

Boroondara Netball Association funding – BNA

Committee survey questions

This survey relates to the \$1.2 million funding you received from the Federal Government to develop four additional outdoor netball courts at the Boroondara Netball Centre.

In making a decision about the BNA proposal, Council will be required to deal with a number of impacts upon other community members/sporting clubs. Most decisions place Council in the position of having to resolve conflicting and competing demands. It will be helpful for Council to understand how you view some of the impacts associated with your proposal.

The following questions are therefore directed to assisting Council in making its decision.

We are seeking feedback from the BNA committee on the implementation and likely impacts of this funding on the users of the Myrtle and Macleay Park including BNA, other sporting clubs, users of open space and surrounding residents.

Your proposal will be considered by Council on 28 June 2021, with further information available online closer to the time. We respectfully encourage the BNA to nominate a maximum of 3 speakers to represent your views at this meeting.

The following survey should be completed after reading the [Information Sheet](#) > *Please note our document outlining mis-representation of the facts in the Council Information Sheet.*

- Do you support the development of four new netball courts in Myrtle and Macleay Park in Balwyn North to be used within the current licenced hours? Note: current licenced hours can be found on the Information Sheet.
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not sure

- Do you have a preference for courts to be built on Oval 3 or Oval 5 in Myrtle and Macleay Park?
 - Oval 3
 - Oval 5

- Do you support the installation of lighting on the existing netball courts at Myrtle and Macleays Park to enable evening matches and training to be used within the current licenced hours? Note: current licenced hours can be found on the Information Sheet.
 - Yes
 - No

- Do you support additional use of the current courts on a Sunday?
 - Yes
 - No

Why do you not support the additional use of current courts on Sundays?

The Association has always worked towards the best outcomes of its members and local community in planning and programming at the centre. The local community have been using the centre on Sundays for other recreational activities which has created a good synergy between the Association and general use for the community.

Association "Competition" is held on a Saturday supporting a full Netball Victoria pathway program that is accredited, delivered, and managed by an experienced BNA netball workforce. Some of the staff and players are involved in other Netball leadership commitments, other sports, and other competitions on a Sunday. A Competition Day is not split over two days.

Other programs can run evenings and on Sundays (as per other Associations), such as social netball or walking netball, if there is a community demand for it. We understand that this is not desirable at this site for a number of reasons:

- 1) Impact on local residents & other users > Saturday and Sunday traffic, parking, noise
- 2) Macleay Park is heavily used on Sundays by soccer > congestion ++
- 3) Most inter-association tournaments are on Sundays
- 4) Most Netball Victoria coach & umpire development programs are scheduled on Sundays
- 5) Clashes for participants with other sporting codes ie) soccer, AFL, cricket
- 6) Life balance of players, team personnel, club administrators, volunteers

The construction of four new netball courts will displace other sporting codes for whom it will be difficult to provide alternative accommodation. Can you please advise why you consider this to be an acceptable outcome?

- The Association has been working with Council officers and understands that the overall park has many site constraints. BNA welcomes the opportunity to look at all options that are presented.
- In the options provided by Council, Oval 3 would have a significant impact on other codes and the environment and is therefore not our preferred site. This option does have opportunities with regard to traffic management (traffic redirection past courts and to Belmore Road) and additional parking opportunities. If placed outside of tree zone, court remediation works may not be as costly as other alternatives. Unfortunately, as indicated it does impact on other precinct users and sports.
- BNA would be very happy for the 4 new courts to be multi-lined – with appropriate sports (acrylic surface) - thereby providing opportunities for other sporting codes eg) futsal, basketball hoops on t boundaries.
- Council's Macleay Myrtle Park Management Plan advises that Oval 5 is not a sanctioned size or space for any other sporting code – it is only suitable for junior cricket and soccer "overflow" and is notably rarely used.
- The area required is approximately 54% of Oval 5 so there will still be ample grass / green space for passive recreation.
- Other sporting codes enjoy significantly more overall space in the municipality than netball – we are requesting the equivalent of 1.5 ovals only

Additional netball courts will increase traffic volumes and parking demand in the local area impacting upon the amenity of the local community. Can you please advise why you consider this to be an acceptable outcome?

- Traffic Management and parking issues have been a concern at the park for some time. Council were looking at options outside of this process. Regardless of the outcome, the traffic and parking issue needs to be addressed now as there are currently significant safety issues. We hope that this project provides Council with an opportunity to look at this concurrently.

- We have proposed a number of potential solutions in particular:
 - Council must amend access and exits to allow for the flow of traffic out the northern end of the park. Currently due to bollards near the soccer pavilion, there is only 1 entry and exit point on Belmore Rd creating unsafe conditions and significant congestion.
 - This option has in the past been opposed by local residents but may be accepted as “access only on Saturdays / weekends”.
- Additional courts and longer match times will allow for greater time between games which will assist both parking & traffic. Currently, to fit games in we need to run our rounds back-to-back every 40 minutes. It would be preferable for our participants to be able to have a break, also enabling clearance of the venue between rounds.

The construction of four hard surface courts suitable for netball will replace existing permeable, grassed open space. Can you please advise why you consider this to be an acceptable outcome?

- There are thousands of young residents who cannot play a full game of netball, a significant number of those players will need to play outside of the municipality. We need council to consider the lack provision for Association Netball and the overall support that is required.
- The area required is approximately 54% of Oval 5 so there will still be ample grass / green space for passive recreation, particularly considering there are another 5 ovals in this Park alone.
- Re-planting the surrounds of the oval will also create more valuable grassed areas and we are more than happy to make this a community netball activity.

The use of four hard surface courts suitable for netball may change the way the community is able to use the open space for passive recreation. Do you consider this to be the case and, if so, why do you consider this to be an acceptable outcome?

- The netball courts do not reduce the amount of OPEN space available and will in fact INCREASE the use of available open space. Having hard and grassy areas available **DIVERSIFIES** the open space allowing multiple different activities to be enjoyed by all.
- Our netball courts are currently used as open space for many passive recreational activities by the community – more so than the ample grassy areas in this area. These include bike riders, skateboarders, scooters, remote controlled toy cars, dancing, boxing, casual netball.
- A hard surface near the playground will enable parents to watch their children in the playground and on their bikes etc at the same time.
- As mentioned above, there is an opportunity to look at multi-lining the courts for casual activation and recreation.

BNA has been offered the possibility of other locations for four courts as alternatives to expansion at Myrtle and Macleay Park and has rejected these offers. It is understood the primary reason for rejection is the difficulty of managing the competition across two separate locations. Can you please provide an explanation for this decision? In providing a response, it would be helpful to understand what is different about netball as a sporting code which results in netball being unable to be managed across multiple locations when other sporting codes are able to do so?

- We have always said that we would be very happy to have a 12 court complex situated at another location in Boroondara if expansion of Macleay Park was not an option.
- Just to clarify, we have NOT been offered the possibility of other “locationS”. We inadvertently found out via an email trail (refer CEO) that Council was proposing 4 courts at Fritsch Holzer Park. This option was never discussed with us. We need to understand if a project is a long-term viable proposition for an Association. The LGA absolutely needs to look at overall provision to support its clubs and improve its overall provision. Holistic views such as this should be discussed with Netball Victoria.
- We are an Association, not a club. There is an important distinction here – a complex organisation with specialist disciplines and workforces. We currently cater for 21 Saturday clubs, 2 Representative team clubs (Power & Express), a Junior development program (not club based) and coach & umpire development programs.
- As such, we are a PATHWAY Association, providing multiple opportunities for participants to become involved in all aspects of sport such as coaching, umpiring, administration - not just physically playing netball on the court. This means that there is continual movement between age groups, divisions, accreditations – week to week. There is a reason why netball has some of the best retention rates for its members over any other sport. We continually monitor, mentor, support and improve individual members.
- Whilst a netball match is approximately 45 – 60 minutes (ours have to be only 36 minutes), participants engage in multiple roles throughout the day. One person (aged from 14 – 15 yrs) on one Saturday may
 - 1) coach a couple of junior teams for their club,
 - 2) umpire 3 or 4 matches,
 - 3) mentor new trainee umpires (am) or umpires training for a badge (pm),
 - 4) do a shift in the kiosk and
 - 5) play their match.

