



Report 08.615
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Committee Parks, Forests and Utilities Committee
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Parks and Forests Concessions Policy review

1. Purpose

To provide an overview of the submissions of the draft Parks and Forests' Concessions Policy and to provide options for the key issues that were raised by the submitters.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2002*.

3. Background

The **current** concessions policy branded *Policy for Recreation and Tourism* for Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC) parks and forest areas was adopted in July 2001 and sets out the general policy direction relating to **commercial and non-commercial recreation and tourism** in those areas, and when and how much GWRC will charge for using them and their respective facilities. Under the existing policy concessions are required for all commercial uses and some non-commercial uses.

The draft Concessions Policy was put out for Committee approval on 19 June 2008 and then to the full Council meeting on 30 June 2008 (refer to Report Nos 08.245 and 08.290). The Concessions Policy was then officially put out for public consultation. The public consultation was carried out over a six week period from 2 July and closed on 11 August 2008.

4. Submissions

A total of 16 submissions were received. Copies of the submissions have been sent out separately to Councillors. A summary of these submissions is attached for your consideration and, where deemed appropriate, comments made in relation to issues raised by the submitters (Attachment 1).

- Two submissions support the draft Concessions Policy in its entirety.

- Eight submissions support the draft Concessions Policy in part.
- Six submissions opposed the draft Concessions Policy.

Mr Alan Horn (Wellington Orienteering Club), Mr Ian Priest and Ms Jennifer Hardie would like to be heard in support of their submission.

5. Key issues

5.1 General

A number of different issues were raised by submitters, many of which are similar in nature. These concerns have been grouped together below for your consideration.

The majority of the submissions related to a misinterpretation of the Concessions Policy. These issues have been addressed under the *GWRC comments* column in attached submissions table (Attachment 1).

5.2 Specific issues

The remaining issues raised by submitters are shown in italics below, with officers' comments following in each case. These issues are:

- (1) *For event organisers that are starting out in the first year or trying to establish their business, fees should be reduced or waived.*

Comments

The only fee waivers granted in the draft Concessions Policy are for commercial activities associated with school or college aged children <19.

- (2) *There needs to be flexibility to deal with charities or small companies within the film and television production industry with no budget to have their fees waived. The Council should also reduce or waive fees for low budget productions like Wellington City Council.*

Comments

Fees are not charged for student film activities for educational purposes in the draft policy.

- (3) *The local film and television production industry should be supported by GWRC and the charges need to be consistent across the Wellington Region as per the film friendly protocol agreed to by the councils within the Greater Wellington Region. The standard fee of \$250/half day and \$400/full day for filming in the Region should be adopted.*

Comments

The proposed fee schedule for the film and television production is a rate of \$500/day for feature films and \$700/day for advertising commercials.

- (4) *An annual long-term streamlined concession should be available.*

Comments

A streamlined concession process is currently proposed but it is to be on an event by event basis. This will minimise the potential for events to clash in terms of location/space and ranger availability. The new streamlined concession process will simplify and significantly reduce the timeframe and paperwork required for processing concessions.

- (5) *Fundraising events for approved charities should be exempt from being charged fees. This would be on the basis that the event is advertised as a fundraising event.*

Comments

As non-commercial events are not being charged (unless there are impacts), this would only be an issue for commercial events where funds are being raised for a charity. There are currently no exemptions for managing events for the purposes of fundraising and/or approved charities in the draft Concessions Policy.

- (6) *Clarification is required as to whether there is a separate application and fee for each park when an activity is undertaken in more than one park.*

Comments

There are no additional fees activities for more than one park for the same event. There is scope for Council to investigate reducing the fees for events that are combined with GWRC parks and forests with other public lands (i.e. Department of Conservation land).

- (7) *Clarification is sought regarding the number of hours that constitute the half day or full day rate charges.*

Comments

Half or full days have not been defined in the draft Concessions Policy. It is suggested that less than four hours be deemed a half day and that more than four hours be deemed to be a full day.

6. Next steps

After the Committee has considered the submissions and then in turn has deliberated these submissions, the decision on the final Concessions Policy is to be determined at the next Committee meeting on 23 October 2008. Officers will prepare a report containing recommendations for that meeting.

7. Communications

The final Concessions Policy is to be approved by the Parks, Forests and Utilities Committee on 23 October 2008 and recommendations made to Council for their approval on 3 November 2008.

After the Council meeting the submitters will be informed of the Committee's decision.

The Concessions Policy is proposed to be operational in mid-November/early December 2008.

A concessions brochure is to be drafted up and then finalised to be released to the public within November/December 2008.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- (1) ***Receives and notes the contents of the report.***
- (2) ***Considers the attached submissions for the draft Concessions Policy.***

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

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Attachments:

- 1 Summary of submissions table
- 2 Draft Concessions Guidelines document