

APPENDIX 5.7: DESCRIPTION OF FACILITY PLANNING PRINCIPLES

A 'principles-based' planning approach is proposed to guide the assessment, consideration and decision-making process for facility developments. The principles reflect the trends that are impacting on the provision of community facilities in New Zealand, within Clutha District, and the surrounding region. As these are 'trend-based' principles, they will need to be regularly reviewed to maintain relevance in a changing planning environment. However, they represent a 'common sense' approach to facility provision.

The principles are:

Principle 1: Co-location and shared facilities replacing dispersed and duplicated provision

Co-location is the positioning of several activities within a centralised location, such as a recreation and sport precinct, whereby a major cluster or 'hub' is formed. This is usually a long-term process, acting as opportunities arise. The activities generally share social/ lounge/ clubrooms, toilets, change facilities and parking, but may use their own specialist facilities - such as a hockey turf or BMX track - or may share facilities such as a sports fields, swimming pool, hard courts or indoor courts. Co-location can also reduce travelling time for families who have more than one member involved in the activity – it provides potential for a 'one stop shop' approach through the creation of activity clusters.

Principle 2: Partnering to maximise community benefits

Partnerships between educational organisations, clubs, commercial operators, Councils, churches and other organisations are an increasingly popular facility provision option. The motives driving these partnerships include providing a seamless or 'one stop' service, avoiding inefficient duplication or gaps in provision, addressing the need to be economical (seeking economies of scale), making better use of scarce managerial, volunteer, land or financial resources, or allowing more advanced specialisations to be developed. The following points are important in exploring partnerships:

- Partnership development at the earliest stages depends on the ability of the partners to develop their ideas in an **atmosphere of flexibility**.
- There needs to be **clarity of leadership**, which implies that whoever leads the development of a partnership needs to be recognised and empowered by his or her own organisation, and is trusted by the partners.
- There needs to be a **clarity of understanding** of the framework, culture, values and approach of partner organisations, which in many cases will need to be the subject of explicit discussion.
- There needs to be **clarity of purpose**, which implies a clear statement of the objective of the partnership which can only exist in the context of a clear and informed understanding of the nature and performance characteristics of existing service provision.
- There needs to be **clarity of role**, which implies that an early agreement of the precise contributions of each of the partners and agreement about their inputs and

gains is essential to a well-structured partnership. This needs to be set out in some memorandum or "contract".

- There needs to be **clarity of commitment** from all the partners which needs the support of the principal partners and this commitment needs to find expression in their practical support for the partnership in terms of the resource and cost implications of the partnership.
- There needs to be **clarity of management** as soon as the partnership starts to become operational.
- There needs to be **clarity of measurement** so that all of the partners agree at the outset know how they are to measure their success and how they are to incorporate into that measurement the requirements for continuous improvement.

These points taken together enshrine the approach that makes for the successful initiation of partnerships. They form the basis of a sound management "check list" which needs to be considered whenever a new partnership is being contemplated.

Principle 3: Targeted renewal and refurbishment funding

Ideally all organisations seek to maximise benefits and minimise costs through the efficient and effective management of assets. To achieve these efficiencies these organisations must identify the best time and method to refurbish, renew, replace and dispose of assets. A typical question is, should a facility be refurbished for X dollars and extend its life 10 years, or replace the asset with something that lasts 50 years for X+ dollars? This principle ensures asset managers offer the most cost-effective and long-term solutions.

In instances where Council does not own such facilities, a condition of refurbishment funding should include a proven record of savings by the owner or users to create a reserve fund for renewal of the facility (or at least a commitment to do so as part of the current refurbishment). There also needs to be proof that the owner has sought to optimise use of the facility through such strategies as:

- Joint ventures
- Consolidation of existing facilities
- Development of a multi-activity arrangements
- Identification and elimination of any alternative facilities.

Funders should look to support refurbishment or replacement of community facilities with targeted investment where there is evident need, and the functional value of the facility can be retained or enhanced.

