

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

**HIRE OF COMMUNITY
FACILITIES
& COMMUNITY
DISCOUNT POLICY**

29 MAY 2024



	Hire of Community Facilities & Community Discount Policy		
RESPONSIBILITY	Manager Engineering		
DATE ADOPTED	29 May 2024	MINUTE	97/24
CM10 No	24/33466		
ASSOCIATED POLICIES	Events in Council Parks and Facilities Policy Events in Council Parks and Facilities Guidelines Council Fees and Charges		
ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION	Local Government Act 1993 Local Government (General) Regulation 2021		

1. Introduction

2.1. Title and Commencement

Strathfield Council's Hire of Community Facilities and Community Discount Policy was prepared and placed on public exhibition from 29 April 2024 to 27 May 2024. It was adopted on 29 May 2024.

2.2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to support the community use of Council community facilities and to contribute to a happier, healthier, and more engaged Strathfield. The policy provides opportunities for the community to access and participate in a range of recreation, cultural, community and educational activities and projects. The Policy provides a transparent, equitable and consistent methodology for the hire of community facilities and the application of community discounts for the hire of community facilities.

2.3. Objectives of the policy

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Provide hirers with access to Council facilities for activities which provide community benefit.
- Assist in meeting the community development objectives outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.
- Outline reasonable conditions for the hiring of facilities.
- Determine criteria for community discount hire of the community facilities.

2.4. Coverage of the Policy

This policy applies to all Council properties (or portions of a property) which are available for casual or regular hire by the community, including:

- Strathfield Community Centre, 1B Bates Street, Homebush
- Strathfield Town Hall and Supper Room, 65 Homebush Road Strathfield
- Library and Information Centre, 65-67 Rochester Street, Homebush
- High Street Community Centre, 64 High Street, Strathfield
- Dutton Centre, Augusta Street, Strathfield
- Homebush West Community Centre, Hampstead Road, Homebush West
- Meeting Room, Cooke Park Amenities Block, Madeline Street, Belfield

The policy will also apply to any new Council properties (or portions of a property) which are intended for casual or regular hire by the community.

2.5. Exclusions

The policy does not apply:

- To Council managed activities and events.
- To Council properties (or portions of a property) which are subject to a long-term lease or licence.
- To Council parks, reserves or sporting grounds.

2.6. Definitions

Casual hire – refers to less than ten bookings per year.

Regular hire – refers to ten or more bookings per year.

Not-for-profit - a not-for-profit is generally an organisation that does not operate for the profit, personal gain or other benefit of particular people (for example, its members, the people who run the organisation, or their friends or relatives). All not-for-profit organisations must be registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

2. Policy

2.1. Permitted Uses

Council makes facilities available for hire by members of the public, at times when they are not in use by Council supported activities, programs or events.

Each facility has its own terms and conditions setting out specific permissible uses of the facility. These terms and conditions will be consistent with development consent, plan of management for community land (if applicable) and operational requirements of the facility. Information on the specific terms and conditions for each facility are available on Council's website.

The application for use of a community facility must specify the purpose of the hire, proposed activities, proposed times, facilities required and the number of participants attending. Applications for use of the community facilities must be inclusive of the time required for setting-up and packing-down for the event or activity.

2.2. Uses Not Permitted

The following activities or events will not be permitted within Council's community facilities, as they do not align with the Community Strategic Plan:

- Events or activities which may pose a safety threat or have an inappropriate impact on local residents.
- Events or activities which may be considered offensive to the reasonable person.
- Events or activities associated with the alcohol, fast food, firearms, gambling, pornography, soft drinks or tobacco industry.

2.3. Minimum Hire Time

The minimum hire time for a community facility is two hours.

Council may propose alternative times and venues for bookings of short duration in order to maximise the availability of the facility for other users.

2.4. Fees And Charges

Fees and charges apply for hire of Council community facilities. The fees and charges are subject to an annual review and are outlined on Council's website.

Fees and charges will include (but are not limited to):

- Hire of the facility
- Security bonds for breach of hire conditions, including any costs associated with cleaning, breaches of security, fire brigade callouts, security callouts, damage or loss of Council property including keys or security passes, hire variations or hire cancellations. The bond is refundable after the hire, less any charges incurred by Council.
- Insurance – Council requires hirers to be covered for public liability insurance to the value of \$20 million. In the event that an organisation or individual is not insured, the hirer will be charged additional for insurance coverage.
- Charges for cleaning and waste management.

The booking is not confirmed until such time as all fees and charges have been paid by the applicant. Fees and charges for the community facilities will apply to the entire booking and must be inclusive of setting-up and packing-down for the event or activity.

