

ADOPTED BY
COUNCIL ON
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Blue Mountains City Council

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

POLICY

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1. Preface

For many years Council has been working in partnership with the community and State and Federal Government agencies to provide community services and facilities for residents of the City of the Blue Mountains. This partnership has resulted in the provision of community buildings for which Council has responsibility and from which a range of services and activities are provided.

Community buildings in the context of this policy document fall into two categories:

1. Public buildings such as community halls, with venues available for hire, generally under the management of delegated management committees.
2. Community buildings from which community service groups operate; examples of such buildings are neighbourhood centres, youth centres, arts centres and child care centres.

In the past, Council has developed a range of ad hoc arrangements as to which group or organisation occupies community buildings and the terms and conditions under which such occupation occurs. Some groups have had to access to a community building, others have been use the private rental market. Some groups providing community services centres operate out of community halls. The arrangements for occupation range from no acknowledgment of a tenancy through to formal leases. This ad hoc approach has resulted in a lack of consistency and equity and is not a model of good management practice.

In 1998 Council commenced work on the development of a policy and procedure document to provide a framework to address this anomalous situation. This exercise was not intended as a means to raise revenue but rather it was predicated on the assumption that principles of transparency, access and equity needed to be introduced across the board. This policy development process is one of a number of initiatives in developing partnerships with the community, government and non-government agencies to provide important community services and community meeting places.

This policy aims to clarify roles and responsibilities for the management of community buildings and to provide a framework for the usage of community buildings. It provides a mechanism through which community buildings can be better managed to provide important services, meeting places and activities for the community. This will also enable the balance of various objectives and services that Council provides the Blue Mountains community as a whole.

This revised policy has been built on the Community Buildings Pricing Policy and Procedures adopted by Blue Mountains City Council on 27 June 2000 and from the input received from community organisations and residents prior to and subsequent to the adoption of that policy. It should not be considered as the ultimate solution to Council's community buildings management, but rather as a policy that can be regularly reviewed to ensure Council is proactive in managing its community buildings in a way which addresses the changing needs of the community.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Council documents:

- Annual Management Plan
- Area Plans
- Access and Equity Policy
- Cultural Strategy
- BM Recreation and Sports Plan
- Council's Youth Strategy
- Future Directions Statement.

2. Statement of Purpose

Community buildings are the first rung on the ladder of community service and facility provision. This first rung should be within easy reach of all residents so that access to these social benefits can be as widespread as possible and the community as a whole can benefit from improved health including mental health, lower levels of crime, lower levels of relationship breakdown, increased personal independence as well as the enriching benefits of social, cultural, leisure and intellectual pursuits.

Community buildings are in Council ownership and Council manages these buildings on behalf of, and in trust for, the community. A key ingredient in this management is the three-way partnership between Council, various community groups and funding bodies at other levels of government. This partnership exists to ensure that many of the services of first resort are provided within the city. Council works in partnership with community services groups to encourage community services, to recognize their contributions to the Blue Mountains community at large and to effect better management and use of community buildings.

Council views partnership as having the following elements:

- Understanding and transparency
- Clarity and certainty
- Sharing and support
- Consultation and communication

Partnership aims at achieving legal, financial, functional/physical, social and community objectives of all parties involved.

This partnership exists on a number of levels in a range of settings. In the arena of the provision of community buildings, Council is committed in this partnership work towards the equitable provision and management of community buildings as a community resource. It seeks from the community a partnership commitment to ensure the sustainability of the buildings for future generations and the use of the buildings for community wellbeing. It seeks partnership from government through financial assistance for building and social sustainability, and assistance with service monitoring.

Council recognises the importance of social sustainability in the Blue Mountains. It is the mix of social service provision with the broad diversity of activities, which makes community buildings critical elements in the quality of life of the City. Their low cost facilitates equity of access and assists start up. Their very basic but generally unrestricted nature fosters diversity and innovation. Their community ownership promotes neutrality and an independent arena in which democratic processes can be undertaken, connections made and information exchanged. Their role as centres where more than one service or activity is provided and where residents meet on an equal footing, fosters the development of networks, norms of reciprocity, education and skills development, and equity - all important elements of social capital.

Social capital is a widely used concept and refers to the combination of social trust, norms, and networks that people can draw upon in order to solve common problems. It is therefore necessary to emphasise the development of norms of mutual trust and the experience of reciprocity which social capital and a vibrant civic infrastructure can engender. The idea of reciprocity is important because it encapsulates the willingness of citizens and residents to contribute to community well being on the general understanding that at some time in the future, they too may need to call upon the community and its services for assistance. It is also understood that social capital facilitates better health, lower crime rates, better educational outcomes, and stronger economic growth for the local community and that social capital is essential for maintaining public goods such as quality of life and environmental conservation.

