

Community Report

Committee Consideration – 13 April 2021

Council Resolution – 27 April 2021

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CSD03.21	Replacement Member Public Art Committee
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Committee	13 April 2021
Council	27 April 2021
Applicant	City of Nedlands
Employee Disclosure under section 5.70 of the Local Government Act 1995 and section 10 of the City of Nedlands Code of Conduct for Impartiality.	Nil.
Executive Manager	Pat Panayotou – Executive Manager Community
Attachments	Nil.
Confidential Attachments	Nil.

Executive Summary

This report recommends that Council appoints to the Public Art Committee a Councillor who is a ward Councillor for the Melvista Ward, to replace ex-Councillor Gordon Hay who resigned from Council in 2020. The Public Art Committee's Terms of Reference state that Councillors on the Committee should be the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, plus one Councillor from each Council ward.

Recommendation to Committee

Council appoints Councillor (insert name), as the Councillor for the Melvista Ward, to the Public Art Committee.

Background

The Public Art Committee provides advice to Council on public art. The Committee's Terms of Reference state that its membership is to include the Mayor or Deputy Mayor; a Councillor from each Council ward; and representatives from the community. Ex-Councillor Gordon Hay was the Melvista Ward's Council representative on the Public Art Community until his resignation from Council in 2020. Therefore, there is now a vacancy on the Public Art Committee, to be filled by a Councillor from the Melvista Ward.

Discussion/Overview

The Public Art Committee's membership includes community members and Councillors. The Council positions stipulated by the Committee's Terms of Reference are the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, plus a Councillor from each of the 4 Council wards.

Current members of the Public Art Committee are:

- Mayor or Deputy Mayor – Deputy Mayor McManus
- Hollywood Ward Councillor – Councillor Ben Hodsdon (Chairperson)
- Coastal Ward Councillor – Councillor Kerry Smyth
- Dalkeith Ward Councillor – Councillor Andrew Mangano
- Melvista Ward Councillor – vacant.
- Community representative – City of Nedlands resident Alexandra Thompson
- Community representative – City of Nedlands resident Luke Hollyock.

The vacancy arises from the resignation from Council of the previous Melvista Ward Councillor, Gordon Hay. Therefore, Council now needs to appoint one of the Melvista Ward Councillors to fill that vacancy. Current Melvista Ward Councillors are Councillors Bronwen Tyson, Rebecca Coghlan and Rajah Senathirajah. Council may wish to appoint any of these three Melvista Ward Councillors to the Public Art Committee.

Key Relevant Previous Council Decisions:

22 October 2019 – 15.4 Arts Committee

Policy / Legislation

The *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)* enables Council to create Committees of Council.

Consultation

No consultation on this matter is required, as the appointment recommended is appropriately a Council decision.

Consultation of the community in the work of the Public Art Committee generally is achieved by having a number of community representatives on the Public Art Committee, as full voting members.

Strategic Implications

How well does it fit with our strategic direction?

The work of the Public Art Committee contributes to the City's amenity, the importance of which is reflected in the City's vision statement, in the words "we shall live in a beautiful place".

Who benefits?

All members of the community benefit from public art of a high standard. It contributes to the amenity of the local area, possibly even to its financial value; as well as attracting visitors who contribute to the success of local businesses.

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

The risk of the Committee making uninformed arts decisions is mitigated by employing a staff member experienced in public art; and also by appointing community members to the Committee who have expertise in the area.

Do we have the information we need?

Yes. There are now 3 Councillor representatives of the Melvista Ward, from whom Council can appoint one to the Public Art Committee.

Budget/Financial Implications

There are no budget implications of this decision to appoint a Melvista Ward representative to the Public Art Committee.

Can we afford it?

N/A

How does the option impact upon rates?

N/A

Conclusion

As there is currently a vacancy on the Public Art Committee for a Councillor from the Melvista Ward, it is recommended that Council appoints one of the sitting Melvista Ward Councillors to be a member of the Public Art Committee. The Public Art Committee, as appointed by Council, will serve until the next general Council election. All Committees of Council disband immediately before a general Council election, until reappointed by the new Council.

CSD04.21	Mt Claremont Playgroup Fee Reduction Request
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Committee	13 April 2021
Council	27 April 2021
Applicant	City of Nedlands
Employee Disclosure under section 5.70 of the Local Government Act 1995 and section 10 of the City of Nedlands Code of Conduct for Impartiality.	Nil.
Director	Pat Panayotou – Executive Manager Community
Attachments	Nil.
Confidential Attachments	Nil.

Executive Summary

The Mt Claremont Playgroup is halving their usage of the Mt Claremont Playcentre, from eight to four hours per week. Therefore, they also wish to have their building usage fee reduced accordingly. Because they are halving their usage time, they are also requesting that their annual building usage fee is also halved. However, changes to Fees and Charges can only be made by Council. Therefore, this report is now presented to Council, recommending that Council halves the group's building usage fees, based on the fact that they have reduced their hours of usage.

Recommendation to Committee

Council reduces Mt Claremont Playgroup's 2020/2021 annual building usage fee from \$3,000 to \$1,500.

Background

Playgroups Generally

Playgroups provide important services and support to parents and young children. Playgroups are not childcare and are run by volunteer parents. They usually have little or no funding available to them, other than the membership and session fees paid by the parents themselves. Playgroup sessions provide children with the benefits of learning; and the physical, social and emotional development that occurs through play. Additionally, playgroup sessions bring parents together, creating and strengthening their local networks and supports. Playgroups help break down social isolation and

contribute to the well-being of parents and young children. Thus, they make an important contribution to the health and well-being of young families, at a time in their lives that is vulnerable to stress and social isolation.

The Mt Claremont Playgroup

The Mt Claremont Playgroup currently has a booking to hire the Mt Claremont Playcentre adjacent to the Mt Claremont Library for eight hours per week for a fee of \$3,000 per annum. This fee was approved by Council.

Discussion/Overview

History

In February 2018, Council considered a report on what the City's playgroups and toy libraries were to be charged for their use of a Council building. In response to the report, Council set the charges for the playgroups and toy libraries for a 4 year period, to give the groups some certainty and the ability to plan ahead. As part of this decision, Council set the following annual charges for the Mt Claremont Playgroup

Table 1: Mt Claremont Playgroup Fees as Set by Council February 2018

Mt Claremont Playgroup	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	\$2,250	\$2,500	\$2,750	\$3,000

2020 saw the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia. In response to the pandemic, in April 2020 Council adopted its Hardship Provisions Policy and as a result Mt Claremont Playgroup's 2019/20 fee was reduced from \$2,750 down to \$1,996. Thus, the two Council decisions together have now resulted in the following being the approved annual charges for the Mt Claremont Playgroup:

Table 2: Mt Claremont Playgroup Fees as Updated by Council 2020

Mt Claremont Playgroup	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	\$2,250	\$2,500	\$1,996	\$3,000

Current Situation

The Mt Claremont playgroup wishes to reduce its usage of the Mt Claremont Playcentre from eight to four hours a week; and to reduce annual building usage fee from \$3,000 to \$1,500.

Mt Claremont Playgroup has advised that it currently has only seven members, so is holding fewer sessions and therefore only requires use of the building for 4 hours per week. The group has advised that COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their membership level, with some parents being concerned about attending sessions. However, the group plans to undertake a recruitment drive and is optimistic about increasing membership in the future.

Administration can reduce the group's number of booked hours in the booking system. However, as the group pays an annual fee set by Council, reducing their booked hours will not reduce the fees that the group pays. The Mt Claremont playgroup is yet to pay its 2020/2021 invoice of \$3,000 but is up to date with previous years payments. A decision to reduce the groups fee in line with its usage can only be made by Council.

City of Nedlands Playgroups Generally

In February 2021 Council considered a report requesting a fee waiver from the Nedlands Playgroup. It is evident that both playgroups are struggling financially. In June, Community Development will provide a report to Council recommending longer-term solutions to the viability of both playgroups and their ability to pay building usage fees. Until then, Council is asked to consider this interim solution for the Mt Claremont Playgroup, by halving their annual building usage fee, in line with the fact that the group is halving their usage of the building.

Therefore it is recommended that Council reduces the Mt Claremont Playgroup's building usage fee for 2020/21 from fee from \$3,000 to \$1,500.

Key Relevant Previous Council Decisions:

- 27 February 2018 – CM01.18 – Council set Fees & Charges for Playgroups and Toy Libraries for 4 financial years.
- 14 April 2020 – Item 7 – Council adopted Hardship Policy in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. This decision reduced 2019/20 Fees & Charges for various parties, including the Mt Claremont Playgroup.
- 23 February 2021 – CMO1.21 – Council acknowledged the importance of Playgroups in Nedlands and reduced charges to the Nedlands Playgroup.

Policy

Council's "Use of Council Facilities for Community Purposes" Policy states that Council "recognizes the key contribution that community organizations make to the local community and provides a range of facilities for their use".

Legislation

The *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)* requires that fees charged by a local government must be approved by Council.

Consultation

The request for Council to consider reducing the Mt Claremont Playgroup's building usage fee has come directly from the group. Community Development is consulting further with the group to find out more about the factors impacting on them; and to offer support with promoting their services to the wider community, aimed at increasing their membership.

Community Development has also consulted with Playgroups WA, the peak body for playgroups, which has advised that playgroups are struggling across the board, particularly since the pandemic. Therefore, it is not just the City of Nedlands' playgroups that are having difficulty maintaining membership, and therefore maintaining their ability to pay building usage fees.

Strategic Implications

How well does it fit with our strategic direction?

The City's Strategic Community Plan states "We are inclusive and connected, caring and support volunteers".

Who benefits?

Members of the Mt Claremont Playgroup and their children. The broader community also benefits when isolation is reduced for mothers and young children. The benefits gained are increased well-being and a reduction in longer-term health costs.

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

There is little to no risk involved in reducing the Mt Claremont Playgroups fees in relation to their hours.

Do we have the information we need?

Yes.

Budget/Financial Implications

Reducing the Mt Claremont Community Groups fee will reduce the City's 2020/2021 revenue by \$1,500.

Can we afford it?

Reducing the Mt Claremont Community Groups fee will not make a significant impact on the City's budget or rates.

Conclusion

The Mt Claremont Playgroup is run by volunteers and provides a valuable community service. As with all playgroups, the Mt Claremont Playgroup helps reduce the social isolation that may otherwise impact parents of young children, as well as enriching the lives of young children through socialisation and play. The playgroup has advised that it requires less use of the Mt Claremont Playcentre, due to its reduced membership, particularly impacted by COVID-19. It is recommended that Council reduces the Mt Claremont Playgroup's 2020/21 venue usage fee from \$3,000 to \$1,500, to give the group time to plan towards a membership drive and to consider other ways to raise funds to pay their building usage fees. Following this Council decision, which will apply only to the current financial year, Community Development will then consult with both of the City's playgroups on other options for their longer-term futures.