

7.15. LANE HIRE FEES - NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

REPORT AUTHOR	Team Leader Tourist Park and Aquatics
EXECUTIVE	General Manager Corporate and Communities
DEPARTMENT	Corporate and Communities
TEAM	Community Services
DATE	27 July 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Approve the removal of the Lane Hire (Not for Profit Organisation) category from the adopted 2026/27 Schedule of Fees and Charges and retains lane hire fees for commercial users only; and**
- 2. Delegate authority under Section 257(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to finalise the matter.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A request has been received from the Mossman Manta Rays Underwater Hockey Club seeking consideration of a waiver of the adopted Lane Hire (Not for Profit Organisation) fee for their use of Mossman Pool.

The request has highlighted broader considerations regarding the application of lane hire fees to community-based sporting and recreation organisations. While the request relates to a single user group, it raises the question of whether the current fee remains appropriate for community organisations using Council aquatic facilities.

Therefore, it is recommended that Council consider removing the Lane Hire (Not for Profit Organisation) category and retaining lane hire fees for commercial users only, providing a consistent approach for community groups while reducing the need for individual fee waiver requests.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

At the Ordinary Council Meeting dated 29 July 2025, it was resolved that Council supports the Douglas Cluster of Schools, and St Augustine's Primary School, by waiving lane hire fees at the Mossman Pool for learn to swim programs.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting dated 28 April 2026, it was resolved that Council:

- 1. Adopts the Schedule of Fees and Charges for the 2026/ 2027 financial year; and**

2. Delegates authority under s257 of the Local Government Act 2009 to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate fees and charges where circumstances warrant and to make minor administrative amendments to the Schedule.

REPORT/BACKGROUND

The Mossman Manta Rays Underwater Hockey Club has operated from Mossman Pool for several years and currently conducts weekly training sessions on Friday evenings between 6pm and 7pm, utilising lanes 6, 7 and 8.

As part of a broader review of Mossman Pool fees and charges undertaken for 2026/27, existing user arrangements were reviewed to ensure consistency with Council's adopted Fees and Charges Schedule. During this process, it was identified that underwater hockey club was not being charged.

To address this, the club was advised that from 1 July 2026 it would be subject to the adopted Lane Hire (Not for Profit Organisation) fee.

Following notification of the proposed fee application, the club submitted a request seeking consideration of a waiver of the adopted lane hire fees, citing community benefit and affordability concerns.

Review of attendance records indicates regular participation by local families and junior members, with many attendees residing within the Douglas Shire region. Attendance generally ranges between approximately 8 and 15 participants per session, including several family groups. The club has identified that the introduction of lane hire fees may impact participation and accessibility for some members.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Under the adopted 2026/27 Fees and Charges Schedule, the Mossman Manta Rays Underwater Hockey Club would be subject to the Not-for-Profit Lane Hire Fee of \$15.00 per lane per hour.

Based on the club's current use of three (3) lanes for one (1) hour per week, the annual fee payable would be approximately \$2,340 per annum.

The Mossman Manta Rays Underwater Hockey Club are currently the only active eligible group that would benefit from the removal of the Not-For-Profit Lane Hire Fee.

Income for commercial lane hire in 2025 was \$682, and for the year to date, is currently at \$840. This income will not be affected, and staff will look for opportunities to promote the facility to increase further commercial income.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The primary risk associated with this matter is that approving a fee waiver for one organisation may lead to similar requests from other community groups and sporting clubs using Council facilities.

Further, applying fees differently between groups exposes Council to criticisms of inconsistency or unfair application of its Schedule of Fees and Charges.

Removing the Lane Hire (Not for Profit Organisation) fee category and establishing a clear and consistent approach for all community groups using Council aquatic facilities will address the risks mentioned above.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Mossman Manta Rays Underwater Hockey Club provides an opportunity for residents to participate in organised physical activity and social recreation.

Attendance records indicate participation from local families and junior members, contributing to community connection, health and wellbeing.

The introduction of lane hire fees may increase costs for participants and could impact future membership and participation levels. Conversely, a review of the fee may support ongoing access to community-based sporting and recreational activities.

CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Liveability

To deliver community activities to promote safe, healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities with an environmental conscious.

1.1 - Deliver community initiatives that support healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities.

Theme 3 - Service Delivery

We deliver Council services effectively and efficiently to meet community expectations, focusing on the wellbeing of both the community and our employees.

3.6 - Deliver Council services to meet community expectations.

Operational Plan 2026-2027 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- *Local Government Act 2009*

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation:

- Sport & Recreation Officer
- Team Leader - Property

CONCLUSION

The removal of the Lane Hire (Not for Profit Organisations) fee will strengthen Council's commitment to supporting volunteer led organisations and community groups that provide valuable services and opportunities to residents.

The proposed change aligns with Council's strategic objectives relating to liveability and delivering community initiatives that support healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities. It is a practical measure that will provide equitable access to Council's aquatic facilities.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil