



## DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES REPORT

14<sup>th</sup> November 2006

**DSS12      MEETINGS WITH SPORTING FIELD USER  
GROUPS  
FILE: 110      KLB      {Folio No. \* }**

### SUMMARY:

Reporting on meetings held with sporting field user groups in August 2006.



### BACKGROUND:

Following the works inspection held on 13 February 2006 Council resolved "*that two (2) Councillors, being Councillors Sowter and McWilliam, meet with each of the Sports User Groups of the Shire and a report be brought back to Council within three (3) months*". In July 2006 meetings were scheduled at each sporting field in the Shire from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2006 to Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2006. All groups that have used Council's sporting field booking system were advised of the meetings by letter. Councillors Sowter and McWilliam attended the meetings with the User Groups.

Certain matters common to all sporting fields were raised at each venue. These were:

- The need for all users of Council's fields to be encouraged to make application for use of sports fields through the Customer First Centre, and to read the conditions of use included on the form.
- Defect reporting or requests for services should be made by contacting Council via the Customer First Centre, rather than waiting for an on-site visit.
- The ongoing work of erecting Best Practice signage on all Council's sporting fields to discourage inappropriate usage.
- The Sponsorship sign policy and the existence of out of date sponsorship signs on various fields.
- The renovation of sporting fields between the winter and summer seasons and the need for users to be flexible so that the work can be carried out.
- The August/September spray of fields for broadleaf weeds

- Waste bins being filled with domestic waste by others so that the bins are full when sporting groups want to use them. This problem is experienced wherever public bins are available.

**Willawarrin Sporting Fields:** The 355 Committee was represented by Ian Bray. Little Athletics and Soccer representatives also attended. Schools use the fields however this usage is not recorded as an application has not been made. Eight Soccer teams were fielded in the current season, social softball is played over summer, and there has been no cricket for a number of years. There is no suitable structure to attach sponsorship signs. The allocation of funds for capital works was discussed in detail. \$10,000 has been allocated in the 2006/2007 financial year for a sewage system upgrade. It was decided that this should take the form of an additional tank at the existing toilet block located below the fields adjacent the Rodeo Ground. Proposals for future funded capital works were also discussed with a view to the timely preparation of development applications and other documentation. The proposal is for a new toilet block, with rainwater tanks, south west of the picnic table and playground.

**Kemp Street Sporting Fields:** Representatives from two Soccer Clubs (Hornets, Rangers), and Macleay Valley Baseball & Softball Association attended. Field development was discussed in relation to capital works funded for 2006/2007 financial year. Drainage is considered to be an issue in the area designated for development of an additional playing field. A request to delay field renovation until after January 2007 due to a national regional baseball event was made. The Rangers Soccer Club outlined a proposal to relocate their clubhouse to the southern side of the field and extend it to two storeys. It was reported that there is one light out on each of the metal poles (four in total) near the baseball diamond. It was reported that the studs on top of the soccer goal posts where the nets were connected are puncturing balls. The suggestion was made that if the clubs agreed, the nets could be attached using Velcro strips. The Rangers were requested to make safe the practice goals that they had located at the side of Kemp Street 3 field or to remove them after each use.

**Services Club Park:** Little Athletics and Auskick were represented. Concerns raised were:

- That the toilet block is locked and unlocked at inconsistent times and the garbage bin is not always available.
- A request was made to install a Sharps Disposal kit in the toilet.
- A request was made for permission to attach a sign on the toilet block stating that Little Athletics were held there with days and times.
- A request was made to install a One Way sign on Holman Street facing the access from the park to Holman Street.

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- A request was made to dig out the built up sand around the long jump pits and returf. This work was completed in mid October.

**Stuarts Point Sporting Fields:** The 355 Committee, (the Stuarts Point User Group), Eungai & Stuarts Point Cricket Club and Little Athletics were represented. The cricket club again requested the field be mown weekly over their season as it is currently mown fortnightly. Current budget does not provide for this and generally the rate of grass growth on this sandy field does not warrant a weekly mow. The cricket club also made the following requests:

- Extra soil to fill holes identified as a risk prior to usage of the field.
- A spread of lime to adjust pH. A pH test made on the day confirmed that the pH was suitable without an application of lime.
- A soil analysis to identify fertiliser requirements and supply of slow release fertiliser which the user group would spread.
- Broadleaf weed spray mainly for clover.
- Some minor issues were raised that SPUG offered to address.
- Other minor issues, such as pruning of branches overhanging the long jump run-up, were addressed on the day.

The club representatives were asked to raise issues with their 355 Committee in the first instance. In spite of the purchase and erection of a new fence along Banksia Street and down to the Bushfire Brigade Shed at the end of the 2005/2006 financial year, vehicles continue to access the field near the pre-school, causing damage to the surface. SPUG has agreed to deal with this within their own resources as their contribution to the fencing and protection of the field. Large rocks will be placed at the informal access points along the Fourth Avenue boundary.

**South West Rocks Sporting Fields:** The 355 Committee, SWR Sports Association and Soccer were represented.

- The status of the Boyters Lane Playing Field development was explained, in that costings were being sought for the various development stages of the Plan of Management.
- It was determined that there were six bins for the sporting fields however domestic waste was being placed in the bins by others and so the bins were sometimes already full when they were needed. The suggestion was made that a sign should be installed near the bin stands stating "Domestic waste should not be placed in these bins".
- The issue of waste blowing from the recycling bins was raised as an untidy aspect of the fields. These bins have since been removed.