Principle 4: Rationalisation of supply of facilities

Facilities that are surplus, due to an over supply of similar facilities, or are redundant, due to diminished demand, could be converted for other uses, relocated or demolished. The supply of facilities includes all those available for community use regardless of ownership.

Preliminary findings suggest that there may need to be a rationalisation of clubroom facilities within Clutha District. Council could take a leading role to identify appropriate levels of provision, and pinpointing priority facilities in the part of the District that has an evident over

supply. Priority facilities would include those that are currently under-utilised, but are well located, perform the desired functions needed by the community and are in good condition.

Clearly, additional consultation is required prior to any of these options being confirmed for specific facilities.

Principle 5: Improved communication and co-ordination

This encourages the provision of a regular and structured communication process to foster co-operation and co-ordination between stakeholders. It is suggested that informal forums could be initiated by Sport Otago to discuss topical facility issues. The purpose of the forums would be to build awareness of facility needs and the potential for co-operative action. These forums to be held in broad sector groupings (such as schools, sport and recreation) or across sectors within an area of the District. These could lead to a number of more focused groupings pursuing a particular enhancement in provision (such as organisations using or wanting to use a specific park or facility).

Principle 6: Redevelopment of compromise facilities to improve functional performance

Many existing facilities are designed to serve a wide variety of user groups. The design is therefore a compromise between a wide range of preferences. This attempt to 'be all things to all people' often means that many activities are in fact severely limited. Such facilities often include school facilities, local general-purpose community halls, through to the major district facilities such as the Netball court complex at the Showgrounds. Most of these facilities have been developed in the belief that meeting the widest range of need will provide the most affordable solution to the community and achieve high occupancy levels.

These facilities generally provide relatively low user satisfaction due to the major compromises in performance required to meet a wide range of needs. A common characteristic of 'compromise facilities' is the ongoing pressure from users for improvements to meet their specific needs.

An analysis of the specific requirements of user groups will usually lead to the redevelopment of facilities to ensure each group can reach their full potential, as appropriate. Identification of the best combinations of users is critical to achieve the best fit between user needs and the facilities provided.

Principle 7: Fair allocation of capital, based on historical support from funders

Funders, such as the Clutha Licensing Trust and Community Trust of Otago have their own internal processes. It would be advantageous to have a coordinated approach with Council when considering the scale of future support for capital projects and assessing what is a fair contribution by taking into account the past level of support offered by these funders to the relevant sports code and the applicant organisation. This will impact on the proportion of the total cost of the project to be contributed by the funder, as well as the actual amount and type of support. The support could include a capital grant, a loan or a combination of the two.

It is recognised that Council provides a wide range of types of support for sports codes, from occasional capital grants through to the fully-funded development and renewal of facilities such as Centennial Swimming Pool. There are also widely varying levels of cost recovery for

operational expenses between types of facilities and playing surfaces. These recovery levels have been established over time as new sports and types of facilities and playing surfaces have emerged. However, the major funding from Council is actually provided through local community rates based on the assessed catchment of the facility or sports ground in question. These rates will continue to be determined through consultation with the local community.

Principle 8: Response to local community values

It is easy to review the cost of maintaining or redeveloping a facility, and where mounting expenses are identified, to recommend its closure or demolition. Often such facilities have been built by volunteer community labour, and a modern cost-benefit analysis might not reflect the level of community value ascribed to it. It is important to consider these community values and to allow sufficient time for a community to consider the local costs and benefits of a change in facility provision. Consultation is vital, and the review of options not previously considered by the original assessment may need to be carried out. Although the cost of keeping a facility might not reflect well when compared with national averages, a local community may be prepared to accept higher costs to maintain or develop an apparently inefficient asset. Recommending the closure of a facility could also be the best way of identifying (and possibly increasing) its local value, and of encouraging local solutions to difficult issues. This iterative process should be an accepted and programmed element of the review process.