community facilities.

Events are fun and entertaining and provide opportunities for large and small communities to connect and safely share enjoyable and inspiring experiences. Events can be informative, build community knowledge, and raise awareness to develop a shared understanding of social, economic or environmental issues. Events can build capability within a community, develop a sense of community spirit, identity and belonging.

Council encourages the use of parks and community facilities for events as they help contribute to the health, wellbeing, and liveability of Strathfield. It is Council's objective to ensure that park and community facility events are suitable and managed in a manner which is safe, and appropriate to the local environment and surrounding community.

1.4. Coverage of the Policy

In Scope

This policy applies to proposed events occurring in parks, reserves and sporting grounds, either owned by Council or under its control and management (e.g. Crown Land). This policy also applies to proposed events in Council community facilities. These events are usually single one-off events, such as parties, approved special events, corporate events, charity events, fun runs and community festivals.

Out of Scope

This Policy does not apply to the following:

1. Sporting ground allocations - seasonal bookings for sports training and games on sporting grounds, usually hired by sporting clubs, tertiary organisations and schools. This is managed by the Sporting Grounds Allocations Policy.
2. Commercial fitness trainers and commercial running groups who use Council sporting grounds and parks for training.
3. Applications for park access for non-recreation purposes such as works within the park or access through a park to adjacent properties for works or deliveries.
4. Applications for filming in parks and Council facilities.
5. Applications for busking.
6. Applications for food trucks. This is managed by the Mobile Food Truck Policy.

2. Policy

Selecting a Venue

Council's Engineering Team manages bookings within Council parks and community facilities. It is their responsibility to ensure that different activity requests are managed, to ensure that there is access for multiple users and to ensure that a single space is not booked by multiple users at the same time.

For any proposed event, the first step is to contact Council's Bookings & Facilities Officer to ensure that the preferred venue is suitable and that the proposed date for the event is available.

When selecting a venue for an event, consideration should be given to the following:

1. Suitability of the event in the preferred location. Hirers must conduct a site inspection before booking the venue (without Council Staff);
2. Expected number of attendees;
3. How participants will travel to the venue (are there public transport options, is there enough parking);
4. Surrounding facilities (e.g. toilets);
5. Waste management;
6. Impact on surrounding residents;
7. Fees and charges for event hire (i.e. budget);
8. Operation hours for parks and facilities (on website).

When booking the event venue, allow time for set up and pack down time.

Various sports clubs, schools and other park users hire the parks and sporting grounds on a seasonal or casual basis. Where a proposed park event coincides with seasonal sporting club usage or another regular park booking, priority will be given to the prior or regular booking.

Council may approve alternative dates or venues, subject to bookings, ground conditions and proposed use.

Council's use of the Council community facilities will have priority over other requests.

The park and community facility event booking and approval of all events within parks and community facilities is at the sole discretion of Council as the land owner/manager. Park and community facility event booking and approval will not be provided if the park or community facility venue is not suitable or the proposed date is not available.

Event Size

Park Casual Event (less than 30 people)

Casual use of parks is permitted, for up to 30 people, without approval from Council subject to the conditions outlined in Council's Terms and Conditions for Council Park & Community Facilities Hire.

If hirers want to use a space in a Council park exclusively, it is recommended that a booking is made. If a location is booked by another group, they will have priority of use.

Park Minor Events (up to 250 people)

Minor events in Council parks and community facilities are permitted, for up to 250 people, subject to the submission of an Application Form (available on Council's website). By completing and submitting the Application Form, the Event Organiser agrees to the conditions outlined in Council's Terms and Conditions for Council Park & Community Facilities Hire. For minor events in parks, the Application Form must be submitted to Council at least six weeks in advance.

Park Major Events (greater than 250 people)

Any event in a park with greater than 250 people is considered a major event. There is a two-step approval process for Park Major Events:

1. Park Event booking and approval by Council's Booking & Facilities Officer; and
2. Planning Approval by Council's Planning, Place & Development team (where needed, see below).

Major events are subject to the submission of an Application Form (available on Council's website) and conditions outlined in Council's Terms and Conditions for Council Park & Community Facilities Hire.

Planning Approval by Council's Development Assessment & Regulatory Services team (where needed)

Depending on the type and size of the proposed event, it may require a planning approval, under Section 68 of the Local Government Act (Section 68 Application). That approval can be sought by submitting a Section 68 Application (available on Council's website).

It is the responsibility of the Event Organiser to submit all relevant documentation to Council for a Section 68 Application. This is a separate process to the Park Event Approval and the application is received and assessed by the Development Assessment team in Council. Where a Section 68 Approval is required, if granted, it will be issued by the Council's Development Assessment & Regulatory Services Service team.

If a Section 68 Application or Development Application is required, the application must be submitted to Council at least six months in advance. The Event Organiser must book the Park before the Section 68 Application is submitted.

The following list provides a guide to which events may require a Section 68 approval:

- Events with over 250 people that contains stalls, sound amplifiers or which may impact on park users or residents.
- Sporting events or activities with over 1,000 people.
- Events which are for trade or business purposes or commercial activities (where permissible).
- Large scale community events and park festivals, including repeat annual events.
- Events including amusement devices.

Some activities associated with events may be exempt from a Planning Approval through the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008. A Park Event Approval will still be required for these events

Community Facility Venue Hire (Up to 250 people)

Community Facility Venue Hire is permitted, for up to 250 people, subject to the submission of an Application Form (available on Council's website). By completing and submitting the Application Form, the Event Organiser agrees to the conditions outlined in Council's Terms and Conditions for Council Park & Community Facilities Hire. For community facility venue hire, the Application Form must be submitted to Council at least six weeks in advance.

Council Park & Facilities Event Fees

Council Park & Facilities Event fees will apply. Further information is available on Council's website in the Strathfield Fees & Charges document.

If the event requires Section 68 Approval by Council's Development Assessment & Regulatory Services team there is a further fee to lodge the application. Details of that fee can also be found in Council's fees and charges document.

The Event Organisers are responsible for all operational costs associated with conducting their event.

Fee Waiver in Community Facilities

Council provides community rates for the hire of the Strathfield Town Hall, Community Centre and Library Meeting Rooms for activities providing community benefit and service to the Strathfield Local Government Area (LGA), which can be qualified and supported by documentation.

Eligible groups may include non-profit community and cultural organisations, recreational clubs and charitable organisations based in the Strathfield Local Government Area or providing a service/activity of community benefit to the Strathfield Local Government Area. Applicants will be required to provide supporting evidence of non-profit status, e.g. constitution, details of incorporation, financial statements.

Applicants will need to provide detailed information on the proposed activity and how it provides a community benefit to the Strathfield Local Government Area.

Applicants are to be based in Strathfield LGA and be able to demonstrate that. The proposed use of the facility provides service to the local community of Strathfield LGA and a minimum of 60% of members or participants are residents of Strathfield LGA. Council may require a membership list or list of participants as supporting documentation.

Each application will be assessed on the information provided on the application form and supporting documentation and determined on its individual merits.

Notwithstanding that Council may grant a fee waiver, the following fees may still apply depending on the event:

- Damage bonds
- Key deposits
- Supply of waste and recycling receptacles and removal of waste
- Electricity use

Who cannot apply?

The following groups and types of activities are not eligible to apply for reduced fees or fee waivers and must pay 100 per cent of the applicable fee:

- Commercial organisations/sole traders
- Fundraising events
- Political parties, or activities that are overtly political in nature
- Regular, organised sporting activities/ events carried out by sporting clubs, sporting groups or associations.
- Religious services or activities that are overtly religious in nature
- Schools, tertiary institutions, school Parents and Friends Associations and school Parents and Citizens Associations
- State or federal government agencies /departments.

Damage Bonds

Payment of a damage bond is required, prior to the event.

All damage to Council property, either deliberate or accidental should be reported to Council as soon as possible, outlining full details of the incident.

The Event Organiser must meet with Booking & Facilities Officer on the closest working day before the event for a site handover and the next working day after the event for a formal site back.

After the event, the site is to be returned to the same condition as it was in prior to the event. Clean-up must be within two hours to prevent litter spread or within a practicable timeframe dependent on the size of the event (whichever is the lesser). In the event that the Event Organiser does not hand back the site in the same condition, Council will clean and repair the venue to the standard required by Council at the Event Organiser's cost.

The damage bond may also be utilised to cover any costs incurred by Council during the event, including the cost of monitoring the event for compliance with conditions of consent and/or legislative requirements as a consequence of carrying out the event.

Should the damage incurred be greater than the value of the bond, Council reserves the right to rectify the damage and charge the hirer the difference in cost.

Behaviour

The Hirer is responsible for the satisfactory conduct of all persons attending their event. The Hirer shall ensure that the amenity of property owners adjoining the venue is not disturbed by excessive noise, offensive language, poor behaviour or any other activity likely to cause unreasonable disturbance.

Unsatisfactory behaviour, including unsatisfactory behaviour towards staff, may result in the Hirer not being able to book future events.

Appeal Process

Should an Event Organiser be dissatisfied with the outcome of their application for a Council Park & Community Facilities Event, they may lodge a written appeal. This will go to the Manager Engineering to review. The Manager Engineering will make a recommendation to the Director Engineering & Operations regarding the application.

The Director Engineering & Operations will respond to the Event Organiser with the following:

- The outcome of the appeal and any action taken;
- The reason/s for the decision; and
- The proposed remedy or resolution/s that will be put in place (if needed).

The elected Councillors will play no part in the event application appeal process.

Responsibilities

The Bookings & Facilities Officer is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing and approving events in parks and community facilities in accordance with Events in Council Parks & Community Facilities Policy
- Providing advice and assistance to Event Organisers
- Reviewing and recommending fee waiver requests, if appropriate
- Reviewing and revising this Events in Council Parks & Community Facilities Policy when required. Substantive changes must go to Council for approval (this does not include minor administrative updates)
- Being the nominated Council point of contact for Event Organisers and liaising with other responsible sections of Council as required and as listed below.

The Director Engineering & Operations is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing and approving appeals, if appropriate.
- Reviewing and approving fee waiver requests, if appropriate

Development Assessment and Regulatory Services staff are responsible for the following:

- Assessing Section 68 Applications in accordance with the relevant legislation
- Undertaking regulatory inspections, including food inspections, if needed

Engineering staff are responsible for the following:

- Assessing Traffic & Pedestrian Management Plans
- Referring proposed traffic changes to the Traffic Committee, if needed

Customer Service staff are responsible for processing Council Park & Facilities Event fees and damage bonds.

Event Organisers are responsible for:

- Complying with this Policy and any terms and conditions applied to their event.
- Complying with any reasonable direction from an Authorised Council Officer.

3.0 Version Control

Date	Type	Minute
5 September 2023	Version 1 - Draft for Public Exhibition	230/23
3 November 2023	Version 2 - Endorsed	230/23

Annexure 1 – Parks & Community Facilities Which May be Booked

The following is a list of parks and facilities which may be booked:

Parks

All parks may be booked.

Strathfield Park rotunda may be booked. All other Council picnic areas (included shelters) cannot be booked and may be utilised on a first come first use basis

Note: for sporting grounds located within a Park – priority will be given to sporting club bookings. See Council's Sporting Grounds Allocation Policy.

Community Facilities

- Strathfield Town Hall and Supper Room, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield
- Strathfield Community Centre, 1B Bates Street, Homebush (Airey Park)
- Ironbark Room, Strathfield Library, 65-67 Rochester Street, Homebush
- Melaleuca Room, Strathfield Library, 65-67 Rochester Street, Homebush
- High Street Community Centre, 64 High Street, Strathfield (Edwards Park)
- Dutton Centre, 40 August Street, Strathfield
- Homebush West Community Centre (Melville Hall), 52 Hampstead Road, Homebush
- Cooke Park Meeting Room