



**Modbury Vista Soccer Club Incorporated**

**Council Deputation**



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## **Purpose of the deputation**

Mr Mayor, thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. The purpose of this deputation is to acknowledge the positive relationship the Modbury Vista Soccer Club has with City of Tea Tree Gully Council and to highlight the current challenges faced by our club.

## **Background**

Modbury Vista Soccer Club was established in 1973 and played its home games at Burragah Reserve, Kelly Road, Modbury North. In 1991 the club relocated to its current address at Richardson Reserve, Wynn Vale where we have resided for the past 27 years.

Modbury Vista Soccer Club is one of the largest sporting organisations in the City of Tea Tree Gully with approximately 700 registered members playing in over 40 teams competing in various associations. These teams range from development squads with players aged from 3-5 years old through to seniors and covers both male and female players. The club has seen an increase in female participation over the years and now fields specific girls teams and a senior women's team.

85-90% of our members reside within the TTG council area.

The council and council staff and MVSC have been working together throughout the past 3-4 years to develop plans to meet our clubs requirements. This has included:

- Council adopting formally our master plan for our building facility upgrades approximately 3 years ago.
- Council committing too this building facility upgrade by lodging and accepting a government grant in 2017 as part of the state local government infrastructure partnership scheme with anticipated delivery of this project in 2018/19 financial year.
- Council resolving in November 2017 to apply for synthetic sporting surface grant for Richardson Reserve.
- Most recently developing a master plan for both of these upgrades on the site following council decision in January 2018.

The club is very appreciative of the council working with the club in regards to these commitments.

## **Challenges facing MVSC**

Whilst we understand the proposed sale of Richardson Reserve is a topical issue and would pose potential opportunities for the MVSC, tonight's deputation is not about that issue. Tonight's deputation is about several major challenges the club is facing that we wish to work with council on addressing. These challenges include:

- poor playing surfaces
- inadequate and deteriorating clubrooms
- lack of facilities for female members and officials
- club and community engagement, and
- faulty lighting

## **Poor Playing surfaces**

Modbury Vista Soccer Club currently has 2 full size pitches on Richardson Reserve that are used for training and games. Unfortunately the reserve is too small to meet the needs of a sporting club our size. To address this issue we have created relationships with the nearby schools (Wynn Vale Primary and Golden Grove Lutheran) where we hire neighbouring grassed areas. In addition we also lease time at Smith Partners Stadium (Golden Grove Rd, Ridgehaven).

We acknowledge that the council is aware of the pitch issues as can be shown in the feasibility report that was commissioned in 2015.



The playing surfaces at Richardson Reserve are extremely uneven which is caused by the different types of grass being used. During the playing season the pitches have very little grass covering and in parts are more dirt and sand than grass. Our main pitch has the nickname of the "beach".

The pitches are of such a poor standard and deteriorate so quickly that we lease Smith Partners Stadium for two nights per week so that we can train there and play some night games. Our State League team also play their home games at Smith Partners Stadium as Richardson Reserve fails to meet some of the minimum requirements such as suitable change rooms and separate officials rooms set by the FFSA. Aside from being embarrassing and not having our State League team able to play at our home ground, this has added a significant financial cost to the club. Having to hire Smith Partners Stadium costs over \$3,000 per month and year to date we have already spent \$25,000 on hire fees.

The state of the pitches cause many of our training sessions to be cancelled during the winter months as we try to protect them the best we can by reducing traffic whenever there is bad weather. This impacts on our canteen and the revenue it can generate when training nights are cancelled.

Each summer we aim to run a 7-a-side soccer competition that is patronised by our members as well as non-members from the wider community. We have been unable to run a 7-a-side competition over the past 2 summers that has seen us miss out on potential revenue of up to \$20,000 (\$10,000 per year).

With the council conducting turf renovation works over spring and summer each year, the club is forced to hire up to 8 different venues at which to train that adds a further cost to the running of our club. As an example we spent \$254 on hiring at The Heights School in addition to \$2,750 we pay to Wynn Vale Primary School and Golden Grove Lutheran School as well as \$1,200 in lawn mowing fees to utilise those ovals during summer.

The council's technical officer on turf and irrigation stated in an email on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018 that usage is major problem for Richardson Reserve and that the council's external consultant advised that our club is 2.5 times larger than the size recommended for the turf.

The last thing we want to do as a club is turn away members of the community from being involved in a sport they love however we are already projecting that our playing numbers will be reduced to around 550-600 next season as a direct result of the playing surface issue and ground availability.

