

## Cricket Wicket Policy 2023

Policy Endorsement:	Endorsement required by Council		
Policy Superseded by this Policy:	Cricket Wicket Policy 2008		
Directorate:	Community Services		
Responsible Officer:	Manager, Community Development, Sport and Recreation		
Policy Type:	Discretionary		
File Number:	A8847053	Version No:	1
1 <sup>st</sup> Adopted by Council	Minute No.	Last Adopted by Council:	Minute No.
Review Period:	4 years	Next Review:	2027

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## 1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

A clear set of guidelines is provided for the establishment and maintenance of outdoor cricket wicket facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong, including the roles and responsibilities of Council and sporting clubs. The purpose of the updated policy is to:

- Provide appropriate facilities for players to play and practice cricket.
- Encourage the development of female and junior participation as a development pathway.
- Provide facilities that support player development pathways for local cricketers to achieve Regional, State and National cricket team selection.
- Ensure that sporting facility developments provide inclusive, accessible opportunities for the broader community to participate in cricket.

## 2. BACKGROUND

To facilitate participation in cricket by the broader community, it is important that players at different levels of participation and competition have access to suitable facilities.

## 3. SCOPE

The policy relates to the provision of outdoor cricket facilities on Council owned/managed land.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

**Community Level:** Cricket played as part of any association/league, outside of premier level.

**Premier Level:** Cricket played as part of Victorian Premier Cricket.

**Turf Table:** A turf table consists of one or more turf cricket pitches/wickets. There is only one turf table per ground.

## 5. POLICY

Council caters for two levels of turf cricket within the city, being Premier-level and Community-level. Premier-level cricket requires a higher standard of facilities and turf wicket preparation, in accordance with Cricket Australia's Community Cricket Facility Guidelines.

Council will:

- Provide cricket clubs based within the City of Greater Dandenong with seasonal allocations to turf wicket facilities.
- Maintain all existing Council-owned centre wickets/tables to the acceptable standard required by the competition in which the club participates.
- Purchase turf table covers for Premier-level turf wicket grounds.
- Manage the covering of turf wickets for Premier cricket only, to comply with the quality standards for Premier cricket and maximise the available playing time. Wickets will be covered in accordance with the relevant competition guidelines.
- Charge fees for facility usage in line with the current Fees and Charges Policy.
- Encourage clubs to assist Council in maintaining facilities in good condition through cooperation with the local ground curator.

Premier-level cricket clubs will be responsible for managing turf wicket covers on match day, following handover of the ground by Council's curator to the club.

Community-level cricket clubs will:

- Manage their own turf wicket covers in accordance with Council directives.
- Purchase and replace their own turf wicket covers.
- Remove wicket covers from turf tables as directed by Council, so that ground staff can maintain and prepare wickets.
- Remove and securely store turf wicket covers off the ground when not in use.

## 5.1 ALLOCATION OF TURF TABLES

Turf tables will be allocated to clubs based upon the following criteria:

- Playing on a turf wicket is a requirement of their affiliated association / competition.
- Applications are supported by a written submission by the relevant association, detailing those requirements.
- Community-level clubs must demonstrate a development pathway to turf cricket including junior and female programs and/or competition teams playing at a lower level on non-turf wicket surfaces (i.e. synthetic or concrete wickets).
- Turf wickets will not be allocated for turf Grade E or 5+, Masters or equivalent level of cricket. These teams are to play on synthetic cricket wickets.
- Council will not construct additional turf table facilities at existing sporting grounds within the City.
- Only existing clubs, as of the 2022/2023 summer season, will be allocated turf wickets. Applications for turf cricket wickets from any new clubs entering the City of Greater Dandenong will not be accepted.
- Should an existing turf table no longer be required by the allocated club, Council will decide whether to convert the turf table to a single synthetic cricket wicket.
- Turf wickets will be allocated depending upon the level of cricket as follows:
  - Premier level:
    - Two (2) turf tables per club, per gender, with a maximum of four (4) male and four (4) female turf teams.
    - The number of weeknight (night cricket) and Sunday matches are to be negotiated annually with Council.
    - All T-20 matches, and special events are to be considered as casual bookings, subject to turf quality and staffing availability.
  - Community level:
    - One (1) turf wicket per club, with a maximum of two (2) male and one (1) female teams. *Note: the female team allocation cannot be substituted for a male team.*
    - The number of Sunday matches are to be negotiated annually with Council.
    - All T-20 matches and special events are to be considered as casual bookings, subject to turf quality and staffing availability.
    - Sub-District is considered as part of the Community level, however, will be permitted, as per the requirements of the association:
      - Two (2) turf tables per club, with a maximum of four (4) male and two (2) female teams. *Note: the female team allocation cannot be substituted for a male team.*
      - The number of Sunday matches are to be negotiated annually with Council.
      - All T-20 matches, and special events are to be considered as casual bookings, subject to turf quality and staffing availability.

## 5.2 TURF – PRACTICE WICKETS

Given the high establishment and ongoing maintenance costs of turf practice wickets, turf wicket practice facilities will only be provided at the existing two locations at Noble Park Reserve and Dandenong Park (Shepley Oval). The existing seasonal allocations for these facilities will continue as per the existing arrangements.

Council will:

- Continue to maintain all existing seasonally allocated Council-owned turf practice facilities within the City to the standard required by the competition in which the club plays.
- Prepare turf practice tables for training in accordance with the seasonal allocation of two nights per week, which can be averaged across the cricket season to accommodate ad-hoc training sessions where cricket pathway development sessions can be demonstrated.
- Charge fees for facility usage in line with the current Fees and Charges Policy.
- Encourage clubs to assist Council in maintaining facilities in good condition through cooperation with the local ground curator.

## 5.3 SYNTHETIC – CENTRE AND PRACTICE WICKETS

Council recognises the importance of providing high quality synthetic cricket facilities to accommodate the large number of junior and senior players. Council acknowledges that the core of the community level competition is played on synthetic wickets.

Council will:

- Be responsible for repairs and maintenance to synthetic cricket wickets.
- Fund the renewal of synthetic wickets that have reached the end of their serviceable life.
- Cover synthetic wickets at the conclusion of each summer cricket season, and uncover synthetic wickets prior to the commencement of each summer cricket season, to allow the grounds to be safely used during the winter sports season.
- Charge fees for facility usage in line with the current Fees and Charges Policy.
- Fund the renewal of concrete cricket wickets that are no longer fit for purpose.
- Allocate cricket practice facilities equitably, in consideration of the needs of all clubs.

Clubs will be responsible for:

- Funding the replacement of the synthetic surface prior to the end of the wicket's serviceable life.
- Funding the additional cost of a synthetic material that differs to what is currently provided.

The capital replacement of synthetic centre and practice wickets will be conducted as part of Councils' Capital Improvement Program subject to budget and Council approval. Council will provide a maximum of three synthetic practice wicket lanes per reserve for Community-level cricket.

## 6. RESPONSE TO THE OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020

Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that a Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles. These are:

- seeking the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations (S. 9b). In particular, the policy seeks to ensure that all residents are accorded respect, and that considerations of their needs, preference and circumstances influences the development of Council services.

- collaboration with other councils and governments and statutory bodies (S. 9f). This policy is based in part, upon an inspection of similar policies and plans among other councils.
- the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured. This policy sets clear parameters around Councils' responsibilities to ensure that the provision of facilities is financially viable.
- supporting transparency of council decisions, actions and information (S. 9h and S. 58). Transparency is reflected in the preparation and content of this policy, which has been formed after consultation with the community, written in plain English to improve its accessibility, and will be disseminated to residents through appropriate media and means.

## 7. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 – COMPATIBILITY STATEMENT

The *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* has been considered in relation to whether any human rights under the Charter are restricted or contrived by the enactment of any part of this policy.

It is considered that the policy is consistent with the rights outlined in the Charter, and in particular, that it advances the following rights, through its emphasis upon respect and consideration of social diversity in all aspects of Council conduct and in its consideration of engagement, inclusion and participation by all residents in our community:

- Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief (S. 14)
- Freedom of expression (S. 15)
- Peaceful assembly and freedom of association (S. 16)
- Taking part in public life (S. 18)
- Cultural rights (S. 19).

## 8. RESPONSE TO THE GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires that Councils "...must consider and promote gender equality; and take necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality."

In addition, Part One, Section 1(a) of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires gender assessments when "...developing or revising any policy of, or program or service provided by, the entity that has a direct and significant impact upon the public" - a provision which takes effect on March 31, 2021.

A gender assessment has been completed and the policy addresses the *Gender Equality Act 2020* by including proportionate action towards achieving gender equality.

- Equal provision for the number of teams per gender for Premier-level turf competition.
- Introducing a maximum of two male teams and one female team per club, per turf table, for community-level turf competition.
- Introducing a new criteria for allocating Community-level clubs to turf table, whereby they must demonstrate a development pathway to turf cricket including junior and female programs and/or competition teams playing at a lower level on non-turf wicket playing surfaces (i.e. synthetic or concrete).

As of the 2021/2022 summer turf cricket season, there were no female teams playing permanently on turf cricket wickets at the community level in the municipality. This updated policy places a greater emphasis on female and junior (mixed) participation as a participation pathway.

Due to the number of turf tables available in the municipality, Council will be able to accommodate a maximum of seven female teams as part of this policy based on current cricket participation. Based on existing staff resources and to ensure quality provision, a turf table can sustain three teams, with periodic extra use for T20 (short format matches) or other activities to be negotiated with Council. Council will again review the allocation of facilities per gender based on participation demand when this policy is next updated in 2027.

## 9. CONSIDERATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

This policy considers the impact of Council's Declaration on a Climate and Ecological Emergency, Council's Climate Change Emergency Strategy 2020-2030 and the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 in relation to the overarching governance principle on climate change and sustainability.

Reliable access to water is critical to the playability of cricket grounds. Irrigation tanks are in place at most sports grounds which allows for water to be delivered to the ground, should the provision of water be restricted because of drought or similar.

The impact of extreme heat on cricket participants will be managed as per existing State and Regional policies and processes.

## 10. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility will rest with the Sport and Recreation Unit to inform cricket clubs about the content and meaning of this policy. This may entail communication through the Council website, email, and presentations.

The Sport and Recreation Unit and the Parks Unit will be responsible for the implementation of the Council responsibilities contained within the policy. The cricket clubs will be responsible for the implementation of the Club responsibilities contained within the Policy.

## 11. REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Sport and Recreation Unit will monitor the details and outcomes of this policy and report as required. The Parks Unit will monitor the condition of cricket infrastructure and implementation of this policy and report as required. A review is conducted by the Sport and Recreation Unit and Parks Unit at the end of each summer season.

The policy will be reviewed after four years and will consider the following:

- The participation trends of the community in cricket.
- The impact that the policy will have on Council staff.
- The cost to Council for the provision of cricket assets.
- Benchmarking against other municipalities.

## 12. REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following policies, strategies or legislation relate to the implementation of this policy.

### Legislation

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 2020*



### **Related Council and Other Policies, Procedures, Strategies, Protocols, Guidelines**

- Council Plan 2021-25
- Diversity Access and Equity Policy
- Make Your Move Greater Dandenong Physical Activity Strategy 2020-2030
- Sports Facilities Plan – Implementation Plan 2018
- Victorian Cricket Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2028, Cricket Victoria
- Cricket Australia Community Cricket Facilities Guidelines, 2015
- Victorian Government Fair Access Policy Roadmap 2022