

Working Group - Sport Seasons in LG Shared Spaces – Minutes

Date: Thursday 28 May 2020

Chair: David Bruce, Coordinator Project Services, City of Bayswater

Vice-Chair: Jenni Hess, Recreation Development Coordinator, City of South Perth

Minutes: Marissa MacDonald, Senior Policy Advisor Community, WALGA

Attendees:

Organisation	Name	Position
Athletics WA	Emma Pass	General Manager Member Engagement & Business Development
Hockey WA	Ryan Lenegan	General Manager Participation and Member Services
Hockey WA	Shayley McGurk	GM Hockey Operations
Hockey WA	Graham Pilcher	Senior Competitions Coordinator
Football West	Alex Novatsis	Head of Members Services
NRL	Tony Crowe	NRL WA Operations Manager
Rugby WA	Bob Hunter	CEO
Touch Football	Warren Smiles	WA State Manager
WACA	Jo Davies	General Manager, Community Cricket
WACA	Danny Andrews	Clubs and Affiliates Specialist
WAFC	Josh Bowler	Manager Facilities and Events
City of Cockburn	Dean Burton	Coordinator Recreation Services
City of Joondalup	Emily Carroll	Senior Sport and Recreation Officer

Apologies:

Organisation	Name	Position
Softball WA	Jill Green	Sports Development & Operations Manager
Tee Ball Asc WA	Di Mount-Bryson	President
City of Joondalup	Shane Fraser	Coordinator Recreation Services

Welcome

Chair, David Bruce welcomed the group and thanked everyone for their time to continue discussing the sport seasons. David gave a quick background overview to MARAG – the Metropolitan Area Recreation Advisory Group representing Local Government officers in the metropolitan area that are involved with facilities and sporting infrastructure, club development and recreation services.

Local Government Grounds Spreadsheet

Chair, David requested any feedback on the spreadsheet regarding the Local Government grounds. SSA's were happy with the spreadsheet with a few queries coming through.

Chair, David asked the group if the SSA's executive were on board with what was discussed in the previous meeting for shared grounds regarding dates. Everyone confirmed their CEO's were happy with the dates.

Ryan, Hockey – Just a few operational details that were sent through. A couple of venues missing of the spreadsheet.

Chair, David – Marissa can provide contacts regarding those Local Governments that may have not provided details regarding their grounds in the spreadsheet. We've put a point of contact for each Local Government on that spreadsheet – most Local Governments have put their information in and we are sorry that not everyone has provided their information. What I want to encourage is that State Sporting Associations go through the Local Government instead of going through the clubs. We probably can provide more accurate information and confirm the availability. That will also help with ground availability.

Season Dates on Shared Grounds and Agreement Document

Chair, David – Athletics WA are you happy with the start dates? 3-4 winter codes finishing and 17 October summer codes starting on shared grounds.

Emma, Athletics – Yes that is good.

Warren, Touch WA – That will be fine with us. Our shared spaces are with cricket.

Danny, WACA – From a community and junior perspective it was agreed to. Probably the one thing that threw a spanner in the works was the likelihood of an AFL grand final on the 24 October. That is an extra week of fixtures that they probably won't try and clash with. So that's the decision they will have to get around. Premier cricket is one area that we haven't fully reached agreement with them. So still trying to look at starting in the earlier October space, primarily because it links in with State level cricket. The contracted players there need to be playing earlier to fit in with the Shield season and all of the flow on. We will be looking to try where we can to work in particular with Hockey to see what grounds are in use in that early part of October.

Chair, David – from a City of Bayswater perspective, Lower Hillcrest Reserve will be fine, but Upper Hillcrest Reserve won't be available because the cricket field crosses over field used for the football field.

Jo, WACA – Danny's come up with another idea that we can go back to Premier cricket around trying to mitigate the number of pitches they'll need. Going back and forth today around that.

Chair, David – It will likely be the challenges with Local Governments where it's the lower grades 2 or 3 that presents the challenge.

Jo, WACA – Pulled together a draft agreement we'd like to put formally through to all sports and WALGA and Local Government to provide a guiding framework about the season timelines to reflect exactly what we are speaking about. It's not a press release from any one group. Agreement to community grass roots competitions, not applicable to premier leagues due to the nuisances around those that will require negotiation. This is not just about shared grounds, this is also to minimise the number of weekend that players are crossing over with winter and summer competitions and volunteers are having to administer winter and summer competitions at the same time. It will be sent through SSA's, MARAG Chair and WALGA for review.

Chair, David – As the Chair of the MARAG group all the Local Governments would like to review the document, before providing support for it. MARAG would prefer the document to mention 17/18 October as the summer start date as agreed previously with all SSA's.

Dean, City of Cockburn – Concerned about where sport teams will be training if they will make finals, as Local Governments will likely be doing maintenance of grounds.

Jo, WACA – That needs to be an agreement/negotiation between the club and Local Governments depending upon what the agreement was for the start date and the maintenance date. I'm not sure if we'll be able to mandate a standard for this approach because it will be very different for different sports.

Chair, David – There will need to be some sort of flexibility from the clubs that make finals. At the City of Bayswater we are progressing with maintenance plans and we have already said to clubs that if they do make finals they will have to work with us to figure out what grounds to use. For example Bayswater Football Club made finals and we told them that they are playing at a WAFL only ground, but then we had to take the posts out to do ground maintenance and they were happy to train on those other grounds.

Josh, WAFC – From a football perspective, we've generally agreed that the football will finish in the last weekend of September anyway so it probably won't go through 3-4 October. Senior football 2 weeks of finals, so that might give you a little bit more time on some of the grounds.

Chair, David – Alex from Football West has confirmed the dates. Only NPL will be encroaching into the summer dates, but they will be played on specific grounds.

Dean, City of Cockburn – Concerned that if different clubs make finals and they have to train, there won't be enough grounds available to train for all those clubs due to maintenance.

Jo, WACA – Don't want to go into too much detail in the Agreement regarding the season finals, need to keep this high level. The number 8 point in the Agreement provides the overarching guidance framework for discussions and negotiations to occur. Emphasising Local Government collaboration.

Chair, David – raised the issue of who this Agreement will be released from. It would be preferable to be released from the Department or WALGA rather than one of the SSA's.

Jo, WACA – Already provided to the Department to review and provide advice regarding whether it needs to come from them. There needs to be a determination whether everyone has to sign it, or whether it can just be released as it is, after everyone has reviewed it.

Chair, David – The timing of the document is important. If you can share it with us as soon as possible. It feeds in well to have this Agreement document ready for the larger meeting next Friday 5 June.

Jo, WACA – Aiming to have it ready by next Friday. Need to be conscious that winter codes need to be securing fixtures and being conscious that we don't go past next week. Embargo it before release it formally.

Emma, Athletics – Any discussion around the other end of the season in terms of winter commencement in 2021?

Chair, David – This was raised last week. Trying to get the sports as quick as possible to the normal fixtures is the goal. Depends on participants and availability for example WACA are sacrificing a few weeks. There hasn't been any discussion beyond that. I guess with Athletics you are fortunate you have a lot of hard track facilities. At Bayswater, Noranda Athletics can stay longer on the grass track than the season. From a Local Government perspective to get all the seasons back onto their normal start date for the following year would be the best option.

Emma, Athletics – The other consideration is that it's an Olympic year next year and we are governed by our national calendar. Still waiting on national competitions which will be a week or two later. But definitely communication and collaboration with Local Governments is the key.

Chair, David – we are all waiting to see what is announced either Friday 8 June or Friday 15 June regarding Stage 3 and how that will affect season dates. Have there been any changes from the season start dates? Earliest start dates soccer recommencing 21 June but most other codes recommencing in early July so Local Governments can prepare the grounds. All Local Governments will now also start to engage contractors for end of season maintenance.

Rugby – No change

WAFC - Junior football likely start 19 July

Football West – No change

Hockey – No change

Chair, David – Tee Ball Association WA, Softball WA and Baseball WA were all contacted regarding their dates. Season recommencement date will be 17 October, except for Baseball where it will potentially restart first week of October but they will play out at Gosnells.

Warren, Touch Football WA – We would be looking to start around a fortnight after any announced date. We would go through to late September. The 17 October is deal for the summer season commencement. The clubs that will run, will run a short winter season anywhere from 6-10 weeks.

Challenges with accessing Local Government grounds

Chair, David – last time we met there was some issues with being able to access certain Local Government reserves. Are there currently any issues?

There was no further issues raised by SSA's regarding this matter.

Dean, City of Cockburn – raised concerns around what phase 3 will look like and how will Local Governments manage/respond.

General business

Danny, WACA – What are Local Governments doing with regards to fees and charges to sports clubs?

Chair, David – Based on the spreadsheet most Local Governments have provided an answer. Some Local Governments didn't have a response at the time they were asked. I have left it as TBA and placed the Local Government contact details to contact them for further information. But a lot of Local Governments have waived winter fees and charges. It's up to each Local Government. For example City of Bayswater we immediately stopped all fees to clubs for hire of reserves, provided refunds for that period, mostly junior clubs don't get charged fees and that's consistent with other Local Governments as well. Clubs that lease facilities we immediately stopped the charges for 6 months. Most Local Governments have an internal COVID Committee, but from City of Bayswater perspective we are looking at summer fees. We are surveying all the clubs to see how they are coping before we pass on decision to Council.

Vice-Chair, Jenni – Similar in City of South Perth. The City has released a funding relief package and a relief for financial hardship policy. The biggest impact is on winter clubs, but clubs will be getting lease fees waived and also reserve hire fees it will be pro-rata for the number of days of use. Case by case basis. Will be up to clubs to demonstrate hardship.

Emily, City of Joondalup – Still working on a package. Majority of clubs on hire arrangements so if they are not using it they are not being charged. We have subsidised our junior club use and also to an extent the senior use. There are options existing within the way we are running that clubs are experiencing financial hardship can apply for waiving of fees. Whether we will be offering anything additional, it is still being discussed.

Dean, City of Cockburn – waived winter fees. For summer, based on current dates, it is unlikely that we will waive some fees – there might be a minor discount but looks like there will be close to a full season. Unless there's restrictions on the clubs ability to bring in income from bars and canteens that's when we might start thinking about waiving some fees. Fortunately at Cockburn there is delegated authority so we can make this decision at the management level.

Danny, WACA – Appreciate this feedback. Want to make sure that the costs stay at a reasonable level so that people can take up their sport again.

Chair, David – There are additional charges that Local Governments will likely absorb such as cleaning but will not be passed onto the clubs.

Chair, David – The gap in club development is an issue right now moving forward. Not every Local Government has a club development officer.

Danny, WACA – this will link in with the Every Club review. There is supposedly a working group being convened on this. But not much information regarding this at the moment.

Jo, WACA – if there a chance to collectively have some input on this it would be appreciated. Having resources in Local Government will only enhance participation.

Chair, David – I think also Kidsport obviously hasn't been utilised in this sport period, so there will likely be more uptake in the summer period.

Emily, City of Joondalup – The feedback from the Club Development Officer network is that there hasn't been a lot of contact or guidance from the Department, which hopefully will come out of the review. There needs to be more discussions especially regarding leadership role. In terms of Kidsport, the Department has said that a lot of vouchers have been put on hold, but given that there are more people who would be eligible for health care cards, there would be expected to be an increase around the summer sports.

Meeting close and next meeting

Chair, David thanked everyone for their time. This working group might come back together if required after Stage 3 announcements by the State Government.

The larger meeting with all SSA's, the Department of Local Governments, Sport and Cultural Industries, SportWest and Parks and Leisure WA (PLWA) is set for Friday, 5 June.

Actions

Jo Davies, WACA - Circulate the Agreement principle document on sport seasons on shared grounds.