Requests were made as follows:

- For shade trees below the car park – four very advanced Tuckeroos. These trees have now been purchased and planted.
- One picnic table to be placed under the awning on the south side of the newer amenity block – this request is still to be funded.
- Vandal proof, spring loaded tap fittings on the north east corner of the field. The taps are left on and water wasted – this request is still being investigated.
- Three metres of standard palings two metres long for the sight boards at the oval – this improvement is considered to be one the cricket club could achieve themselves.

**Smithtown Sporting Fields:** The 355 Committee and Junior Rugby League were represented. The Committee advised that there are about 170 children playing Rugby League this year with 100 being involved with Touch Football. The user groups have not as yet erected the fencing purchased by Council last financial year. The agreement was that Council purchased the fencing and the sporting groups erected the fencing in conjunction with the Bowling Club. The 355 Committee does not want to pay the electricity bill they have received for using the floodlights on the field. The 355 Committee has submitted a Development Application for extensions to the grandstand, however the Application was incomplete and further information is required by Sustainable Development Services. Funds have been allocated to pay for the Development Application from Projects to be Determined in the current financial year. \$30,000 is listed in 2008/09 financial year for replacing the toilets and additional storage.

**Gladstone Sporting Fields:** Four members attended representing Soccer. On the day we were advised that the purchase of the mobile canteen should go ahead, however the group subsequently advised that this was no longer considered a priority as there were insufficient teams at Gladstone to warrant the expense or to use the canteen to advantage. Further suggestions on projects for the funds are pending.

Signage at this field is quite old and requires replacement. The newly erected fence on Macleay Street was raised as a problem because a gap had been left around the large tree on the boundary. Additional fencing has since been erected to close up the gaps. The condition of the fencing on the paddocks adjoining the fields to the north and east was raised due to an incident when cows got onto the fields through the fencing. Arrangements are being made for the replacement of this fence. The need for additional seating and shade at the fields was raised. Some defects regarding the toilets were raised and representatives were reminded that the most effective process for having these concerns dealt with in a timely manner was to advise Council via the Customer First Centre.

**Frederickton Sporting Fields:** Two representatives from the Frederickton Sports Association attended. It was advised that there were two broken irrigation points on the field. The netball courts have depressions at the goal centres that need to be filled and levelled. It was requested that the bush area to the east of the field be inspected for fire hazard. The User Group was again asked to provide quotations for installing floodlights on one field. This project was funded in 2005/06 and \$6,200 has been revoted for this financial year. The sporting fields are now included in a draft Plan of Management for Frederickton Parks and Sporting Fields and it is anticipated that additional funding will be allocated to the floodlighting project in the future.

**Crescent Head Baker Drive Sporting Fields:** Touch Football, Cricket and the Crescent Head Primary School were represented. The following items were discussed:

- The location of the cricket nets remains a subject of discussion.
- Soccer was advised that a line marker can be borrowed from council provided a few days notice was given to charge the batteries.
- The removable soccer goal posts are timber and heavy, could they be replaced.
- Could a load of soil be delivered to fill holes on fields.
- Could the hard surface netball courts be remarked prior to February 2007.
- Could recycling bins be included with the garbage bins at the field.
- Not enough shade or weather protection.
- The group was advised that \$35,000 has been allocated in this financial year for a canteen/change room building. Much discussion ensued about the pressing need for more storage area, a covered seating area and shade.

The group was asked to advise in writing how they wanted to proceed with the cricket nets and the new capital works.

**South Kempsey Oval:** The Macleay Valley Cricket Association did not receive their letter. Subsequent discussions took place regarding the cricket practice nets to be located on the extension at the south western corner of the field. This work is funded in the current financial year and is progressing. The Association would like an amenity block built in the future on the western side of the field.

**Verge Street Sporting Fields:** Junior Rugby League, Macleay Valley Mustangs, Macleay Valley Hockey Association were represented.

- Sporting field signage has been erected. The user groups feel more signs are needed.

- No parking signs and vehicle access to the fields, especially Verge 2, remain a concern.
- Vandalism to the Junior Rugby League building, the Grandstand, fences and other assets are the main concern.
- The well used gate between Verge 1 and 2 is bare earth and a concrete ramp has been requested.

A letter has since been received from the Macleay Valley Mustangs urging Council to consider a live-in caretaker at Verge Street. This would require appropriate premises and the Mustangs believe it would reduce vandalism in this area. The Club believes that the correct presentation of this area to visiting players and officials will encourage a more favourable opinion of our facilities from regional committees. Two of the main factors limiting the use of Verge One for larger events are the lack of parking and seating for spectators.

Maintenance issues and minor requests are being addressed within available resources where possible. Requests for major works will be considered for future capital works.

**REPORT IMPLICATIONS:**

- *Environmental*

*Nil.*

- *Social*

*Nil.*

- *Economic (Financial)*

*Requests by user groups are being addressed within available resources as appropriate. User groups will continue to have input into funded capital works projects.*

- *Policy or Statutory*

*Nil.*

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the information be noted.

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**A P Vermeulen**  
**DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES**