



Chief Executive Officer Attachments
ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
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Management of Community Facilities

CONSULTATION STAGE

Introduction

The Review Context

The Review of Management of Community Facilities was undertaken to determine the state of the Shire of Chittering's (the "Shire") practices, processes and systems. The Review specifically looked at:

- the Shire's policy and corporate framework governing facility management;
- the leases, licences and hire/user agreements used by the Shire in defining its relationships with occupiers;
- the Shire's costs for providing community facilities;
- general observations;
- local government trends in facility management; and
- the way forward.

The intention of the Review was to explore a way forward for the management of community facilities, which the Shire can use for the purposes of its community consultation.

Consultation

Consultation with relevant parties is important to ensure proposed changes to how community facilities are managed are relevant to the local community and in line with the Shire's aims for the facilities.

The proposed policy and corporate framework will be the starting point for discussions with various facility managers and groups providing services and programs with a view to encouraging feedback and input in the final design of policy and corporate framework.

This report:

- presents the findings of the consultation with facility managers/occupiers and user groups on the Management of Community Facilities Review; and
- proposes a way forward for the Shire's corporate and policy framework.

The Policy and corporate framework may consist of the following elements:

- Policy on community facilities;
- Guidelines for management of community facilities;
- Leasing/Licensing and User Agreements;
- Service Level Agreements; and
- Utilisation Data Sheets.

Consultation

The following was adopted by the Shire as a **way forward** for consultation purposes with its community, facility users and facility managers.

Policy and Corporate Framework

That the Shire consider developing a policy and corporate framework to guide the facility managers in providing community facilities and overseeing delivery of services and programs.

Accountability Framework

That the Shire consider adopting an accountability framework for the management of its community facilities by:

- providing its facility managers with sufficient guidance on operating its community facilities and delivering various services and programs; and
- establishing sufficient controls, such as regular reporting, to monitor facility managers' performance and compliance.

Open and Transparent

That the Shire consider adopting an open and transparent approach to its dealings with facility managers, where their agreements, financial transactions and ongoing returns are on the public record and accessible by all.

Value Comparison

That the Shire consider calculating and comparing:

- the value of its forgone rental income; and
- the value of the community benefit created by facility managers and the various services and programs they deliver.

In developing and implementing these policies and corporate framework, the Shire aims to achieve good governance, universal access and optimum utilisation of its community facilities.

Consultation (continued)

Service Level Agreements

That the Shire consider adopting service level agreements with facility managers as part of its policy and corporate framework.

Tenancy Agreements

That the Shire consider adopting tighter conditions around the use of leases for exclusive occupancy as part of its corporate framework.

That the Shire consider reviewing its lease terms back to five years.

Costing and Finance

That the Shire continues to gather costing/financial data and consider reviewing the employee charge/oncost.

Venue Bookings

That the Shire consider adopting a digital solution for its venue bookings and invoicing.

Delivery Model

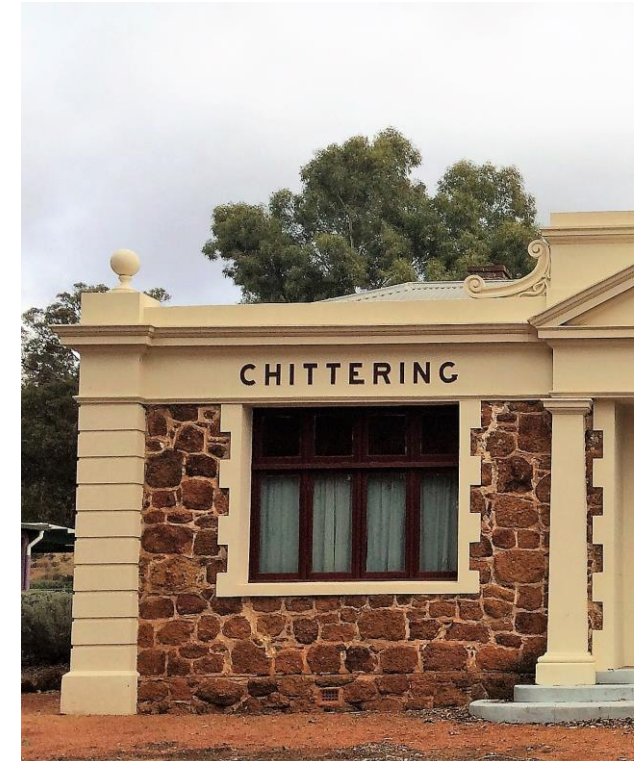
That the Shire continues to explore, using a business case process, the most optimum model (insourcing and outsourcing) to deliver facilities in order to achieve the best value for the community.