This would be impossible for the participant, their parents and the individual club administrators to manage across multiple sites.

- There are many ad-hoc netball social competitions which do indeed play across multiple locations but do not provide other development opportunities.
- This is not a Football Netball League or Competition that runs a Home/Away system where multiple competitions are running on two or three courts. These are Clubs playing in League.
- Other sporting codes have completely different programs eg) basketball requires indoor venues; football require an area of space for one match which can fit 10 – 12 netball courts.
- We are currently utilising Indoor Courts at the Boroondara Sports Complex for Representative Netball, so we do manage our workforce across venues con-currently, where it is viable. As we also participate in the VNL league we also manage participation at other Venues that support this state level competition.

Association based competitions are the back-bone - and most successful outputs- of netball in Victoria. The opportunities that are given to players, umpires and coaches in an association setting in one location are second to none. The development across differing levels of competition for improvement; progression and professional development would not be possible if split across venues. Having a hub, and specific home for netball is what unique about the sport, and it fosters the environment of inclusion, participation, belonging and friendship across differing ages, abilities, and communities - it should be nurtured rather than dismissed.

Examples of other Associations that split venues include:

- Casey Netball Association: Primary Venue (**10 Indoor** Court Venue) Casey Stadium, Secondary Venue (**10 Outdoor Competition Fully Compliant Lit Courts**)
- Waverley District: Primary Venue (**12 Outdoor Courts**) Ashwood Netball, Secondary Venue (**5 Indoor Courts**)

How does your committee intend to communicate and connect with all stakeholders regarding the implementation of your chosen opportunities (should they proceed), especially considering a scenario where not all stakeholders will be comfortable with outcomes due to them being negatively impacted. Has the committee contemplated the development of a community and stakeholder engagement plan should your chosen opportunities take place?

- BNA has worked with Council officers and engaged in various Project Working Groups over the past five years. One of the goals of the PWG was to undertake community and stakeholder engagement, which we never progressed to. We would be more than happy to engage with other stakeholders in a practical and proactive way.
- We do not accept that we are “negatively impacting” on any other stakeholders.
- All of the extensive data which we and Netball Victoria have provided to Council over the past 5 years is & has been publicly available on our website.

Based on the understanding only school students of specific school netball clubs playing with BNA are able to join those clubs (except for one school), if BNA were to prioritise community club use over private school use, e.g. reduce the number of private schools involved in the Saturday competition, would that help meet community demand? Community demand being defined as clubs open to all girls and women in the community.

- Most importantly, participants who attend “private schools” and their families ARE valued members of our local community.
- Boroondara Netball Association is a community based netball association which some schools, both private and public, have chosen to join. They enter knowingly into a community competition where there are pathway opportunities offered. They must abide by our by-laws including all-female schools playing within a modified mixed competition.
- If these school did not enter as a club, their members would simply join a community club – as a group of school friends and as many do - making absolutely no difference to our situation.
- There are many school based teams – private and public – playing within the competition. For example, Canterbury Netball Club have a team called Canterbury St Bede’s comprising a group of children from St Bedes; Carey is not one of our Saturday netball clubs but many Carey students play together in community clubs; we have school based teams from a long list of local primary and secondary schools which we can provide to you if required.
- Incidentally the comment “except one school” is false. Both CGGS and Fintona also have teams in the Open section catering for their ex-students and many of the independent teams are groups of school friends wanting to continue playing.
- Many players from these “private” schools DO choose to play with a community club. Families make their individual decisions based on many factors such as friendship groups, cost, quality of coaching, training venues etc. Examples are:

