

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL  
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING  
Tuesday 22 August 2023  
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

**Item:** 10.1 Question on Notice

**Originating from:** Cr Melanie Selwood

**Subject:** Community & Recreation Facilities Framework

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**1. QUESTION**

Council is in the process of implementing the new Community & Recreation Facilities Framework with many recreation groups now having made their choice. My questions to the administration are:

1. Which recreation facilities have chosen to 'opt-in' to Council taking on maintenance?
2. Which recreation facilities have chosen to 'opt-out' from Council maintenance and continue their own maintenance with a contribution from Council?
3. How is the funding contribution calculated for groups who have chosen to opt-out?
4. Will any funding contribution remain for a fixed-term or will it have a staged increase over time (e.g. in line with CPI)?
5. Where groups have opted in, is Council committing to a schedule for maintenance based around game times and the specific requirements of each recreation ground?
6. What is Council's budget allocation for maintenance for both opt-in and opt-out?
7. Have Council's budget projections for recreation facilities changed now that most groups have made their decision to opt-in or opt-out?
8. What extra administrative burdens have been placed on volunteer committees regarding maintenance (such as risk assessments, safe operating procedures, application and acquittals for funding)?

**2. BACKGROUND**

In August 2022, Council adopted a new Community & Recreation Facilities Policy to come into effect on 1 July 2023. Now that the policy has been enacted, Council staff have been working with community groups to negotiate whether they will opt-in to Council maintaining the turf at their facilities, or whether they will opt-out and receive funding to cover some of the costs incurred by the groups who are doing their own maintenance.

Concerns have been raised by some recreation grounds committees as follows:

- The opt-out funding is insufficient to cover many of the out-of-pocket costs incurred.
- By opting-in, the cost to Council is actually higher than if Council were to fully reimburse the group for actual maintenance costs (fuel, servicing, fertiliser etc) where labour costs are minimal due to volunteer labour.

- One group has claimed that the funding offered by Council has been reduced from 80 cents per square metre to 55 cents per square metre.
- The costs of fuel, fertiliser and servicing are increasing which will be borne by community groups who opt-out.

These questions will provide Elected Members with some clarity around the implications for communities and Council now that many groups have made their decision to opt-in or opt-out.

### **3. OFFICER'S RESPONSE – Karen Cummings, Manager Property Services**

Council endorsed the Community and Recreation Facility Framework (CRFF) at its 23 August 2022 meeting following an extensive development, engagement and collaboration process over the previous four years.

There are some substantial improvements that the adoption of the CRFF and its ongoing implementation will facilitate. These include:

- Significantly improved equity in Council resourcing and support between Council and community owned facilities
- The allocation and spending of Council resources in accordance with agreed priorities and approved service levels
- Significantly improved standard of facilities over time for the community
- Allocation of funding to ensure ongoing safety of facilities is achieved for the community
- Clear obligations and arrangements for Council and community groups, clubs and associations
- Assistance with clubs planning for the future
- Policy positions that reflect the Adelaide Hills Council and its unique environment
- Clear Work, Health and Safety obligations and processes for community groups, clubs and associations

The CRFF project was an action from Council's Sport and Recreation Strategy (2016-2021), and following its adoption, also replaced Council's Sport and Recreation Policy. A significant part of the CRFF's implementation involved the development of new leases for Council owned sites, and arrangements regarding Council's contribution towards oval maintenance.

- 1. Which recreation facilities have chosen to 'opt-in' to Council taking on maintenance?**
- 2. Which recreation facilities have chosen to 'opt-out' from Council maintenance and continue their own maintenance with a contribution from Council?**

The following table outlines the intentions of community groups, clubs and associations at the time of compiling this response in regards to oval maintenance under the new CRFF.

Currently, Council directly maintains five (5) recreation facilities (i. e. opting in) with the rest being maintained by the community groups with a financial contribution from Council as highlighted below under the third 22/23 oval maintenance allocation column. With the rollout of the new CRFF it is likely that eight (8) recreation facilities will choose the "Opt In" option. This includes the sites listed below as "hybrid" sites where there is no automated

irrigation system. In these instances, Council will maintain the site and pay for bore electricity costs, and the club will continue to irrigate the oval manually. Included in this list is Heathfield Oval who have chosen to continue with the current arrangement of Council maintaining their oval under their existing Lease.

Eleven (11) sites have chosen to “Opt Out” of Council undertaking maintenance, instead choosing a cash contribution from Council together with the ongoing utilisation of volunteers to maintain their ovals.

