

Finance has been consulted around the potential financial impacts of implementing the proposed Fees and Charges Policy. Review will occur in Quarter 3 of this Financial Year.

### **OTHER STAFF COMMENTS**

Community Operations will need to assess community groups applying for fee subsidies based on the group's eligibility and status, level of fees charged to its members and types of activities being undertaken.

### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Draft Grant and Fee Scale Policy was placed on 28 days public exhibition through Council's Your Say engagement process from 23 May until 20 June. Council's previous grant applicants and venue hirers were notified and invited to comment on the policy. The survey results show that 10 respondents completed the questionnaire. Of these 10 respondents, 4 (or 40%) of respondents accept the policy without changes; 5 (or 50%) of respondents accept the policy with changes and 1 (or 10%) do not accept the policy.

#### **Respondent's comment:**

1. *I would not have been able to teach meditation to more than 2000 people in the Inner West Municipality without the support of a reduced fee.* Anonymous 5/25/2018 12:22 PM

#### **Council's comment:**

Community Operations advise that most respondents are concerned that they may be disadvantaged due to the group charging a fee to participate. Under the new policy, groups will need to be assessed based on their eligibility status and level of fees charged.

#### **Respondent's comment:**

2. *I would like it to say that public health organisations get 100% subsidy i.e. get venues for free.* Anonymous 5/26/2018 12:09 PM

#### **Council's comment:**

Community Operations advise that most respondents are concerned that they may be disadvantaged due to the group charging a fee to participate. Under the new policy, groups will need to be assessed based on their eligibility status and level of fees charged.

#### **Respondent's comment:**

3. *On behalf of The Polly's Club, we would find the reduced or nil fee for the hire of Marrickville Town Hall of great benefit to the continuation of our club. In continuous operation since 1964, the club has been using Marrickville Town Hall for our 5 social dances per year since 2000 and has forged strong ties with local council. We provide a safe and friendly environment where people can be themselves, dance, socialise and be entertained at an affordable price. This format has allowed us to be Australia's longest running LGBTIQ social group, celebrating 55 years in 2019. The biggest threat to our continued existence is operating costs. A reduced or nil fee for Marrickville Town Hall hire will greatly assist in ensuring our continued operation and ability to provide the inner west community with a cheap, safe and friendly social event where they can connect with others and assist in the raising of funds for The Polly's Club charity grants program. This program allows us to donate funds to charities focused on men's health, women's health, youth health, mental health and animal welfare at every dance. Regards, David Haynes, President The Polly's Club.* Anonymous 5/29/2018 10:00 AM

#### **Council's comment:**

Community Operations advise that not-for-profit target groups that charge to attend an activity are not eligible for a fee subsidy and would receive a community rate (at a rate of 50%).

**Respondent's comment:**

4. *Some NFP community groups I work with to run the Open Inner West Festival charge a fee of \$5 entry fee at their events to assist them in covering their costs to hold large scale cultural festivals for the community. A fee of 50% (that they would be eligible for) would still be a significant fee for hire of the large Town Halls where these events take place. Would there be scope to raise this entry fee to \$15?* LSmith 6/08/2018 11:11 AM

**Council's comment:**

Community Operations advise that groups organising activities through Open Inner West Festival charge a cost to participants as part of the festival. This may impact on groups' ability to hold their event as they rely on the small charge to offset costs. This would need to be assessed based on each group's eligibility status and level of fees charged.

**Respondent's comment:**

5. *It's great to see grants for the interpretation of heritage and history. Although the Inner West Council area doesn't have many community museums, it does encompass the Sydney Bus Museum and a number of historical societies which have object collections. I am a little confused by the need for the projects to be linked to the Library's collection. The arbitrary parameters of what one body has managed to collect should exclude a group with a wider, or better, collection from accessing funding for projects that help interpret the inner west's history for the public. I hope that this grant is publicised widely to the groups in the Council area with object collections and that there are training sessions, or advice given on how to approach an application.* Anonymous 6/14/2018 06:21 PM

**Council's comment:**

Community History and Heritage Coordinator advises that the Community History & Heritage Grants are promoted to the wider groups in the council area. These grants are designed to primarily build up the content of the Library and History collections for access by current and future generations. The Grants are designed to be mutually beneficial to the Local History of the area for example if the Sydney Bus Museum or a group holds an object collection the kind of grant application that would be accepted would be the digitisation of the object, or the cataloguing of the collection or a publication that showcased the collection providing online access to the public.

**Respondent's comment:**

6. *Dear Officer, We are a non-profit-making community organization serving people over the age of 55. All staff are volunteers, but we are proud of it. We don't have any funding support. It is already very difficult. If we cannot afford the venue fee, would you tell me please, how we will continue our activities. Thank you.* Anonymous 6/18/2018 11:06 AM

**Council's comment:**

Community Operations advise that most respondents are concerned that they may be disadvantaged due to the group charging a fee to participate. Under the new policy, groups will need to be assessed based on their eligibility status and level of fees charged.