- Quality of netball program: MLC whereby some players left their community club for their school club due to the appointment of a new netball administrator & ex-Diamond netballer Sharni Norder (Layton).
 - Training venues: due to the lack of adequate lighting on our courts, community clubs do not have access to appropriate training times and facilities as players need to engage after school. The school clubs generally train at school before or during lunch hours which may be easier for parents.
 - Cost: sometimes school clubs charge a higher fee to their members to cover their costs of employing administrators & coaches; whereas community clubs are less costly due to significant volunteer input.
- Our Junior Development program, JuniorNet, is purposefully made up primarily of school based groups as we try to group children together with their friends.
 - Private and State schools have their own specific school programs such as GSV, APS, SSV. They are very different competitions to BNA with different purposes and structure.
 - Please note “*definition of community demand*” that our clubs are open, not just to girls & women as stated above, but also to boys and men. This is one of the reasons we need more courts – to provide other competition pathways such as All Abilities and Male competitions.
 - It is also important to note, that general community netball court provision that usually provides the roots that create the club are not available in Boroondara. So the clubs that you might normally see developing at local reserves, churches or primary schools are not necessarily able to be created in Boroondara as the netball court provision in the municipality is poor.

Do the private school teams pay a fee to BNA to participate and is that fee the same as community clubs?

- All teams pay the same entry fee and court fee based on school year level & provision of umpires.
- Our fees are very reasonable, particularly compared to other sports. For an 18 week season costs for each team are:
 - Entry fee per team: \$110
 - Court fee per team: \$420 for year 4 teams who must provide their own umpires
\$580 for year 5 – 9 teams where we provide and pay all umpires
\$520 for senior teams who must provide an umpire every alternate week.
- The only difference between community clubs and school clubs are their governance structure. All clubs regardless of where they are from set their own club fees, training schedules, coaching and umpiring commitments & participate in our pathway programs.

If Council rejects the proposal at Myrtle and Macleay Park but is able to provide an alternative location for four netball courts, will BNA make all or part of the funding available for the provision of additional netball courts in Boroondara? It is understood BNA may not wish to manage this facility but it would seem additional courts have to be to the benefit of netball in Boroondara? Would you support reallocation of the funds to a different location in Boroondara?

- The investment by the Federal Government was to improve outcomes for the Association. BNA is a well recognised organisation within the netball community and this is precisely why we – and not other organisations - have been granted this money.
- BNA has worked very hard to create, manage and build an Association for it’s members

- The ultimate allocation of funding is with the Federal Government and was for a specific purpose being “to enable the BNA to expand its services and facilities to help meet the ever-growing demand for netball in our local community” refer Josh Frydenberg Media Release 2019.
- If Council is looking at increasing it’s overall provision within the Municipality, it should engage with Netball Victoria who have proven results in working with Councils and looking at long, medium and short term strategies in providing a holistic view of the LGA, and can provide the advocacy for these Netball projects

If BNA were to schedule games over multiple venues, how many additional volunteers would be required and what types of roles?

- Unless the secondary venue was a municipal level venue (8 courts), as stated above and for the reasons above, BNA would not schedule games over multiple venues.
- Management would have to be replicated over each venue. This includes administrators, coach & umpire mentors / trainers, first aid & kiosk personnel, court supervisors, court setup and pack up personnel
- At club level, management would also have to be replicated for each club along with coaches, umpires, team managers. Clubs would need to increase fees to cover additional personnel.
- Unless the secondary venue is a municipal level venue, this may also threaten our membership base as our clubs have made it quite clear to us that this would be unacceptable.

If additional volunteers were able to be secured, would scheduling games over multiple venues help meet demand?

- It is not just the scheduling of games; it is the entire infrastructure that would need to be duplicated - admin rooms, kiosk, first aid, storage, change rooms, audio, electronic, lights, umpire facilities, parking.
- BNA has already invested over \$400,000 of it’s own funds into the current site, the Boroondara Netball Centre.

Is there any other feedback you would like to provide?

At the end of the day, our combined prime purpose is to improve both the physical and mental health and wellbeing of people – men and women / old and young – in the Boroondara local community.

We have created a “community hub” which is a 2nd home to many, providing leadership opportunities, mentorship & support, camaraderie and fun. Participants can contribute in many different ways – not just on the netball court.

We value our members and want to provide the outcomes that best service their needs.

We appreciate the time & effort that Council are currently putting into this proposal and thank them for their consideration. We look forward to a successful outcome.