



Brighton Council

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE BRIGHTON COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
COUNCIL OFFICES, 1 TIVOLI ROAD, OLD BEACH
AT 5.15P.M. ON TUESDAY, 4 FEBRUARY 2025**

PRESENT: Cr Geard (Chairperson); Cr De La Torre; Cr Gray; Cr McMaster; Cr Murtagh; Cr Owen and Cr Whelan

IN ATTENDANCE: Cr Curran; Cr Irons; Mr J Dryburgh (Chief Executive Officer); Mr C Pearce-Rasmussen (Director Asset Services); Ms J Banks (Director, Governance & Regulatory Services); Mr A Woodward (Director, Development Services); Ms M Braslin (Acting Director Corporate Services) and Ms J Blackwell (Senior Planner).

1. Acknowledgement of Country

2. Apologies

All members were present.

3. Public Question Time and Deputations

There was no requirement for Public Question Time.

4. Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the requirements of Part 2 Regulation 8 of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015*, the chairperson of a meeting is to request Councillors to indicate whether they have, or are likely to have, a pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any item on the Agenda.

In accordance with Section 48(4) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, it is the responsibility of councillors to then notify the Chief Executive Officer, in writing, the details of any interest(s) that the councillor has declared within 7 days of the declaration.

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Business

5.1 Thompson Oval Cricket Pitch, Pontville

Author: Director Asset Services (C Pearce-Rasmussen)

Background

AFL Tas have approached council with an opportunity to host a Men's and Women's double header with the Tasmanian AFL teams playing against VFL and VFLW opponents in late March. For Thompson Oval, Pontville, to be selected as a venue for this event, the synthetic cricket wicket would need to be removed.

Council had previously agreed to remove the synthetic wicket following advice that this was a requirement of the Brighton Football Club entering the premier league. It was later clarified however, that this was not a specific requirement of entry into the premier league competition. The AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines do not require for the synthetic pitch to be removed, although removal of the pitch is strongly supported by AFL Tas and this has been communicated to council on several occasions.

There will be no pitch option for youth cricket at Pontville if the synthetic pitch is removed. Council currently has synthetic wickets on Cloak Oval in Old Beach and on Weily Park in Bridgewater, with these facilities being heavily utilised at present.

Cricket Tas and Southern Cricket Association (SCA) have been utilising the synthetic pitch on Thompson Oval this summer through weekday training sessions as well as weekend games. Council have also been approached by several out of area cricket clubs seeking to assist in re-establishing cricket in Pontville, with one of these meeting with the Pontville user groups to understand the needs of current users of the site.

Removal of the pitch would allow the Brighton Football Club to access the ground year-round for training and would provide a higher quality playing surface as the team enters the premier league and develops their club. Hosting the proposed AFL matches in late March will also likely provide a significant economic boost for the Brighton Football Club.

If the ground is to be prepared in time for the proposed AFL matches, works to remove the cricket pitch would need to commence immediately.

Consultation

Chief Executive Officer, Director Asset Services, Works Manager

Risk Implications

N/A

Financial Implications

Brighton Football Club have offered to cover the cost of removal of the pitch.

If removed, council lose the ability to hire the grounds for cricket games and training. However, there is strong potential for increased use by the Brighton Football Club.

Strategic Plan

S1.3 ensure attractive local areas that provide social, recreational and economic opportunities

S3.3 community facilities are safe, accessible and meet contemporary needs

Social Implications

Removal of the synthetic pitch will mean there is no pitch option at Pontville for junior cricket to be played upon. This would reduce local access to cricket during the summer period.

Conversely, the football club pre-season training may be extended throughout the summer period due to increased access to the ground.

Environmental or Climate Change Implications

N/A

Economic Implications

N/A

Assessment

There are a number of pros and cons to consider in determining whether to remove the pitch as outlined above. Electing to remove or retain the cricket pitch will unfortunately result in the detriment of one sporting code to the benefit of another.

In making a determination it is recommended that councillors consider the opportunities for both the Brighton Football Club and community in hosting the games in late March and the benefits that pitch removal will bring, whilst balancing the longer-term impacts on the availability of playable surfaces for school-aged cricketers.

Options

1. Remove the synthetic wicket from Thompson Oval.
2. Retain the synthetic wicket on Thompson Oval.
3. Decline the request from AFL Tas and hold over a decision on pitch removal until a later date.
4. An alternative option as determined by council.

RECOMMENDATION:

Councillors endorse staff actioning the preferred option as determined through deliberations.

DECISION:

Cr Whelan moved, Cr Owen seconded that this matter be held over until the Pontville Park master plan has been decided.

CARRIED

VOTING RECORD

<u>In favour</u>	<u>Against</u>
Cr De La Torre	Cr Gray
Cr Geard	
Cr McMaster	
Cr Murtagh	
Cr Owen	
Cr Whelan	

Meeting closed: 5.33pm

Confirmed: _____
(Mayor)

Date: _____
18 February 2025



January 23rd 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to explore the possibilities around the Brighton Football Club venue for an upcoming event. AFL Tasmania is in the process of sounding out and considering potential host venues for our senior and under 18 state programs for 2025 and beyond.

There is a unique opportunity for a Men's and Women's Tasmanian double header against VFL and VFLW opposition in late March this year, where we are still to confirm a suitable venue. There are several prospective venues interested, but with Brighton's ascension to the Premier League competition, AFL Tasmania would strongly consider the venue provided it is suitable for play.

To be eligible for consideration, however, we would need an update on the timelines around the removal of the concrete cricket pitch on Thompson Oval. If the concrete cricket pitch remains, the venue unfortunately would not be considered appropriate for this event or opportunities like it at senior or under 18 level when they arise in the future.

The excellent amenities and change facilities built at Brighton make it an attractive option for football events – e.g. gala days, carnival events and one-off events like this one. Unfortunately, the concrete pitch will stand in the way of the venue being preferred against other suitable venues and won't enable it to be considered for higher level football.

As we have previously expressed, we have a strong desire for the concrete pitch to be removed from Thompson Oval to ensure Brighton can flourish within the Premier League and enable growth through the club. Currently the Brighton Football Club are the only SFL Premier League club with a concrete pitch on their ground.

Please advise if Brighton is interested in hosting the upcoming State Game double header event. If you can confirm it is suitable for consideration, we will welcome a meeting to discuss further.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian Gill'.

Damian Gill
Head of AFL Tasmania