Social capital accumulation depends on the development of trust and partnerships based on shared responsibility for community well being, service provision and sustainability. While contributions towards these partnership arrangements might vary, all parties have a shared responsibility to work towards social, financial and environmental sustainability.

It is with this understanding that the City of Blue Mountains supports the provision of community buildings for the following community purposes:

- To facilitate the provision of services, activities and meeting places which address community needs.
- To provide premises from which community services, activities and meetings can take place.
- To promote the development of voluntary, special interest and/or mutual support associations and network between these associations, interests and activities to meet community needs.
- To promote Access and Equity principles in the provision of community building facilities.
- To work in partnership with community organisations and with other government and non-government agencies to meet identified community needs.
- To foster leisure and cultural activities which enrich the quality of life of local residents.

3. Framework for Sustainability

Planning for a sustainable future is acknowledged in Council's Management Plan as the umbrella activity, which guides and influences all Council activities. The management and use of community buildings must be consistent with environmental, social and financial sustainability. Policies and practices of Council that work towards environmental sustainability in relation to community buildings are developed in other Council documents. Policies and practices that work towards social sustainability are set out in such documents as Area Plans and Council's Cultural Strategy.

Financial, social and environmental sustainability are interdependent. This policy document focuses on financial and asset management but with the understanding that social and environmental sustainability are of equal importance.

In providing community buildings and the services and activities that operate from within them, there are significant resource constraints. These constraints are experienced by Council, community organisations and other levels of government and limit the services and activities that can be provided.

3.1 Financial Sustainability Considerations

A policy of 'full cost recovery' has an attractive ring about it. It sounds like a policy based on fairness 'if a service is sufficiently valued by the public, they will pay for it'. However, in the case of community buildings a policy of full cost recovery may discourage use and lead to a reduction in the benefits. The reduction in benefits is likely to outweigh any increases in revenue to Council from such a policy. In this case, it may be preferable to pay for the cost of the use of the building through rates and taxes, rather than through direct charges. Moreover, it may be deemed appropriate to subsidise use of a particular community building facility.

At the outset, financial sustainability considerations should be seen as a collaborative effort between government agencies at all levels and the community sector in the Blue Mountains.

The functions, services and activities undertaken in Council's community buildings can be classified into three distinct categories:

Core - Those which must be supplied to the community as a whole without restrictions such as emergency services, local roads and libraries. The core functions of Council are set out in other Council documents.

Expected - Those which are not mandatory, but which communities believe should be provided by public sector and are generally not provided by the private sector such as baby health centres, arts centres and neighbourhood centres.

Commercial - Profit making enterprises

Core services are those supplied to the community as a whole, whose benefits accrue to society as a whole, and generally cannot be divided into units, which can be sold separately. In a local government context, good town planning is a core service – all benefit. Nonetheless, individual charges may be levied for building or planning permits in respect of particular proposals.

Expected services are outputs which the private sector is generally not prepared to produce commercially, but which society considers meriteous. Provision of such services characteristically involve some degree of subsidy on equity grounds. Many of the expected services and activities are housed within community buildings such as neighbourhood centres, youth centres and senior citizen centres.

Commercial activities are purely for commercial or profit making purposes, the purchasers of which should be charged at least the full long-run economic cost of producing them, and to which equity based concessions are generally not applicable; for example, Council owned retail shops and residential properties.

Community buildings, the services and activities they house, and the community needs and aspirations to which they are directed are diverse. Fees and charges will need to reflect this diversity. However, it is also important that the application of fees and charges across these circumstances is consistent and fair. For example, a situation in which one organisation receives a substantial subsidy from Council while a similar organisation performing the same service and using the same income source is required to make a net contribution of some thousands of dollars to Council is anomalous. Council's policy is based on the principle that similar services should attract similar levels of subsidy.

Equally, Council recognises that some front line services in the City operate on the basis of state or federal government grants which are tied to specific uses in the Agreements under which the funds are provided. In some instances, these funds cannot be diverted to meet Council's fees and charges. In other instances, Council has entered into an agreement to provide a building free of charge to a particular group. Further, many funded services have experienced reduced or more narrowly targeted funding in recent years and this has resulted in cuts to some services. Council appreciates that where state and federal funding has declined, community based services need assistance in representing the needs and requirements of the City's residents to funding agencies at a high level.

