



Memo

Environment and Infrastructure

To: Cr De Luca
Cc: All Councillors
From: Craig Sawyer
Acting General Manager – Environment and Infrastructure
Date: 2 January 2018
Subject: Fees for schools and sports groups to use sportsgrounds.
Record Number 2017/498122

I refer to your requests below and provide the following responses.

- 1. I refer to the previous response and concerns raised as to members of our community being subjected to excessive charges by Council (eg the Manly Boy Charlton Swimming Club Users) and what appears to be the fact many have already paid the sporting user levy so actually being charged more than once.***

The previous response the above question refers to is the Memo to Councillors about Sporting User Fees dated 3 November 2017 (2017/394786). As indicated in this memo:

- Sportsground fees are *partial cost recovery* as our sportsgrounds are used by sports groups, schools, community groups and casually by residents and visitors. We aim to recover only a portion of the costs to maintain/provide a sportsground from sports groups, schools and community groups as the benefits are shared.
- Sports groups are charged a seasonal sportsgrounds user fee per player.

Sports groups' fees are for use of sportsgrounds on these days and times:

- Summer season (September to March), Winter season (April to August).
- Monday to Friday 4pm to 9.15pm.
- Saturday and Sunday 8am to 6pm.

In contrast, schools are charged an annual fee for use of sportsgrounds on these days and times:

- School terms 1, 2, 3 and 4, Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm.

There is no cross over between when schools and sports groups access sportsgrounds. School students who play school sport and club sport pay fees for access at different day and times.

Sportsground fees for schools and sports groups are minimal, for example:

- Local schools are able to book a sportsground (that may include several fields) on any day of the week for an entire calendar year (all four school terms) for \$120. Separate fees apply for premium venues such as Brookvale Park.



- Local sports group seasonal sportsgrounds user fees are:
 - \$12.40 per junior player.
 - \$16.70 per senior player.

2. *I have received numerous concerns that Schools are being charged by Council to use sports grounds.*

Prior to the formation of the Northern Beaches Council, the three former Councils applied fees for sportsground users including schools and sports groups. These fees and the manner in which they were charged varied between these Councils. Income from these fees partially offset maintenance and management costs.

Following amalgamation a review of these fees was undertaken and it was determined that a consistent set of sportsground fees for schools and sports groups across the Northern Beaches would be more equitable.

The current annual school fees are consistent with the approach from the former Pittwater and Warringah Councils. The former Manly Council applied hourly fees. The current fee is based on the lowest fee from the former councils.

Parks and Recreation have also simplified the process for schools to book sportsgrounds by establishing a single annual application process and fees. This system is being implemented for the first time for the 2018 school year.

3. *Could this fee please be reviewed in view of many of the children already having paid their sporting user levy, their parents having paid substantially increased rates and many facing great hardship and this fee preventing participation?*

Schools and sports groups are responsible for paying Council's sportsfield fees - not the individual students and players. The manner in which fees are collected from parents of students and players is a matter for each school and sports group. Schools and some sports provide support to families who are experiencing financial hardship and some sports price their fees to encourage junior participation.

The fees for schools and sports groups to use sportsgrounds are currently under review. The proposed fees will be included in the draft 2018/19 budget for community engagement and Council's consideration.

The need for a review of fees for use of sportsgrounds was also identified by local sports groups in development of the Sportsgrounds Strategy and was subsequently included as a key action in the strategy.

Craig Sawyer

Acting General Manager – Environment and Infrastructure