The split of sites is shown below where the highlighted sections represent budgeted costs based on Opt In/ Out decision for 2023/24:

Site	Ownership	22/23 allocation or cost	Council Cost (Opt In Hybrid)	Council Cost (Opt In)	Min amount (Opt Out)	Opt In/ Out status
<b>Bradbury (*)</b>	Council	14,000		18,000	10,000	Opt In
<b>Bridgewater (*)</b>	Council	12,000		15,000	9,000	Opt In
<b>Woodside</b>	Council	12,200		58,000	25,000	Opt In
<b>Aldgate (*)</b>	Council	10,000		12,000	6,500	Opt In
<b>Ashton</b>	Council	5,400	25,000	40,000	9,000	Hybrid
<b>Heathfield (*)</b>	Council	12,000		15,000	12,000	Remaining on current Lease
<b>Mylor</b>	Council	5,400		19,000	13,000	Opt Out
<b>Scott Creek</b>	Council	5,400	18,000	26,000	9,000	Hybrid
<b>Balhannah</b>	Council	7,000		21,000	14,000	Opt Out
<b>Basket Range</b>	Community	5,400		15,000	9,000	Opt Out
<b>Birdwood</b>	Community	7,000		31,000	20,000	Opt Out
<b>Forest Range</b>	Community	5,400		15,000	9,000	Opt Out
<b>Gumeracha</b>	Council	7,000		22,000	9,000	Opt Out
<b>Houghton</b>	Community	5,400		18,000	10,000	Opt Out
<b>Kersbrook</b>	Community	7,000		24,000	14,000	Opt Out
<b>Lenswood</b>	Community	5,400		15,000	9,000	Opt Out
<b>Lobethal</b>	Community	7,000		25,000	14,000	Opt Out
<b>Mount Torrens</b>	Community	5,400	25,000	40,000	12,000	Hybrid
<b>Paracombe</b>	Community	5,400		19,000	11,000	Opt Out
<b>Uraidla</b>	Community	7,000		22,000	13,000	Opt Out
<b>Stirling (*)</b>	Council	12,000		15,000	8,000	Opt In
		<b>\$162,800</b>	<b>\$68,000</b>	<b>\$133,000</b>	<b>\$145,000</b>	

(\*) Cost shown for 2022/23 are estimates only as ledger records at a consolidated level.

### 3. How is the funding contribution calculated for groups who have chosen to opt-out?

For the sites that have chosen to “Opt Out” (i. e. choosing an annual cash contribution from Council) the funding contribution is calculated at a rate per square metre based on the size of the oval. The rate per square metre is based on a standard level of service appropriate for community use. This approach attempts to ensure that equity is maintained across all of the facilities, a key outcome of the adopted CRFF.

**4. Will any funding contribution remain for a fixed-term or will it have a staged increase over time (e.g. in line with CPI)?**

It is proposed by the Administration to alter allocations based upon CPI each year. This will be undertaken as part of the development of the Annual Business Plan.

**5. Where groups have opted in, is Council committing to a schedule for maintenance based around game times and the specific requirements of each recreation ground?**

Yes. Funding allocations for both the opt in and opt out scenarios have been based on the same level of service for active open spaces across the whole Council area, to a “community use” standard. This level of service has been communicated with each Lessee. If Clubs/Lesseees are seeking a level of service over and above the community standard that has been adopted by Council, this needs to be undertaken at their own cost.

**6. What is Council's budget allocation for maintenance for both opt-in and opt-out?**

As per the table above the current allocation for maintenance costs is as follows:

- for those opting in (but under a hybrid model) the cost to Council is \$68k
- for those opting in (or remaining on their current lease) the cost to Council is \$133k
- for those opting out the cost to Council is \$145k

**7. Have Council's budget projections for recreation facilities changed now that most groups have made their decision to opt-in or opt-out?**

Based on the expected mix of those opting in and those option out the budget projections at this time have not changed. This will be regularly reviewed, and if necessary, adjusted as part of normal budget processes.

**8. What extra administrative burdens have been placed on volunteer committees regarding maintenance (such as risk assessments, safe operating procedures, application and acquittals for funding)?**

There is expected to be an increase in the reporting requirements for lessees. This relates to the need to meet work, health and safety reporting at their sites, as well as acquittal of funds allocated for expenditure on oval maintenance (where they have opted out). Council staff are working with groups to ensure where possible any additional reporting is minimised.

**7. APPENDIX**

Nil