This policy is based on the premise that community buildings are public facilities which benefit everyone in the community. This community benefit is a public good and a shared responsibility to which all those who are able, should make a contribution. The aim of the policy is to protect this public good through appropriate and fair levels of contribution.

4. Use of Community Buildings by Community Service Organisations

Council recognizes the value of social capital and the provision of services to the community at large. The principles for allocation of community service organisations in community buildings and the sustainable management of these community assets are:

1. Council supports the provision of community services through subsidies.
2. All financial arrangements are documented, transparent and in accordance with legislative requirements.
3. Council and community service organizations each has a role in ensuring building sustainability.
4. Community service organizations are given security of tenure for fixed periods.
5. The type and level of support to individual community service organisations is reviewed on a regular basis.
6. Community service organizations are responsible for the outgoings over which they have influence, such as electricity, gas, cleaning and minor maintenance.
7. Income derived from a community building should be directed to the building.

4.1 Implementation of these principles

These principles will be implemented as follows:

1. A rental will be established for each premise using property valuation principles. Council will not charge a rental to the tenanted group, but will provide a 100% rent subsidy. See Appendix 2 for the list of those community service organizations that currently have exclusive use of all or part of a community building.
2. The tenanted group will be responsible for all outgoings excepting building insurance and Council rates.
3. Council will assume responsibility for cyclic, major, and conditioned based maintenance.
4. Minor building maintenance will be the joint responsibility of the community service organization and Council, as follows:

Council will provide an annual allocation for minor maintenance for each community building (or part thereof) used by a community services group in its annual budget for community buildings. This amount will be reviewed annually as part of the formal budget process. Once the Council allocated minor maintenance vote has been exhausted, the community service group will be responsible for minor maintenance to a maximum of \$300 for any one item.

5. Non-profit organizations wishing to establish, or continue to use, all or part of a community building must apply for such use on a four-year basis, and within six months of a Local Government election on the prescribed form.
6. Council will establish a Premises Review Panel comprising Councillors, representative(s) from community service organisation(s) and relevant staff for the purpose reviewing the applications and making recommendations to the Council for occupation of premises. The panel in its deliberations may seek advice from Government funding bodies, peak organisations in the community welfare and arts sectors, or other expert advisors, and co-opt members as required. Applications for exclusive use of all, or part, of a community building by a community service group, will be assessed by the Panel against the following criteria:
 - The group provides services, activities and/or meeting places which address community needs.
 - The premises will be used as a place from which community services, activities and/or meetings can take place.
 - The organization promotes the development of voluntary, special interest and/or mutual support associations and networks between these associations, interests and activities to meet community needs.
 - Access and Equity principles are implemented by the organisation
 - The organization works in partnership with community organisations and with other government and non-government agencies to meet identified community needs.
 - The organization promotes leisure and cultural activities which enrich the quality of life of local residents.
7. In general, existing non-profit groups who occupy all or part of a community building and who provide services to the community will continue to have occupation.
8. Individual licence agreements of up to four years duration will be developed, using a standard format, for each community service organisation tenanted in a community building. These agreements will be within the framework of the Council's adopted Community Buildings Policy and will set out the partnership arrangements between Council and the community service group. A nominal one dollar per annum, if required, will be set as the rental.
9. In the event that it is required of the group to have a lease registered on the title for a term longer than four years, this will be separately determined by the Council.
10. Leases on community buildings will be reviewed in accordance with the principles for allocation of community services organisations in community buildings if community benefit ceases to be shown.
11. Council does not intend to financially disadvantage any community organisation through the implementation of the policy. Accordingly, basis, groups who are directly affected by this policy and cannot afford to meet all outgoing costs may apply for further subsidisation from Council.

12. Community service groups are encouraged to hire rooms in the tenanted premises. However, the groups will be required to set reasonable room hire fees in consultation with Council. Revenue from such hirings is only to be used for building purposes, such as minor maintenance or building related outgoings such as cleaning and electricity. Any annual surpluses from room hire are to be carried over from year to year. Community Service Groups will be required to separately identify income from room hire in their chart of accounts and show the manner of expenditure as part of their audited statement, a copy of which is to be supplied to Council on an annual basis.
13. Existing terms and conditions of occupation will apply until new agreements have been signed. This is necessary as a number of groups have occupation of premises as a result of Council resolutions and with fees set through the annual Schedule of Fees and Charges.
14. Where capital funding for the construction of community buildings on Council land was provided by entities other than Council, occupation of these buildings has been in accordance with the agreements executed at the time. The integrity of these agreements is acknowledged and therefore the provisions of these agreements should be maintained until such times that new arrangements are required and a new agreement is negotiated.