Subsidy

That the Shire consider recognising peppercorn rentals/foregone income as the Council's subsidy in the annual budget and associated documentation.

Shared Facilities

That the Shire consider adopting multi-use shared facilities as its policy for future development of community facilities.



Consultation Methodology

The Council agreed to proceed with the consultation stage, which consisted of the following elements:

- the provision of the Management of Community Facilities Review to the facility managers/user groups;
- the completion of the Utilisation Data Sheet (see sample attached) by the Facility Managers/user groups;
- the staging of a Review Workshop with Facility Managers/user groups;
- one-on-one discussions with Facility Managers/user groups.

While the Review Workshop was well attended the one-on-one consultation sessions were attended by all facility managers/user groups.

The following facility managers/user groups attended the consultation sessions:

1. Wannamal Community Centre
2. Bindoon Town Hall
 - Bindoon Entertainment and Theatre
 - Chittering CWA
3. Bindoon Post Office – Chittering Tourism Association
4. Bindoon Ag Office – Bindoon Agricultural Society

5. Brockman Centre
 - Bindoon Historical Society – Museum
 - Bindoon Arts and Crafts
 - Bindoon Men's' Shed
6. Chinkabee Complex – Bindoon Sport & Recreation Association
7. Chittering Health Centre
 - Jupiter Health Services
8. Muchea Hall
 - Muchea Netball Club
 - Konga
 - Muchea Judo Club
 - Chittering Junior Football Club
 - Chittering Junior Cricket Club
 - Muchea Senior Cricket Club
9. Lower Chittering Hall
 - Chittering Scouts Group
 - Lower Chittering Cricket Club
 - Zumba
10. Sandown Park
 - South Midlands Polocrosse Club

Note: WACHS did not participate in workshop or 1:1 sessions despite requests

The consultation methodology was designed to inform and encourage participation by the facility managers and user groups.

Consultation Insights – Local History

General Support

Those that attended the consultation sessions were positive and generally supportive of the direction the Council was proposing with the management of community facilities.

Review Workshop – Acknowledgement

The Review Workshop was well attended and the proposed direction was well received. The main feedback from the participants revolved around the:

- significant heritage of the facilities; and
- recognition of club contributions to:
 - community involvement in raising funds;
 - development of the original facility and/or subsequent extensions/improvements; and
 - volunteer hours required to manage and deliver a service to the community.

The facility managers/user groups were of the view that future tenancy agreements should acknowledge the history of the community facilities and their contribution to its development.

The acknowledgement could be recorded in a preamble to the tenancy agreement. This would ensure future generations were aware of the history of the community facility.

Significant Heritage

The consultation process confirmed what many knew already – most facility managers have a long established history at each of the facilities with significant backstory and a proud history:

- Bindoon Theatre Inc dates back to 1939
- Cricket at Lower Chittering dates back to 1940
- The original Wannamal Community Centre dates back to 1910
- Senior cricket at Muchea dates back to 1944
- CWA activities date back to 1945
- Bindoon & Districts Agricultural Society dates back to 1950

Local Histories

Many of those that were consulted reference one or more life members who are in possession of some of the club's/group's history, which would naturally also include the history of the community facilities. Some of this information is recorded and available, most of it is not. While these club members are still reasonably active it would be worthwhile capturing some of this historical information. There would be some community value if these local club/group histories were captured and recorded for future generations.

Many of the community facilities were grounded in the roots of community needs and built for purpose. These were not architecturally enhanced facilities with elaborate features built as monuments.

Consultation Insights

Community Development 101

What really stood out during the consultation was the extent of involvement and ownership by the community. Development of many of the community facilities could be case study material for Community Development 101 programs.

Community Resilience

The feedback and input by various facility managers/user groups demonstrated significant local resilience. Sheer perseverance by the community got many of the facilities developed.

