



Subject: CD25/51 – Request from Melville Cricket Club Inc. – Turf and Mowing Reimbursement
Submitted by: WA Cricket

Introduction

WA Cricket welcomes the opportunity to provide a written submission regarding Melville Cricket Club's request for financial support from the City of Melville for turf wicket maintenance and outfield mowing at Tompkins Park, along with associated support for Applecross Cricket Club at Bert Jeffrey Park.

As the governing body for cricket in Western Australia, WA Cricket is committed to supporting sustainable infrastructure and equitable access to quality playing conditions across all levels of the game. Both Melville and Applecross Cricket Clubs play vital roles in the cricket ecosystem. Melville as a Premier Grade club within the high-performance pathway, and Applecross as a Suburban Turf club supporting community-level participation and development.

WA Cricket's Position

WA Cricket supports the principle of equitable local government support for cricket clubs, particularly those participating in Premier and Suburban Turf competitions. However, we recognise that a uniform approach across councils is not practical due to differences in local government structures, budgets, and service delivery models.

WA Cricket does not advocate directly to individual Councils or seek to influence specific budgetary decisions. Instead, we play a support role, providing strategic advice, contextual information, and guidance to both clubs and local governments to assist informed decision-making. Ultimately, it is up to individual clubs to engage with their local government and negotiate arrangements that best suit their operational needs and community context.

The Role of Premier and Suburban Turf Cricket

Premier Grade Cricket represents the highest level of club cricket in Western Australia and is a critical component of the high-performance pathway. It is where aspiring cricketers develop the skills, discipline, and competitive experience required to progress to state and national representation, including the Perth Scorchers and Western Australia.

Melville Cricket Club plays a central role in this pathway, offering structured development opportunities for youth and senior players, contributing to talent identification, and supporting coaching and mentoring aligned with national standards.

Melville Cricket Club is also one of only seven Premier Grade clubs (out of sixteen) in Western Australia that offers a full female pathway, supporting the development of girls and women from junior levels through to senior competition. This commitment aligns with WA Cricket and Cricket Australia's strategic direction to grow and strengthen women's and girls' participation across all levels of the game. Melville fields a total of four more teams than some other clubs in the Premier Cricket competition, demonstrating its leadership in creating inclusive, high-performance environments for both male and female athletes. This dual pathway is critical to ensuring equitable access to elite cricket opportunities and reflects the evolving landscape of community sport.

Applecross Cricket Club, competing in the Suburban Turf competition, complements this by delivering high-quality community cricket experiences. Turf wickets at this level are rare and highly valued, and Applecross's stewardship of its turf block at Bert Jeffrey Park enhances the diversity and depth of cricket opportunities within the City of Melville.

Beyond performance, both clubs deliver significant social and community benefits:

- Fostering inclusive participation across age groups and genders.
- Providing volunteering and leadership opportunities for local residents.
- Activating public spaces and contributing to community wellbeing.
- Serving as hubs of social connection, particularly during summer months.

These benefits are amplified when clubs are supported to maintain high-quality facilities that are safe, fit-for-purpose, and welcoming.

Benchmarking and Equity

Benchmarking data referenced in this submission was sourced by City of Melville staff and reflects what WA Cricket understands to be the current landscape across metropolitan LGAs with Premier and Suburban Turf clubs. Key insights include:

- All other Premier Grade clubs in Perth reportedly receive some form of financial support from their respective LGAs, either through direct funding or in-kind maintenance services.
- Contributions range from \$60,000 to \$112,000 per annum, with an average of approximately \$80,000.
- Suburban Turf clubs also receive support, typically between \$15,000 and \$40,000 per annum.
- Melville Cricket Club is currently the only Premier Grade club not receiving financial support from its LGA.

- Applecross Cricket Club, while operating at a lower tier, faces similar challenges in maintaining turf infrastructure and has limited capacity to generate revenue.

In reviewing the proposed funding model, WA Cricket notes that the annual contribution may be subject to reduction based on any revenue received by Melville Cricket Club from the Tompkins Park Function Centre. While we understand this consideration, we share the Club's concern that linking operational revenue to curation support may unintentionally discourage efforts to improve facility performance. In other LGAs, Premier Grade clubs typically receive curation assistance in addition to any income generated through venue operations. A model that offsets support based on external revenue streams risks maintaining Melville as an outlier and may undermine the principle of equitable and sustainable support.

This data suggests a clear equity gap that the City of Melville may wish to consider addressing through a fair and balanced funding model.

Strategic Importance and Sustainability

Melville Cricket Club has proactively invested in equipment and transitioned to an in-house curation model, demonstrating its commitment to maintaining high standards. However, its financial sustainability is increasingly challenged due to limited revenue streams and the absence of consistent dividends from the Tompkins Park Recreation and Community Association.

Applecross Cricket Club similarly relies on volunteer labour and modest resources to maintain its turf wicket block and has raised concerns about the long-term sustainability of this model.

Without appropriate support, both clubs risk being unable to maintain the infrastructure required to deliver quality cricket experiences. This would represent a loss not only to the cricket pathway but to the broader community that benefits from their presence and programs.

Conclusion

WA Cricket encourages the City of Melville to consider the broader context of Premier and Suburban Turf cricket and the importance of equitable support for clubs delivering high-performance and community outcomes. While WA Cricket does not seek to speak directly to Council or advocate for specific funding models, we support the principle of fair and reasonable financial contributions that reflect the unique demands placed on clubs like Melville and Applecross.

We thank the City for its engagement on this matter and remain available to provide further strategic advice or contextual support to assist in future decision-making.

Yours sincerely,

Brodie Green

Infrastructure & Local Government Relations Manager

WA Cricket