Community discounts will apply to hourly hire fees (only). Discounts will not apply to other fees and charges.

Council reserves the right to request higher security bonds if proposed activities are considered to be of high risk to Council property or security.

Council will charge cancellation fees for bookings that are cancelled, based on the amount of notice provided.

2.5. Regular Hirers

Council reviews regular hire arrangements on a yearly basis and regular hirers must apply to Council for new or continued use each year.

Council will not unreasonably refuse ongoing hire to previous regular hirers. However, Council cannot guarantee that existing arrangements will be approved in future years, dependent on Council events and activities, changes in Council organisational priorities and consideration of the needs of other applicants.

2.6. Application Review and Prioritisation

Council staff will take the following into consideration when reviewing applications and if competing applications need to be prioritised:

- First prioritisation will be given to Council managed events and activities.
- Ensure that proposed use is permissible and compatible with other facility users (where relevant).
- Consider the applicant's past history and any previous negative impacts (e.g. noise complaints, damage to Council property).
- Consider the accumulative impact of each application relevant to the total management of the facility e.g. noise, parking etc.
- Allocate space on a prioritised basis to activities of highest benefit to the Strathfield community in accordance with Council's Community Strategic Plan.
- Ensure that facilities are accessible by multiple users and not dominated by individual groups to the detriment of others.
- Council will generally not approve applications for use of multiple rooms simultaneously in the same facility on a regular basis.
- Council reserves the right to propose alternative arrangements to applicants which are more appropriate to the management of the facility and other hirer's requirements.
- Council will prioritise full fee paying applications for the Strathfield Town Hall and Homebush West Community Centre on weekends.
- Council reserves the right to refuse approval of applications that do not comply with Council's requirements.
- Council reserves the right to refuse approval of applications where there is planned or unplanned maintenance or renewal works required to the facility.

Elected Councillors will play no part in the allocation process.

2.7. Hire Breaches

Any breaches of Council's terms and conditions for the community facilities, including providing misleading or incorrect information, may result in the following:

- Loss of bond.
- Termination of future bookings.
- Refusal of future facility hire applications.
- Imposition of higher bonds for future applications.

3. Community Discounts

Council offers community discounts for regular hirers across two categories:

- Community Discount Category 1 – 50% fee waiver for not-for-profit organisations during the week and on weekends (from outside Strathfield)
- Community Discount Category 2 – 90% fee waiver for not-for-profit organisations based in Strathfield during the week and on weekends.

Any organisation that receives a community discount must include the Strathfield Council logo on relevant marketing material to demonstrate Council's support. The logo will be supplied at the time the fee waiver is granted.

Community Discount Category 1

A community discount will apply to not-for-profit organisations (based outside Strathfield). The discount applied will be 50% for hourly hire fees (only).

In order to qualify for the community discount category 1, the following supporting information may be required to be supplied by the hirer at the time of their application:

- Evidence of the organisation's not-for-profit status and registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).
- A copy of the organisation's annual report and financial statements.
- A description of the proposed use for the community facility, which must align with the community development objectives as outlined in Council's Community Strategic Plan.
- Evidence from the organisation that they charge nominal fees only for participation in the event or activity.
- Evidence from the organisation that all income, assets and surplus funds of the group are used to achieve the group objectives and are not distributed directly or indirectly to members of the organisation except as genuine compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation.
- A copy of any funding agreements (if relevant) including funding received from government on a recurrent/ ongoing basis, to support the costs of the organisation's operations.
- Evidence that the organisation has public liability insurance valued at \$20 million.

Council will require sufficient supporting documentation to satisfy itself that the community discount applies. If the potential hirer cannot provide the documentation, Council reserves the right to charge the full applicable fees and charges.

Community Discount Category 2

A community discount will apply to not-for-profit organisations based within Strathfield and providing services predominantly to the Strathfield community. The discount applied will be 90% for hourly hire fees (only).

In order to qualify for the community discount category 2, the following supporting information must be supplied by the hirer at the time of their application:

- All of the information required for community discount category 1; AND
- Evidence that the organisation is based within Strathfield local government area. Council will require evidence of a Strathfield address.
- Evidence that the services provided by the organisation are predominantly to the Strathfield community. Council may require a membership list or list of participants as supporting documentation.

Council will require sufficient supporting documentation to satisfy itself that the community discount applies. If the potential hirer cannot provide the documentation, Council reserves the right to charge the full applicable fees and charges.

4. Version Control

Date	Type	Minute
23 April 2024	Draft – for public exhibition	97/24
29 May 2024	Final endorsed version	97/24