4.2 New Applications for Lease or Exclusive Hire of Community Buildings

The availability of exclusive use space in Council owned community buildings is limited and competition for exclusive use is steady.

Council is concerned to develop an equitable assessment procedure to apply to community groups and others requesting the use of Council buildings on an exclusive hire or lease basis.

Procedures for new buildings and new groups

New applications for exclusive use of a building or part thereof, will be received by Council at anytime. Council will keep a register of such requests.

Council will review every four years the exclusive use of all or part of community buildings by community service groups, in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in Section 4.1. Requests listed on the register will be included in the applications considered by the Premises Review Panel.

If a space becomes available in a community building, Council will advertise any vacancies that arise. These will be considered in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in Section 4.1.

From time to time new groups are formed or funded that provide services that meet an identified community need and there may be occasions where such groups require urgent consideration by Council for provision of premises. In such cases, the group will be required to develop a business plan in conjunction with Council staff. Such a business plan would include the source of funds for capital

and ongoing expenditure as well as the services and benefits provided to the community at large. A report will be prepared, based on this business plan, for determination of the issue by the Council.

5. Public Halls and Community Buildings Under Delegated Voluntary Management Committees

Introduction

Council owns a large number and diverse range of community buildings and facilities which it manages in partnership with the community through a system of management committees or, in some instances, lease and other long term hire arrangements. Nearly all these arrangements involve the commitment of volunteer time and unpaid work for community benefit. Council is indebted to the many residents who willingly give their time to assist with the management and operation of Council's community buildings.

The efficacy of these arrangements depends on clarity and support from Council in relation to policies and procedures. The following policies and procedures have been developed to give effect to Council's Statement of Purpose and to facilitate Council's management partnerships for community buildings. They set out the mutual and reciprocal responsibilities of Council and management committees for community halls in particular.

5.1 Role and Responsibilities of S377 Management Committees

(a) Rationale

Council is committed to working in partnership with community facility management committees.

The formal basis of such partnership arrangements between councils and management committees has been provided for under Sections 355 and 377 of the Local Government Act. These sections provide councils with the power to appoint committees and delegate authority to them to manage and control community buildings

At its meeting of 26 September 2000 Blue Mountains City Council resolved that the functions of management committees are to:

- make appropriate arrangements for a booking and payments system
- arrange for the handover and collection of keys
- arrange for reports on the state of the facility after usage
- arrange for minor maintenance through Council's Property Section
- make recommendations to Council on matters of major maintenance
- ensure building security
- make recommendations to Council on fees and charges
- promote use of the building, consistent with the Council's Pricing Policy and Access and Equity principles.
- have an understanding of usage levels
- receive financial reports and understand the financial position of the community facility

There may, from time to time, be the need to develop further delegations for particular committees. For example the Braemar House Committee requires particular delegations to operate a cultural program.

Delegates of Council are required to observe Council's Code of Conduct and, in particular, to avoid conflicts of pecuniary interest in the management of community buildings.

The benefits of management committees operating under the Local Government Act are considerable. The Act provides the parameters within which both Council and the management committee engage in management of community buildings, and this fosters mutual understanding. Management committees operating within their delegations are also provided with proper protection and support of Council in their activities.

(b) Policy

Council appoints management committees and delegates authority to them to manage and control one or more community buildings under section 355 and 377 of the Local Government Act 1993 on behalf of and in partnership with Council.

A standard Constitution and set of delegations are used as the basis on which all management committees are appointed and operate.

Policy and operational guidelines for members of management committees are provided in Council's Operations Manual for Community Buildings.

(c) Procedures

Council implements the standard constitution adopted by Council on 27 January 1998, provides a set of delegations for management committees, and develops an Operations Manual for Community Buildings consistent with this pricing policy and its implementation requirements.

Council ensures that all community buildings requiring community management are allocated to a nominated management committee.

Council may pay honorariums to booking officers or other committee members, depending on the availability of funds, in recognition of the significant work that is undertaken on behalf of the community in making Council facilities accessible to residents.

5.2 Selection and Appointment of S377 Management Committees

(a) Rationale

Management committees run on unpaid donations of time, effort and energy from members of the community. As with any unpaid work, however, this does not mean that it is unskilled work. On the contrary, Council relies on the members of its management committees having, between them, an array of relevant skills.

Key among these are:

- the skill to chair meetings,
- skills to read financial reports,
- skills to make financial decisions within the parameters set by Council (e.g. recommend appropriate fees and charges to Council),
- skills to work with staff, such as booking officers, so as to carry out the role of the committee in meeting Council's intentions for its community buildings,
- skills to assess ethical issues such as potential conflicts of interest, equity issues, issues of social justice,
- skills to work with other members of the community,
- skills to promote rather than merely mind the building or facility.

It is in everyone's interest that members of management committees have, at least between them, this array of skills.

Council is also concerned that committees represent the community in its diversity and that there is regular turnover in committee and officer bearer composition so as to enable effective participation.

As noted in Section 1 on the roles and responsibilities of s377 management committees (p26), the Local Government Act requires management committees to act within the formal delegations specified in their instrument of appointment and to observe Council's Code of Conduct. The avoidance of exercise of pecuniary interest is a main principle of any code of conduct.

(b) Policy

Membership of a management committee is open to interested residents from the local community. A management committee must have at least a quorum of members who have no pecuniary involvement with any user group or organisation related to the community building. Members with a pecuniary involvement with a user group or organisation related to the community building may not be office bearers on the management committee.

(c) Procedures

Procedures for appointment to delegated committees are set out in the Constitution for Management Committees adopted by the Council on 27 January 1998. This constitution also provides for appointment of casual vacancies to Committees.

Council ensures that its Code of Conduct, as required under Section 440 of the Local Government Act, is available to all potential management committee members and provides a pre-application briefing.

5.3 Orientation Briefings for Management Committees

(a) Rationale

Management committees have responsibility under delegation for implementing diverse and complex policy objectives related to the operation of council's community buildings. Responsibilities include:

- The operation of community buildings and the design and implementation of programs in accordance with Council policy
- The determination of policies and procedures for the exercise of authorities, functions and procedures
- The hire of space/ facilities in accordance with Council approved fees and conditions of use
- The administration of income and expenditure incurred by the management committee in the operation of the building
- The administration of office systems including records and accounts
- Arranging for minor maintenance of the building including minor repairs, interior painting, floor maintenance.
- The preparation of advice to Council in relation to fees and charges
- The operation of the building in accordance with all licensing and risk management requirements.
- In order to ensure that all Section 377 management committees understand and have access to Council policy and procedures, a policy and operations manual is required as well as an orientation program for members to guide their work.

(b) Policy

Council assists management committees in carrying out their delegated responsibilities by the provision of advice, information and an orientation program.

(c) Procedures

Council develops, maintains and distributes to all management committees a copy of the Operations Manual for Community Buildings. This Manual will be updated on a regular basis or as the need arises.

The Manual will provide up to date information on:

- committee members' responsibilities as delegates of Council and their responsibilities regarding the management of specific community buildings.
- the roles, responsibilities and recruitment of volunteers.
- the Schedule of Fees and Charges.
- the management of equity, diversity and conflicts of interest.
- administrative costs which may be reimbursed.
- the ways in which Council's Statement of Purpose apply to the allocation of space in community buildings [including inappropriate uses, safety issues and management of security, noise etc].
- the assistance and services Council will provide to the committee, and
- the information, eg utilisation estimates, that Council requires from the Committee.
- Other matters which are from time to time deemed necessary.

Council provides an orientation briefing for new and returning committee members within four weeks of the annual appointment of management committees. This briefing includes: code of conduct protocols, roles and responsibilities of the management committee and of its executive officers, data collection requirements, quality service and management principles, and services and assistance that will be provided to the management committee by Council.

Council ensures that the orientation briefing is provided prior to the annual election of executive officers of each management committee.

Council allocates funds to cover the annual costs of orientation briefings and of keeping the operations manual up to date and in print for management committee members.

5.4 Framework for Establishing Hire Fees in Public Halls

Council has a number of community buildings available for use. These are listed in Appendix 1.

These halls and community buildings are hired for a wide variety of uses by a diversity of community and interest organisations. These venues are managed by committees appointed by Council, under Sections 355 and 377 of the Local Government Act 1993 as amended.

These community buildings and some spaces in other buildings, are available for occasional, casual and regular hire by individuals and organisations undertaking a very wide range of activities. These range from private functions such as weddings, for profit activities such as antique sales, a host of organisational activities by voluntary and non-profit associations and community service agencies, as well as the delivery of some front line social services such as community meals. The people attending and using these buildings for this wide range of purposes are diverse as is their capacity to pay. At the same time, the benefits to the community of these services and activities in community buildings is very substantial.

In developing a framework for a Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges, Not-for-profit Community-based uses relates to the full or part use to provide non-profit community-based services and activities, whilst commercial or private use relates to the full or part use primarily for the purpose of earning profits or for private purposes such as wedding receptions or birthday parties. Further details of these definitions are set out in Council's Manual for Community Buildings.

The annual determination of the Scale of Fees and Charges for buildings and spaces which are available for general hire, will be undertaken by Council on the recommendation of the relevant management committee. Council has a role in ensuring consistency in the fees and charges levied.

5.5 General Hall Hirers Pricing Policy

General hirers pricing policy

Recommended fees will be based on the following framework:

- For non-profit regular users Subsidy up to 50%
- For non-profit casual users Subsidy up to 25%
- For profit users & Private Functions No subsidy, with Market Rate at peak times (eg. Friday and Saturday nights)

Implementation

Council will meet with each hall committee and

1. Council will provide actual costs associated with the building.
2. The Committee will provide a breakdown of their annual costs associated with the building, utilisation projections and income received.
3. The Committee will recommend to Council fees that will attain the cost recovery pricing or advise Council of levels of subsidy required and justification for this.
4. On the basis of the above information and after looking at subsidised levels a recommendation will be made to Council for hire fees to be included in the Schedule of Fees and Charges.
5. Shortfall between income generated from the building and operating expenditure will be reported to Council and to the committee as the annual subsidy provided to that hall by Council.
6. The compensate for loss or damage to Council's buildings or part thereof, Council requires a bond from hirers/organisers who use food services equipment, where food or drink is served, or where there is a potential for damage to Council buildings.
7. Level of bonds will be based on recommendations from Hall Committees, and included in the Annual Schedule of Fees and Charges.
8. In order to reflect the administrative costs associated with booking spaces and collecting the charges, the prices will be differentiated between long term repeat bookings (eg. first Tuesday evening of every month) and one-off bookings as well as user types such as profit or non-profit organisations or private functions.
9. Council may pay honorariums to volunteer booking officers or hall secretaries.

5.6 Annual Process for Setting Fees and Charges

(a) Rationale

The annual review of fees and charges levied for the hire and use of community buildings provides a key opportunity for the development of a network of trust and cooperation between the Council, volunteer management committees and the community. The fee-setting process should be well documented incorporating clear deadlines, roles and responsibilities including the relationship between the input from Council and the committees and the decision by Council.

(b) Policy

Council annually reviews and determines fees and charges for the use of community buildings on the basis of recommendations from management committees and in accordance with Council's policies.

(c) Procedures

No later than November of each year, Council will request each management committee, to review all fees and charges and to prepare a list of recommended fees and charges consistent with Council's and policy frameworks purposes for community buildings.

To facilitate this process, Council will establish a standard information system for each community building which is managed in partnership between Council and the management committee.

Under this system, management committees will provide information on

- activities undertaken in the buildings for which they are responsible in previous financial year,
- utilisation rates,
- the committee's track record in meeting access and diversity criteria of Council,
- an outline of how the Committee's recommendations for the next year's fees and charges meet Council's consistency requirements, and community expectations and needs,
- any new initiatives and/ or significant issues in relation to the management and /or usage of the buildings managed by the committee and which may impact on their recommendations.

As its part in this system, Council will provide:

- an annual statement of accounts
- a six monthly statement of the direct costs of running the building
- the current list of fees and charges for all community buildings

Management committees will provide Council with their recommendations for fees and charges for the following financial year by the end of March each year.

As required by the Local Government Act, Council will consider and determine each management committee's recommendations for fees and charges applying to the building(s) under its control as part of its budget determination by no later than 30 June each year.

5.7 Roles and Responsibilities Of Council

(a) Rationale

Council has adopted this revised policy framework for the community buildings in the Blue Mountains local government area. A key aspect of this framework is a collaborative partnership between Council and the community for the efficient and effective management of community buildings.

The framework establishes clear roles and responsibilities for management committees underpinned by a system of skills development and supporting documentation. Council needs to match these new management committee arrangements by streamlining some of its own procedures.

(b) Policy

Council will be responsible for ensuring the following operational aspects of the management of community buildings:

- Access to the community directory.
- Access to the schedule of fees and charges.
- Development and maintenance of the Operations Manual for Community Buildings.
- Management of a bookings system including development of Application for Hire forms for regular and casual hirers.
- Management of Bond monies [including payment, refund and withholding].
- Insurance.
- Timely decisions about discretionary waiving of fees.
- Managing hirers' access to keys.
- Checking and maintaining the building exteriors, ground maintenance, fire equipment, safety equipment, pest control, statutory licensing.
- Six monthly statements of direct costs of running each building.
- Management of maintenance requests.
- Timely advice relating to the annual review of fees and charges.
- Provision of briefing sessions for prospective committee members and the orientation programs for management committee members.
- Management of major capital works and improvements projects approved by Council.