If we have to start turning away members due to the poor playing surfaces and inability of the turf to cope, we feel this could have a negative impact on the community as kids will be unable to get involved in playing soccer and the benefits that it brings or we will just transfer the problem as kids will go and play at TTG or Modbury Jets and put strain on ovals such as Burregah and Tilley Reserve which will then require significant upgrade of those facilities.

### **Clubrooms**

The clubrooms at Richardson Reserve are inadequate and showing their age. The building was originally designed as a community building and not specifically for a soccer club.

The Clubrooms consist of:

- A small common area
- A small canteen/kitchen
- Male, female and Disabled toilets
- A cleaner's store room
- Male home and away changerooms (which don't have toilets)
- A small storage area on the side

The storage area has proven to be far too small for a club our size so the club has invested in recent years spending \$60,000 in constructing a suitable storage shed.



The size and state of the clubrooms mean we are restricted in our ability to host events and raise funds such as running club events like our annual quiz night where we must hire out other venues.

Due to the poor playing surfaces, the loss of the 7-a-side competition, cancellation of trainings and having our seniors play away from Richardson Reserve has resulted in a significant loss of revenue to the club from the canteen. We are currently losing around \$10,000 per annum due to these factors.

We have also identified that our clubrooms are not Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant with an uncovered steep path from the carpark to the clubrooms for members to navigate. This has been exacerbated by the introduction of the temporary female change rooms and showers using the previous disabled parking area.

We acknowledge that the Council is aware of the state of the clubrooms. We also acknowledge the efforts made by Council to find funding for rebuilding or renovating the clubrooms as can be shown by the allocation of \$1.7 million in this year's budget and look forward to working with council on this issue.

#### **Lack of facilities for female members**

Modbury Vista Soccer Club has 3 ladies/girls teams all of which are among the best in their respective leagues. We see female soccer as a major growth area however Richardson Reserve does not cater to female players/teams and the poor playing surfaces are restricting our growth in these areas.

We acknowledge that the council has installed temporary showers this season for female players however these should not be viewed as a long-term solution.

#### **Club and community engagement**

As a community sporting club, the word 'community' is very important to us. With approximately 700 registered players we provide a valuable service to the local community.

With the state of the current facilities, as a club we have to look at whether we can continue to provide this service going forward. The current facilities do not support our needs and investment is required otherwise we may have to look at reducing the number of members we can provide for.

We are aware that 40% of the council's residents are aged under 25 years. As a club we are providing a service to these residents by offering a productive recreation outlet and the opportunity to be part of our organisation.

#### **Lighting Issues**

The council should be aware that Richardson Reserve has been experiencing issues with the flood lighting in recent times. Multiple times per week the lighting will go out during training due to overload issues. This is dangerous to our players as they find themselves in the dark. This has been reported to the council and we are awaiting a resolution.

Already this season due to general poor lighting and the steep ramp to the entrance of the clubrooms we have had a member trip and hit their head on the building causing concussion and blood loss with an ambulance having to be called

#### **Summary**

In summary, Modbury Vista Soccer Club has been established for 45 years, with the last 27 years being based at Richardson Reserve. The club has been providing a valuable service to the community however for the points highlighted in this deputation we are experiencing some real challenges.

As a club we are striving to develop a strategic plan for the next 3-5 years but this is proving extremely difficult given the uncertainty around our playing surfaces and the clubrooms.



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One of our key strategic priorities is to increase female membership however we are restricted at present with the current facilities we have for our females.

We have a committed group of volunteers who work extremely hard within our club and we are continually seeking opportunities to self-fund as much as possible including securing grants such as the active club grant for \$5,000 that goes towards equipment, the TTG Community grant for a \$3,200 line marking machine and we have also worked with council on submitting a grant for the \$1m sporting surfaces through the Office recreation and sporting to help go towards a synthetic pitch to help address the overuse issue. In addition we have the full support of the FFSA including chief executive officer Michael Carter who unfortunately couldn't make it tonight but is well aware of our issues and is committed to working with the club and the council to seek the investment we require.

What we hope to achieve from tonight is a continued commitment from the council, irrespective of the outcome on the proposed sale of Richardson Reserve, that the club will receive the necessary investment we require that should look include the installation of two full-size artificial pitches that meet FFSA standards to resolve the issues we have with the turf and the construction of a new fit for purpose clubrooms.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity for us to present at this meeting and we look forward to working with council in the future.