We are now witnessing the changing of the guard as younger members of the community step up and take on the responsibility/challenge for delivering a variety of community services/programs.

Sustainability – Membership

The challenge for all clubs/community groups occupying community facilities is to grow their membership with younger participants where they come through, enjoy their activity and take on some responsibilities. Various sporting clubs/community groups have lapsed for periods of time due to insufficient number of participants and/or volunteers.

Committee of Management

The Chinkabee complex is a good example of how a committee of management could be set up to involve various stakeholders/user groups in the coordination of activities at the facility to ensure it meets everyone's needs.

After establishing a facility as its “home”, many community groups deal with the challenge of maintaining membership participation.

Consultation Insights

Women's Programs

The development and delivery of women's programs, particularly cricket and Aussie Rules has significant implications on local clubs and facilities. While these are great initiatives the clubs are not resourced to support, develop and implement these programs in the short term. In many instances the community facilities need to be upgraded with additional change rooms and toilets.

There is a growing interest in women's programs, however at present levels of demand it will take a few more years to get something sustainable up and running. Those clubs considering women's programs may need to have regional discussions about a larger catchment area in order to attract sufficient levels of interest to establish new women's teams.

The state associations have been involved in promoting women's sports and encouraging participation. There may need to be more focused funding to assist clubs and councils in upgrading community facilities to meet the needs of women's programs.

Similar to the Cricket Australia's community funding for grassroots:

- New facilities/improvements;
- Support volunteers and coaches; and
- Helping grow "all girls" competitions.

Grant Applications

Many of the sporting clubs work hard with the Shire to leverage the current investment in the community facility by making grant applications for ongoing facility improvements. This also underlines the importance of master planning for each of the Shire's facilities. When grant funding becomes available the Shire and clubs/groups have improvement ideas for each of the facilities.

It normally takes some time for all the positive hype to translate into real demand. Women's programs are no different.

Consultation Insights

Licences – Occupancy Agreements

There are clubs/user groups at Muchea that are on annual user agreements. These clubs/user groups invest significant volunteer hours to make their programs and activities an annual success. They are also active with:

- planning facility improvements;
- making grant applications; and
- raising funds for the Club to co-contribute to the facility improvements.

The Council should consider granting these clubs/user groups a multi-year licence rather than just the annual user agreements. The multi-year licences would enable the clubs/user groups to continue to be involved in facility improvement by undertaking longer term master planning for the facility to meet the growing needs of their programs.

Multi-Use and Multi-Purpose Shared Facility

The sharing of community facilities is most successful when the purpose of various users is consistent and in alignment. Otherwise, some of the uses may conflict within the facility. If there are conflicting uses, which have been addressed through various compromises and arrangements, these should be captured as part of any service level agreement with the facility occupiers.

Evacuation and Emergency

Some of the Shire's community facilities, which are subject to occupancy arrangements have been designated as:

- evacuation centres; or
- emergency helipad access.

These encumbrances need to be acknowledged in future occupancy arrangements. In the meantime, they may be recognised as part of the service level agreements.

Volunteers

Various clubs/groups would not survive without significant input from volunteers. It's important to capture, record and acknowledge the contribution by volunteers. The volunteers time is spent on administration and finance, program development and delivery, marketing and sponsorship, maintenance and grounds upkeep.

The proposed SLAs will require the clubs/groups to detail the level of volunteer input in regular returns to the Shire. This level of information on local volunteering will assist the Shire with future grant applications. The Shire will be able to demonstrate the level of local commitment and support for the facility and various programs/activity.

Regular returns will also provide data to determine appropriate and most cost effective management model:

- Direct Management;
- Contract Management;
- Lease; or
- Committee of Management.

Benefits of community infrastructure (halls and grounds) would never be realised in some communities if it wasn't for local volunteers running programs and operating facilities.

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Consultation Insights

Visitations – Economic Benefit

Some of the clubs/groups using community facilities are staging events that attract significant visitations to the Shire. There may be an opportunity for the Shire to cross promote some of these events.

The local polocrosse club attracts as many as 45 teams to the local grounds:

- at least 6 participants per team; and
- multiple horses (2-3) per team member.