(c) Procedures

Council will develop and maintain a comprehensive Operations Manual for Community Buildings.

Council will develop and maintain a standardised data collection system to ensure that community building usage and financial information is available annually to support policy development and decision making.

Council will ensure that the community directory as a critical information resource is up to date and widely accessible across the Blue Mountains Local Government area.

Council will ensure that the annual schedule of fees and charges for community buildings is made available on a timely basis to management committees and to hirers and users of community buildings.

Council will provide management committees with standardised booking forms for casual hiring and regular hiring of space in community buildings. This form could include the following hirer information where relevant:

- Organisation name
- Australian Business Number (ABN)
- status (profit/non-profit)/ articles of association
- contact details
- description of activities
- minimum space required
- insurance policies
- outline of ability to meet Council's diversity and access criteria,
- State /Federal funding support levels
- statement of accounts
- service catchment area.

In partnership with delegated 377 Management Committees, Council will review and monitor the management of the booking systems in relation to community buildings so that it is efficient, flexible and accessible to staff and volunteers.

Council will ensure the efficient management of Hirers Bonds including timely reimbursement or advice of, and reasons for, withhold.

Council will maintain all relevant insurance including Public Liability Policy, personal accident policy, property insurance policies including damage by fire, storm, tempest, malicious and accidental damage, existing plate glass and/or safety glass, and burglary.

Council will exercise its discretionary powers to waive fees through a prompt, easily accessible and transparent mechanism.

Council will ensure that hirer access to keys is streamlined (incorporating a key identification system, a duplicates system and an accessible key collection and return system operating across the local government area and reflecting the distributed nature of Council's community buildings).

Council will ensure the efficient registration and response to requests for maintenance of community buildings which is not the responsibility of a lessee or other hirer.

Council is responsible for checking and maintaining the following:

- Interior exit signs, doors and emergency lighting.
- Fire equipment including extinguishers, hoses and signage.
- Pest control & fumigation.
- Compliance with statutory requirements including public entertainment licensing.
- Exterior maintenance of buildings including painting, repairs to walls, windows, locks, roofs, window frames, external doors, plumbing and electrical repairs.
- Ground maintenance including lawns and gardens.

Council will develop, maintain and distribute to management committees on a six monthly basis statements of operational costs in relation to each centre (including minor maintenance and repair, cleaning and utility costs etc).

Council will ensure the development of an orientation schedule for new and prospective members of management committees.

Council will advise all management committees by at least the preceding November of the requirement to review all fees and charges.

Council will ensure that risk management procedures including safety procedures are in place and that procedures are understood by all management committees.

Council will ensure that management committees understand and adhere to the relevant acts and regulations relating to how people use Council buildings including the Occupational Health and Safety Act; Building Code of Australia; the Local Government Act and the Noise Control Act.

Council will ensure that all management committees are advised in November each year to submit proposed major capital improvement projects to Council by February each year for possible funding in the next Building Improvements Program.

Council will manage all major capital works projects approved by Council, from obtaining the necessary capital consents and approvals; the tendering process through to completion of work.

6. Annual Process for Requesting Major Capital Works

(a) Rationale

From time to time management committees, as well as organisations with long term leases or other hire arrangements, identify major capital works which are for maintenance purposes or to meet licensing, legislative or similar requirements.

Outlays on major capital works are subject to the availability of Council funds and/or other government grants according to current planning priorities. Responsibility for major maintenance works may also be specified in lease agreements and thus be outside the operation of this policy.

Note: major capital improvements on community buildings which are on community land must follow procedures set down in the Local Government Act and the Local Government (Community Land Management) Amendment Act.

(b) Policy

Council considers applications for major capital works on community buildings as part of its budget process.

Council may seek grants or other contributions towards major capital works on community buildings from other levels of government and/or users and hirers of the building.

(c) Procedures

Requests for major capital works for community buildings should be well documented with concept plans, demonstration of need, evidence of stakeholder consultation, budget estimates and submitted by to Council by February each year for consideration in Council's forthcoming Building Improvements Program.

Appendix 1

List of Council Public Halls together with other community buildings under the management of Committees with delegations under Sections 355 and 377 of the Local Government Act, 1993, as amended.

Blackheath Community Hall
Blaxland & Seniors Community Centre
Braemar Gallery
Faulconbridge Community Centre
Gloria Park Pavilion
Glenbrook School of Arts
Katoomba Civic Centre
Lawson Youth Centre (also known as Lawson Community Hall)
Medlow Bath Neighbourhood Centre
Megalong Valley Hall
Mid Mountains Community Centre
Mount Wilson Hall
Mt Riverview Hall
Mt Victoria Public Hall
Springwood Civic Centre
Warrimoo Citizens Hall
Wentworth Falls School of Arts
Weroona Community Building
Winmalee Community Hall

Appendix 2

Community Service Groups currently having exclusive use of all or part of a community building.

Group Name	Category of Use
Springwood District Preschool Kindergarten	Children's Services
Winmalee Pre-School Kindergarten	Children's Services
Blackheath Kookaburra Kindergarten Inc	Children's Services
Wentworth Falls Pre-school Kindergarten	Children's Services
Hazelwood Childcare Centre Inc	Children's Services
Katoomba Pre-School Kindergarten Assoc	Children's Services
Glenbrook Preschool Inc	Children's Services
Lapstone Pre-School Kindergarten	Children's Services
Euroka Children's Centre Inc	Children's Services
Bunya Child Care Centre Inc	Children's Services
Katoomba Children's Cottage Inc	Children's Services
Blue Mountains Family Support	Community Welfare
Mountains Outreach Community Service	Community Welfare
Mountains Community Resource Network Inc	Community Welfare
Blue Mountains Community Garden Project	Community Welfare
BM PLWHA Centre	Community Welfare
Blackheath Creative Arts Group Inc	Cultural
Springwood Arts Centre	Cultural
Springwood Historical Society	Cultural
Blue Mountains Food Service (Blaxland)	HACC Service
Blue Mountains Food Service (Springwood)	HACC Service
Blue Mountains Food Services (Lawson)	HACC Service
Blue Mountains Food Services (Blackheath)	HACC Service
Katoomba Senior Citizens	HACC Service
East Blaxland Health Centre	Health
Blaxland Early Childhood Centre	Health /Children's Services
Springwood Early Childhood Centre	Health /Children's Services
Blackheath Early Childhood Centre	Health /Children's Services
Glenbrook Early Childhood Centre	Health /Children's Services
Mid Mountains Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Katoomba Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Springwood Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Winmalee Youth Service (figures are for centre)	Youth Services

Group Name	Category of Use
Mt Riverview Youth Centre	Youth Services
Katoomba Girl Guides	Youth Services
Youth Futures Group (Lawson Youth Centre)	Youth Services
Upper Mountains Youth Centre Inc	Youth Services
Blue Mountains Developmental Youth Recreation Services	Youth Services
2nd Springwood Scout Group	Youth Services

Appendix 3

List of groups who are currently paying an annual rent over \$150 per annum to Council, who will cease to pay rent when agreements based on this revised policy are implemented.

Group Name	Category of Use
Mountains Outreach Community Service	Community Welfare
Mountains Community Resource Network Inc	Community Welfare
Blue Mountains Food Services (Blackheath)	HACC Service
Mid Mountains Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Lawson Youth Centre	Youth Services
Blue Mountains Developmental Youth Recreation Services	Youth Services

- It is understood that all of these organisations have a rental component in their funding.
- Total estimated anticipated loss of income to Council when this policy is fully implemented is \$31,536.

Appendix 4

List of organisations likely to incur increased costs for consumables as a result of the implementation of this policy.

Group Name	Category of Use
Blue Mountains Family Support	Community Welfare
BM PLWHA Centre	Community Welfare
Blackheath Creative Arts Group Inc	Cultural
Blue Mountains Food Service	HACC Service
Katoomba Senior Citizens	HACC Service
Mid Mountains Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Katoomba Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Springwood Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre
Winmalee Youth Service	Youth Services
Katoomba Girl Guides	Youth Services
Lawson Youth Centre	Youth Services

Estimated cost of outgoings currently paid by Council (to be paid by groups on full implementation of this policy) based on 2000-1 expenditure figures is \$27,900.

Appendix 5

Definitions of building maintenance terms.

1. Minor Maintenance.

Minor maintenance is an activity up to the value of \$3,000. (An individual maintenance activity may involve multiple trades in rectifying a problem)

2. Major Maintenance and Planned Maintenance

- Major Maintenance is any maintenance activity arising from an event above \$3,000.
- Programmed Maintenance refers to area-by-area, type-by type, and pre-scheduled works.
- Cyclic Maintenance relates to mechanical/electrical engineering maintenance.
- Condition Based Maintenance means bringing a component or a set of components to agreed standards.