Rural City of Wangaratta

Community Sport Facility Booking Policy

Document Type	Major Council Policy
Department	Council-wide
Date of Council Endorsement	
Date for Review	2031
Responsible Officer	Manager Community Services
Authorising Officer	Director Community and Infrastructure
Version Reference Number	XXXX
SIM Reference Number	TBC

1. Statement and Purpose

This policy establishes a consistent, transparent and sustainable framework for the allocation and use of Council owned and managed community sport facilities.

The policy aims to:

- provides safe and fit-for-purpose playing environments
- maximises community participation in sport and recreation
- support equitable and inclusive access to community sport facilities
- ensure sustainable management of Council assets

This policy supports Council's commitment to community wellbeing and the objectives of the Community Sport Fair Access Policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to sporting grounds and associated facilities owned and/or directly managed by Council.

While it does not directly apply to facilities managed by Community Asset Committees, Council will work collaboratively with these bodies to promote alignment with the principles of equality and transparent facility allocation.

3. Policy

Council will allocate and manage community sport facilities in accordance with the following principles.

3.1 Equity and Fair Access

- Prioritise equitable access for all user groups
- Support gender equitable access to facilities, training times and competition opportunities
- Align with the Community Sport Fair Access Policy and Action Plan

3.2 Community Participation and Benefit

- Maximise community participation in sport and recreation
- Support access for underrepresented groups
- Prioritise activities that deliver broad community benefit

3.3 Shared Use and Collaboration

- Encourage shared and multi-use facility arrangements
- Promote cooperation between user groups to maximise utilisation

3.4 Sustainability

- Protect and maintain playing surfaces and infrastructure
- Balance facility use with asset capacity and condition
- Restrict access where required to protect surfaces, ensure safety or allow maintenance and capital works

3.5 Allocation Framework

Where demand exceeds availability, Council will allocate access based on the following priorities:

1. Council endorsed events and programs
2. Demonstrated commitment to equitable and inclusive practices
3. Participation levels and contribution to community wellbeing
4. Support for shared, collaborative and multi-use facility arrangements
5. Historical use, where relevant, provided it does not conflict with equitable access objectives

In assessing applications, Council may also consider:

- participation data and growth
- equitable distribution of training and competition access
- compliance with previous agreements and policy requirements
- availability and suitability of facilities

All bookings must be submitted through Council's approved processes and are subject to approval in accordance with Councils delegated authority.

Council reserves the right to amend, relocate or decline bookings where necessary to achieve equitable outcomes, broader community benefit, or safety and asset protection.

3.6 Eligibility Requirements

User groups must:

- hold a minimum $20 million public liability insurance
- comply with relevant legislation and Council policies, including:
  - Child Safe Standards o Fair Play Code
  - Community Sport Fair Access Policy
  - applicable sport or association registration requirements

3.7 Booking and Use

- Seasonal access must be applied for through Council's booking process, and where approved, formalised through a Seasonal Agreement
- Previous use does not guarantee ongoing use, or future allocation

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Council

Council will:

- administer and manage facility allocations in accordance with this policy
- make transparent, fair and equitable allocation decisions
- communicate allocation processes and outcomes
- support shared use arrangements
- monitor compliance with bookings and agreements

4.2 Sporting Clubs

Clubs will:

- submit applications within required timeframes
- comply with Seasonal Agreements, booking conditions and policy requirements
- support equitable access and Fair Access principles
- provide relevant information required to assess applications
- pay all applicable fees and charges when due
- work collaboratively with other facility users

5. Breaches

Failure to comply with this policy, Seasonal Agreements, booking conditions, Fair Access requirements or other relevant obligations may constitute a breach.

In response to a breach, Council may:

- providing guidance and opportunity to rectify the issue
- require a compliance or improvement plan
- modify or educe facility access
- decline future booking applications
- cancelling existing bookings

6. Human Rights

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic). In implementing this policy, Council seeks to promote and protect human rights, including the right to equality, non-discrimination, and participation in community life.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has considered and applied Councils Equality Impact Assessment Template and satisfies the provisions established in the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic).

8. Monitoring and evaluation

Council will monitor the allocation and use of sport grounds and associated facilities on an ongoing basis to ensure alignment with this Policy and the Rural City of Wangaratta Community Sport Fair Access Policy.

9. Definitions

Seasonal Agreements

Formal agreements between Council and community sporting clubs that provide scheduled access to facilities for training and competition purposes.

10. References and Related Policies

Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
- Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

Internal Policies

- Community Sport Fair Access Policy (2026)
- Gender Equality Action Plan (2022-2025)

External Standards and Frameworks

- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Fair Play Code

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years, or earlier if required due to legislative or operational changes. The review will be led by the Manager of Community Services.

Version History		
Version Number	**Date of change**	**Reasons for change**
1	May 2026	Scheduled review
2	September 2026	Definitions and References review