Upwards of 270 participants, 540 horses and 675 spectators visit the Shire for polocrosse events 2-3 times per year.

Tourism

The Chittering Tourism Association tracks local tourism activity including visitation numbers. It would be really useful for the Shire's event planning and evaluation purposes if various Shire attractions (ie Brockman Centre) provided regular visitation returns. This may be captured as a requirement in SLAs for various Shire attractions.

Insurance

There appears to be some confusion over responsibility for insurances. A number of occupiers were not clear about what the Shire had insured and what they needed to insure. As there are special insurance requirements at some of the community facilities the proposed SLAs will clearly articulate which party is responsible for which type of insurance.

Operating Costs

Each occupier should be responsible for their own operating costs, which include utilities. This assumes the Shire will have appropriate systems in place to capture that information and refer it to the appropriate occupier for payment.

During the consultation process there were various occupiers that were not responsible for their utilities.



Consultation Insights

Regional Sporting Facility

The future of Lower Chittering and Muchea facilities and clubs using them needs to be considered in the context of the new regional sports/community facility. The new facility should mostly have positive impact on the community, however there will be some consideration of investment and location of clubs as the Shire looks at achieving best-fit moving forward between facility and club.

Master Planning

It was evident that many of the facility managers were undertaking master planning of their facility, with one saving significant funds for future facility refurbishment. Most of the master plans were being developed informally and have not been communicated to the Shire.

Many of the facility managers expected long-term tenancy agreements. It wasn't until we unpacked the reasons behind this expectation that we discovered the depth of future planning that was taking place.

Even user groups with annual user agreements were committed to ongoing facility improvements and making co-contributions.

The Shire may call upon some of the clubs/user groups to formalise the master planning of community facilities and seek the Council's endorsement. The endorsed master plan will be captured in proposed SLAs and influence the length of occupancy term.

Asset Management

Some of the lessees/occupiers are in charge of significant community assets, which need appropriate levels of attention and upgrade to ensure preservation for future generations. The proposed SLAs may required the lessee/occupier to work with the Shire's Asset Management team to develop and implement a master plan for the facility including a detailed maintenance program. These are important tasks that may see annual/regular inspections and discussions about the expected standard of the community facility and who holds responsibility for what.

Community facilities are of significant value to the local community. Steps need to be taken to preserve these community assets for future generations.

Consultation Insights – Brockman Precinct

The Brockman Precinct comprises several community facilities occupied by different community groups:

Facility	Community Group
Former Shire Clerk's building	Bindoon Arts and Crafts
Museum	Bindoon Historical Society
Chittering Roads Board building	
Men's Shed	Bindoon Men's Shed

The Brockman User Group was established to coordinate the activity in the Brockman precinct. The Shire may consider establishing a separate service level agreement with the Brockman User Group. Such an agreement may cover:

- the Precinct's participation in various community activities, events/festivals such as the SwagFest and Quilts-in-the-Spring;
- facility maintenance and grounds upkeep including fire breaks;
- provision of Council funding for participation in Shire activities and maintenance and Precinct grounds upkeep;

- master planning of the Brockman precinct including:
 - removal and replacement of pea gravel
 - installation of sustainability initiatives such as:
 - water tanks to capture rainwater
 - solar panels to generate renewable energy
 - maintaining public toilets and installation of ATU.

Service Level Agreements

The longer the consultation process went on the more clearer it became that the proposed SLAs would become an essential tool of the new policy and corporate framework. Clear definition of expectations is critical to the ongoing sustainable occupancy and delivery of various services/programs.



Item 9.4.2

Consultation – Way Forward

The following captures the intent and direction of comments provided during the consultation as it relates to the proposed way forward.

Policy and Corporate Framework

That the Shire consider developing a policy and corporate framework to guide the facility managers in providing community facilities and overseeing delivery of services and programs.

There was general support for the Shire to provide a more robust framework for the management of community facilities.

Accountability Framework

That the Shire consider adopting an accountability framework for the management of its community facilities by:

- providing its facility managers with sufficient guidance on operating its community facilities and delivering various services and programs; and
- establishing sufficient controls, such as regular reporting, to monitor facility managers' performance and compliance.