**Respondent's comment:**

7. *Local NFP sporting clubs are a major group providing healthy living and recreation services within our community. The Proposed New IWC Fee Scale Policy doesn't identify sporting clubs as examples in the Fee Subsidy categories. Community-based NFP sporting clubs should sit in the 100% Fee Subsidy category, yet the final criteria of the Activity Type, "and Where there is evidence that payment of a fee for venue use will prevent the activity occurring" may see sporting clubs losing 50% of the fee subsidy. The very nature of community sporting clubs in the IWC is that few, if any, have club houses and they do not have easy access to meeting areas. These clubs are required to hold AGMs, parent information evenings, coach and manager information sessions and other activity-related information sessions; they should not be penalised receiving the 100% subsidy simply because these sessions are a necessity and must occur. IWC should be*

*supporting these community sports clubs by providing a 100% subsidy to community meeting spaces. Anonymous 6/19/2018 10:20 AM*

**Item 2****Council comment:**

Community Operations advises that local not-for-profit sporting clubs are concerned may not be eligible for a fee subsidy. Their applications will need to be assessed based on their eligibility status and level of fees charged to their members.

Parks Planning and Engagement notes Council's key role in providing a diverse range of community facilities. The provision of community facilities like all other Council services needs to be balanced against the many needs of the community and the vast range of services that Council provides. Consequently the extent of Council's involvement in delivering any service needs to take into account Council's legal obligations and an analysis of the social and economic benefits, community need and relevant community trends. Parks Planning and Engagement feels that sporting clubs should contribute towards the cost of hiring facilities which Council maintains. Noting that a vast number of sporting clubs are non-for-profit organisations a social inclusion discount could be assessed by Council based on their eligibility status and level of fees charged to its members.

**Respondent's comment:**

8. *I am making this submission on behalf of Leichhardt Swimming Club. The Club receives a fee subsidy from the Council each summer season which enables us to use the swimming pool at LPAC on Saturday mornings from 7:30 am until 10 am without having to pay for lane hire. There seems to be no facility in the grants and fee scale policy for a continuation of this subsidy. The Club caters for approximately 150 children in the inner west area providing opportunities to improve their swimming and compete at area and state levels. Should we be required to start paying for lane hire the Club would cease to function as it is a non-profit organization relying on donations to pay for trophies and ongoing operation costs. This subsidy provision needs to be included in the policy.*  
Anonymous 6/20/2018 08:41 PM

**Council comment:**

It is noted that Council's aquatic and recreation centres and parks are out of scope of this policy and will be reviewed as part of a separate project in 2018/19. The fees and charges for sporting grounds will be reviewed during 2018/19 with a view to making changes from 2019/20.

The Policy needs to be amended (Appendix 2 on page 45 of the document) to read:  
*Venues available for casual and annual hire include community and neighbourhood centres; meeting/activity rooms and are defined in Table 2.*

**Respondent's comment:**

9. *I am writing to you as Treasurer of the AL-ANON Wednesday evening meeting at the Rozelle Senior Citizens Hall in Darling St., and request that you consider us for a lower or nominal rent. We are a community group that supports and assists families with alcohol and associated problems. These groups are often referred to by local medical practitioners and psychologists and are of particular value to low income people as cost is coin donation only or less if people can't afford. As such we provide a valuable and freely available resource for the community and support existing health structures with their patient load. Given that many of the members may be on pensions or be of low income etc we request a lower rent structure. We are aware that some of the other Al Anon groups in the council area make donations of literature and books to women's refuges and local libraries in lieu of rent. We have a meeting that lasts 90 mins but currently charged for 2 hours, with a group coming in straight after we leave. Please consider for rent reduction or nominal payment, with thanks Liz R*

**Council comment:**

Community Operations advises that local support groups are concerned about being disadvantaged however under the new policy local support groups will be eligible for a fee subsidy.

**Respondent's comment:**

10. *We are particularly keen to apply for grants for new projects under your Community Grants Program, and to encourage our community partners to apply for grants for joint projects which will be based at ARCCO. One of the issues in the past has been that if the projects aren't fully funded then the cost of the facility rental for projects is usually shifted onto Addison Road. Because Addison Road relies on rental income to be able to deliver services and programs this cost shifting undermines our ability to support projects in other ways, or commit to supporting future projects. It would be great if Council staff could be mindful of this when assessing future grant applications that include a 'facility rental' component at ARCCO. Another way might be to quarantine some funds available to be distributed as grants, specifically to support facility rental for projects. Sometimes this is the only support community groups need to make a project viable, and a small grants program, say up to \$1,500 per application, might be a way around this.*

**Council comment:**

Council receives many grant applications each year requesting more funding than is available. Applicants are encouraged in Grant Guidelines and at Information Sessions and Grant Writing Workshops to talk with the Grants Team to discuss their projects to assist with their grant submissions.

The Grant Guidelines provide an explanation and example of a budget proposal. Application forms request project costs in the budget section of the grant proposal and questions on the viability of the project are asked. If this information is provided then this perspective is transparent in the Council assessment process and therefore can be taken into consideration.

**CONCLUSION**

The Grant and Fee Scale Policy outlines integrated, transparent and equitable processes to govern the allocation of grants and fee scales for Council venues and town halls. The policy aligns Council's investment in the community with the strategic directions in the Community Strategic Plan, Our Inner West 2036. This report recommends Council's adoption of the policy.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attach 1 Grants and Fee Scale Policy 090518