

1.3 PREMIER LEAGUE AND ELITE SPORT FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

(KM: LIAS28)

Responsible Director: Julie Salomon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***PURPOSE***

This report proposes that the conditions which currently apply to premier league soccer clubs (National Premier League Victoria licenced clubs) be extended to all premier sports leagues and clubs across the City of Monash.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES

At the 28 May 2013 Council Meeting, Council resolved to support a soccer club's application for a National Premier League Victoria (NPLV) licence under a range of conditions primarily to address concerns that the new NPLV framework could potentially displace over 200 junior players in Monash and inevitably result in Council needing to commit a significant amount of funds to the grounds and associated supporting infrastructure to support the NPLV club.

The need to build active communities through community sport is an important part of Council's approach to community development and Council supports sporting clubs in the provision of diverse and sustainable sport and recreation opportunities. It is critical that local junior and community based clubs should not be disadvantaged or displaced by a decision to support premier/elite level clubs and/or elite sport frameworks.

Council is committed to ensuring that priority access to sporting facilities and grounds is given to existing community sporting clubs. The introduction of any new framework should support and align with this commitment and not adversely impact existing junior teams through displacement, impede their growth over time nor add a further burden to rate payers through increased costs associated with initial sports grounds and infrastructure costs and increased ongoing maintenance costs.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

Council's priority is to support the continued growth of community sport at the local level and it needs to ensure a consistent policy position is in place for any club, in any sport, that may elect to enter premier league or similar elite sport competition frameworks.

It is recommended that Council extend the conditions that apply to soccer clubs that seek an NPLV licence to all sporting clubs within the City of Monash who may pursue a premier/elite licence (or similar).

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council extends the conditions that are currently in place for soccer clubs that apply for a National Premier League Victoria licence to encompass all sports codes and clubs that approach Council with an application to join a premier league or similar professional sport competition framework. These conditions are:

- 1. A guarantee that there will not be any displacement of existing junior players;*
- 2. Funding requirements for all infrastructure improvements will be at the cost of the licenced club and the relevant State or National Sporting League/Organisation;*
- 3. Prior approval from Council is required during all stages of the application process;*
- 4. Community clubs will be given priority access to sporting facilities and grounds that are shared with a licenced club; and*
- 5. Council will not enter into any licence agreement beyond 1 year with a licenced club.*

INTRODUCTION

This report proposes the conditions in which Council would support premier leagues (or similar sporting frameworks) within the municipality. Council has confirmed its position in relation to premier level soccer competition (National Premier League Victoria) and it proposed that similar conditions be extended to all premier leagues and elite sport frameworks such as premier cricket, bowls, AFL, netball, lawn bowls etc.

BACKGROUND

At the 28 May 2013 Council Meeting, Council resolved to support a soccer club's application for a National Premier League Victoria (NPLV) licence under the following conditions:

- 1. A guarantee that there will not be any displacement of existing junior players;*
- 2. Funding requirements for all infrastructure improvements will be at the cost of the licenced club and Football Federation Victoria;*
- 3. Prior approval from Council is required during all stages of the application process;*
- 4. Community clubs will be given priority access to sporting facilities and grounds that are shared with a licenced club; and*

5. *Council will not enter into any licence agreement beyond 1 year with a licenced club.*

These conditions were adopted in response to Council concerns that the new NPLV framework could potentially displace over 200 junior players in Monash and inevitably result in Council needing to commit a significant amount of funds to the grounds and associated supporting infrastructure to support the NPLV club.

These concerns were shared by a significant number of other local government authorities who held the general view that the new NPLV framework would result in: the potential displacement of junior players; additional infrastructure funding pressures; onerous consultation processes; and a need for councils to be supportive of any club licence application.

To ensure clubs from other sporting codes and frameworks (i.e. premier cricket, bowls, AFL, netball, lawn bowls etc.) do not displace local junior or community based sporting clubs, it is recommended that these clubs be required to adhere to the same conditions that apply to soccer clubs that apply for a NPLV licence.

DISCUSSION

Council promotes physical activity and healthy lifestyles through the way it plans and develops the municipality. Monash's Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2013-2017 and comprehensive range of recreation programs, facilities, strategies and services all serve to promote and enhance sport and recreation opportunities for all sections of the community.

The need to build active communities through community sport is an important part of Council's approach to community development and Council supports sporting clubs in the provision of diverse and sustainable sport and recreation opportunities. It is critical that local junior and community based clubs should not be disadvantaged or displaced by a decision to support premier/elite level clubs and/or elite sport frameworks.

Council is committed to ensuring that priority access to sporting facilities and grounds is given to existing community sporting clubs. The introduction of any new framework should support and align with this commitment and not adversely impact existing junior teams through displacement nor impede their growth over time.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Council's Active Reserves Strategy examined the needs of sporting clubs and provided guidance for the future provision of sport and sporting facility development within the municipality. The recommendations provided

Council with a greater understanding of existing usage for the allocation of licence agreements at active reserves.

As a consequence in 2011, Council entered into five year (with a two year option) agreements with clubs across the municipality. Council is committed to honouring these agreements to ensure tenant clubs with a community focus will not be impacted by the introduction of any new framework.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONSULTATION

Council's Active Reserves Strategy utilised a consultative and evidence based approach to develop facility upgrade priorities and guide future decision making. Council is committed to this approach, and would apply the same principles when considering any facility upgrade requests by a premier league club.

CONCLUSION

Council's priority is to support the continued growth of community sport at the local level and it needs to ensure a consistent policy position is in place for any club, in any sport, that may elect to enter premier league or similar elite sport competition frameworks.