While there was general support there was also general concern with the workload this may create for the facility managers. Reporting against KPIs and frequency will be negotiated with each facility manager.

Open and Transparent

That the Shire consider adopting an open and transparent approach to its dealings with facility managers, where their agreements, financial transactions and ongoing returns are on the public record and accessible by all.

They were no specific concerns expressed about this proposal.

Value Comparison

That the Shire consider calculating and comparing:

- the value of its forgone rental income; and
- the value of the community benefit created by facility managers and the various services and programs they deliver.

There were no specific concerns expressed about this proposal.

Service Level Agreements

That the Shire consider adopting service level agreements with facility managers as part of its policy and corporate framework.

It was noted that the SLA cannot contradict the occupancy agreement. The SLA may only clarify the mutual obligations.

The Service Level Agreements will be working documents/references for the facility managers to refer to on an ongoing basis.

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Consultation – Way Forward (continued)

Tenancy Agreements

That the Shire consider adopting tighter conditions around the use of leases for exclusive occupancy as part of its corporate framework.

That the Shire consider reviewing its lease terms back to five years.

There are recommendations for some user groups to be given licences in place of annual user agreement. Prior to committing to new occupancy agreement the Shire will review the instruments to make sure it's the most appropriate. There was general feedback that 5-year lease terms may not be long enough. Where extensive master planning, investment and fundraising is taking place for facility improvements the Council may consider lease terms longer than five years.

Costing and Finance

That the Shire continues to gather costing/financial data and consider reviewing the employee charge/oncost.

There was no specific comment on this proposal.

Venue Bookings

That the Shire consider adopting a digital solution for its venue bookings and invoicing.

This was generally seen as a positive initiative by the facility managers.

Delivery Model

That the Shire continues to explore, using a business case process, the most optimum model (insourcing and outsourcing) to deliver facilities in order to achieve the best value for the community.

There was no specific comment on this proposal.

Subsidy

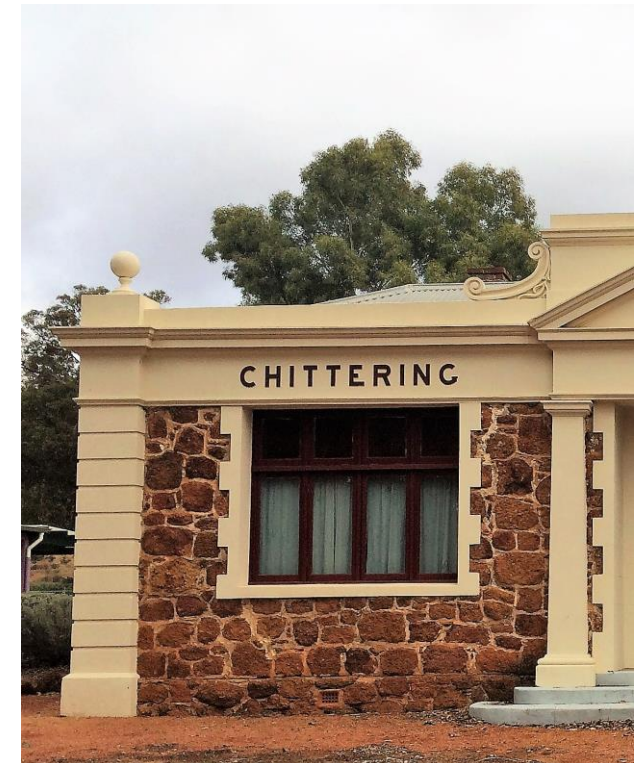
That the Shire consider recognising peppercorn rentals/foregone income as the Council's subsidy in the annual budget and associated documentation.

There was no specific comment on this proposal.

Shared Facilities

That the Shire consider adopting multi-use shared facilities as its policy for future development of community facilities.

While this proposal was generally supported there was some concern expressed around potential conflict where the various users may not have common purpose/alignment.



Recommendations

That the Council:

- receive and note the results of the Management of Community Facilities Consultation; and
- thank the facility managers/user groups for participating in the consultations.

That the Council adopt the Way Forward as the basis for managing community facilities.

That the Council consider developing a policy and corporate framework for managing community facilities.



The Review of Management of Community Facilities was conducted by John Ravlic, Principal – Ravim RBC.

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