Policy ID no: **DSD 11-CL**

**Sports Ground Sponsorship Naming Policy**

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| **Date Authorised by Chief Executive Officer or Council:** | 10 June 2015 |
| **Commencement Date:** | 10 June 2015 |
| **Review Date (10 years from authorised date):** | 10 June 2025 |
| **Responsible Department** | Recreational Services |

This policy has been authorised.

Nerina Di Lorenzo

**Chief Executive Officer**

10 June 2015

INTRODUCTION

The Sports Ground Sponsorship Naming Policy has been developed to provide a framework to ensure a consistent decision-making approach to requests from clubs to rename their sports ground for sponsorship purposes.

This Policy will assist in facilitating responsible sports ground sponsorship arrangements and provide parameters for clubs wanting to negotiate sponsorship agreements.

A number of sports clubs have requested permission to provide temporary naming rights for sports grounds within Council owned/managed reserves as a sponsorship benefit for club sponsors.

A request for the temporary renaming of a sports ground is generally sought as a means of generating operational income for a sports club.

Council has an existing Naming Merri-bek Places Policy. While the permanent renaming of reserves based on a commercial sponsorship arrangement is not permitted, the policy is silent on requests for temporary naming rights in sponsorship agreements between sporting clubs and commercial enterprises. Reserve naming rights remain vested with Council as the asset owner and manager. As such, sporting clubs are not entitled to enter into commercial agreements to alter venue names or install signage pertaining to the naming of a reserve or sports ground without the formal written permission from Council. This Policy does not change this, but enables clubs to negotiate a fee for sponsor recognition in club, association, competition and league marketing and promotions.

This policy applies to sports clubs in Merri-bek who have current seasonal/annual tenancy agreements or lease agreement to Council owned and managed sports fields and sporting facilities.

CONTEXT

Alignment

Council’s Allocation and Use of Sporting Facilities, Grounds and Pavilions Policy provides a framework for the allocation and use of sporting facilities, grounds, and pavilions to sports clubs, through seasonal and annual tenancy agreements or lease agreements. The Sporting Facilities, Grounds and Pavilions User Guide further outlines the conditions that clubs must adhere to in order receive and retain their sports ground allocation.

The Sports Ground Sponsorship Naming Policy is guided by the Naming Merri-bek Places Policy, noting the Naming Merri-bek Places Policy is silent on requests for temporary naming rights in sponsorship agreements between sporting clubs and commercial enterprises.

Council’s Community Facility and Directional Signage Policy (under review) does not directly impact on the ability of Council to permit the temporary renaming of sports grounds. Any signage associated with a naming rights sponsor would be required to meet the requirements of the Community Facility and Directional Signage Policy. The policy is silent on the temporary renaming of sports grounds in association with naming rights sponsorship arrangements.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

* Provide a framework to assist with facilitating responsible sports ground sponsorship arrangements
* Provide parameters for clubs wanting to negotiate sponsorship partnerships
* Provide an outline for the conditions to which a sports club must adhere, in order to arrange the sponsorship agreement.

POLICY DETAILS

Conditions

The following conditions have been developed to provide guidance for the temporary naming of sports grounds:

1. Naming rights are limited to sports grounds and sporting facilities only and not the reserve, precinct, pavilion or any other public building/facility;
2. A sponsorship arrangement between a sporting club and a commercial entity must be for;
3. $10,000 or greater per year to be significant enough for temporary renaming to be considered. Pro rata amounts per season will not be considered;
4. The term of the sponsorship (i.e. naming) agreement is limited to the term of the club’s seasonal or annual allocation of the sports ground. Agreements over multiple seasons are allowed at the discretion of Council;
5. Funds raised through the commercial arrangement are allocated to Capital development of the tenanted facility or facilities;
6. The proposed name of the sports ground should not be offensive or discriminatory in any way;
7. The proposed sponsor is not associated with alcohol, cigarettes (including tobacco products), fast food or gambling, or adult entertainment services;
8. The sports ground is only referred to by the approved ‘sponsored name’ in club, association, competition or league promotions and marketing. Council’s name for the reserve is to be used in all other public documents e.g. Council reports, directories, websites etc;
9. Where a facility has multiple tenants within a season, written agreement between the tenants for the sponsorship to occur must be provided to Council;
10. All costs relating to the sponsorship and adhering to this procedure are to be borne by the applicant tenant;
11. The applicant tenant must indemnify Council against any loss should Council revoke the approval of the temporary renaming of the sports ground;
12. Any signage installed in relation to the temporary renaming of the sports ground must meet Councils Community Facility and Directional Signage Policy and be approved by Council;
13. A planning permit will be required for the proposed signage; application for the permit must be made to Council’s City Development Department; and
14. The terms of the temporary renaming of a sports ground may be reviewed by Council at any time.

