

## 2.3 MONASH FOOTBALL (SOCCER) PLAN

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council endorses the release of the draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan for the purposes of community consultation.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council approval to release the draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan for community consultation. Feedback will be reviewed at the end of consultation, and used to inform a final draft of the Monash Football (Soccer) Plan to be prepared and presented to Council for consideration.

### **BACKGROUND**

The draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan (attachment 1) has been developed as the result of an extensive consultation period and work with football (soccer) clubs in Monash to strategically address key issues for the sport.

At its Meeting held 30 October 2018, Council endorsed a plan to conduct a series of club forums with major sporting codes to identify and potentially address issues and opportunities for each sport. The major sporting codes identified were tennis, football, Australian Rules football and cricket.

A forum with all football clubs and Football Victoria was held on 27 June 2019. Opportunities and challenges for the sport that were nominated by clubs at the forum, as well as facility condition and participation data gathered by officers through this period informed the development of the Football In Monash Discussion Paper, which was subsequently released for public exhibition between 23 April and 29 May. A total of 87 responses were received to the Discussion Paper.

The consultative and evidence-based approach adopted throughout this process has guided the development of the draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan, which includes Guiding Principles and Key Actions to ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for football in Monash.

**DISCUSSION****Key Findings**

There are four key issues informing the development of the draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan.

1. Infrastructure:
  - 4 out of 24 Monash football pitches meet preferred lighting standards.
  - 21 out of 24 Monash football pitches have poor drainage and irrigation systems.
  - Synthetic cricket pitches are located inside the playing field of 7 out of 24 Monash football pitches.
2. Participation:
  - Females make up just 16% of adult football participation in Monash, which is lower than the national participation rate of 23%.
  - Only 41% of Monash residents that play football do so with a Monash-based club.
  - At 14%, junior participation in football in Monash is below national averages.
  - Lower than average junior participation in Monash is directly attributable to lower than average participation in girls (6%), compared to 22% for junior boys.
3. Common themes emanating from Monash Football Forum:
  - Improving the condition of grounds and lighting.
  - Working towards activating existing venues to their full potential with higher quality facilities.
  - Strive for increased participation, equity and inclusiveness in Monash football clubs.
4. Community responses to the Football In Monash Discussion Paper:
  - 80% support investment into established football venues in Monash.
  - 76% support all Monash football clubs committing to increased inclusiveness.
  - Condition of facilities, participation and sustainable clubs were the most popular investment principles from respondents.

**Guiding Principles and Key Actions**

The following guiding principles have been adopted for the development of key actions from the Monash Football Plan:

- ✓ Community Participation.
- ✓ High Quality Facilities.
- ✓ Sustainable Clubs.

In total, 15 actions have been identified in the Monash Football (Soccer) Plan. Relevant stakeholders have been identified for each action, with lead for delivering each action highlighted. A proposed timeframe has been documented for each action and, if required, an anticipated budget to deliver each action.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

#### *A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan 2017 – 2021*

This Plan outlines Council's commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of the Monash community. Key pillars of the Plan relevant to the Monash Football (Soccer) Plan are:

- *Active and Healthy:* Focuses include supporting people to remain connected and engaged in their community, ensuring that community needs, both now and into the future are central to the physical design of infrastructure, encouraging and supporting regular physical activity,
- *Engaged, Confident and Connected:* A city which actively listens, engages and values community wisdom in shaping its own future. Focuses include ensuring everyone has the opportunity to be a part of the community, being responsive, flexible and creative in responding to existing and emerging community needs, providing services and activities that are accessible and affordable to people from all walks of life, reducing barriers to participation, and pursuing partnerships that benefit the community.

#### *Monash Council Plan 2017 - 2021*

The Council Plan outlines the key objectives and priorities Council has for the Monash community. Of particular relevance to the Monash Football (Soccer) Plan is:

- *Inviting open and urban spaces* focusing upon improving public infrastructure, meeting places and open spaces, and providing inclusive, safe and inviting places for the community to use. Strategies include committing to long term infrastructure and renewing and maximising community and sporting facilities.

### **SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Monash Football (Soccer) Plan will support Council's agenda for a healthy and resilient Monash Community.

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

This report is in line with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities ACT 2006 and does not raise any specific considerations.

***CONSULTATION***

A community consultation process will be undertaken and will include direct consultation with Monash football clubs.

The consultation period will be used to refine and update the plan, to ensure it meets community and football club expectations, prior to Council's consideration of the final version.

***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Any of the actions documented in the plan reliant on Council funding will be subject to priorities set within Council's annual capital works budget.

***CONCLUSION***

It is recommended that Council endorse the draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan for the purposes of public consultation. Feedback will be reviewed at the end of consultation, and used to inform a final draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan to be prepared and presented to Council for consideration.

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Attachment 1 - Draft Monash Football (Soccer) Plan