Applications will be approved at Council’s absolute discretion. Council is not obliged to approve any proposal irrespective of compliance with the above conditions.

In relation to signage, enquiries should be made to Council’s City Development Department as to whether a planning permit is required under Clause 52.05 of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

This Policy will not be applied retrospectively to any current sponsorship agreements.

Sporting clubs will be required to acquit for sponsorship income generated by the temporary renaming of a sports ground to show that the conditions listed above are being met. Council may also ask a sporting club to confirm that other relevant guidelines and policies are being met in connection with the temporary renaming agreement.

Agreement termination, suspension and/or amendment

Council may cancel, suspend or amend an approval if it considers a significant breach of the conditions has occurred or where a compliance request has been disregarded.

Should an approved sports ground sponsorship arrangement be affected by sports ground closure or other unforeseen restrictions, Council will not compensate the club for any loss of sponsorship

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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| **Party/parties** | **Roles and responsibilities** | **Timelines** |
| Recreation Services | Undertake the sponsorship approval process subject to the conditions outlined | Ongoing |
| Recreation Services | Manage the acquittal process to ensure the conditions are being met | Ongoing |
| City Infrastructure (Building and Capital works) | Approval of facility refurbishment plans | As required |
| Asset Management | Record items in Council’s Asset Management System | As required |

# MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A review of this policy will be undertaken 10 years from its date of authorisation unless otherwise instructed.

DEFINITIONS

| **Term** | **Definition** |
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| Seasonal allocation | A Seasonal Allocation is an agreement that provides seasonal use of a Council sports ground, facility or pavilion.  Seasonal summer allocations – from 1 October to 29 February  Seasonal winter allocations – from 1 April to 31 August |
| Annual allocations | An Annual Allocation is an agreement that provides annual use of a Council sporting ground, facility or pavilion.  Annual allocations – from 1 April to 31 March |
| Lease agreement | A Lease is an agreement that provides exclusive or longterm occupation of a Council sporting ground, facility or pavilion. Council places a greater expectation on clubs in terms of maintenance and management where use is under the terms of a lease. |
| Sports ground | An area of open space provided specifically for the purpose of conducting formal sport or encouraging informal recreation activity. |
| Sports facility | For the purpose of this Policy, sports facility refers to areas dedicated to tennis courts, bowling greens, bocce courts, velodromes, athletics tracks, basketball court, table tennis arena and croquet greens. |
| Reserve | A reserve is the name of the overall sporting precinct, where more than one sports ground exists e.g. Charles Mutton Reserve – Mutton Reserve East and Mutton Reserve West could each be sponsored and temporarily renamed individually. |
| Capital development | Physical improvements to a facility that:   * increase or maintain sport and recreation participation * increase female and junior participation * increase access to sport and recreation places * improve safety, address risks and ensure compliant facilities * provide innovative sport and recreation facilities * provide environmentally sustainable facilities * provide universally designed facilities * improves amenity. |
| Temporary | For the purposes of the temporary renaming of sports grounds, ‘temporary’ refers to the length of tenure of a club at a Council managed sports ground for a seasonal or annual tenancy. |

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

* Naming Merri-bek Places (D14/58550)
* Allocation and use of sporting facilities, grounds and pavilions policy (D12/269802)
* Sporting facilities, grounds and pavilions user guide (D13/339390)
* Community Facility and Directional Signage Policy (D09/85261)