

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARDS POLICY

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Responsible service: Economy, Tourism & Place Service

Contact position: Manager Economy, Tourism & Place

Policy statement

Blue Mountains City Council will manage community noticeboards in its local government area in accordance with clear and consistent practices relating to noticeboard ownership, maintenance, access and notice content.

Scope

This policy applies to all Blue Mountains City Council staff, non-Council key-holders and any parties who use or want to use Council-owned noticeboards throughout the Blue Mountains local government area.

It applies only to noticeboards that Council owns.

Roles and responsibilities

Positions	Responsibilities
Director Infrastructure Economy & Property Services	Determine appeals against restriction or prohibition from using a community noticeboard.
Manager Economy, Tourism & Place	Asset owner for noticeboards on or in Council-owned land, buildings, parks, footpaths and road reserves. Oversee the ongoing maintenance and general upkeep of noticeboards. Issue keys to non-Council key-holders and ensure the keys are returned when necessary. Determine whether to install, refurbish or decommission a noticeboard.

Positions	Responsibilities
Program Leader Place Management	When necessary, determine which notices or other materials can be displayed on noticeboards. Be a point of contact for community associations or chambers of commerce. Determine whether to restrict or prohibit access to parties who repeatedly post inappropriate materials.
Asset inspectors	Inspect noticeboards and write reports as detailed in this policy.
Customer service officers	Facilitate access to noticeboards by giving key-holders' contact details to requestors.
Key-holders	Keep noticeboard key in a safe location. Provide equitable access to noticeboards for community members.
Technical Assistant (Place Management)	Monitor noticeboards (both content and condition). Refer maintenance requests to the maintenance team via CSR.

Definitions

Term	Definition
notice	Any paper or similar materials displayed on a community noticeboard.
requestor	Any person or organisation who wishes to post a notice on a noticeboard.

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1. Accessing noticeboards

The community helps Council manage noticeboards. Therefore, it is appropriate for a member of a local group (such as a chamber of commerce or progress association) or retailer to hold a key to the local noticeboard. The authorised key-holder is responsible for giving community members access to the noticeboard to post materials.

Noticeboards are intended to be self-regulating, framed by the guidelines of use installed on each noticeboard.

1.1 Key-holder selection

The selection of key-holders is the responsibility of the Program Leader Place Management and the Technical Assistant (Place Management); however, this may be amended to suit Council's operations in the future (subject to the approval of the Director Economy, Place & Infrastructure Services).

Property & Commercial Services will hold all noticeboard master keys, which will be kept at Katoomba HQ.

1.2 Key-holder contact details

Council keeps a list of key-holders and their contact details in HPE RM (20/252582). Council must have a notice on all noticeboards containing Council's contact details and those of the relevant key-holder.

If a key-holder gives written approval, their contact details will also be published on Council's website. Customer service officers will provide key-holders' details to community members upon request.

1.3 Requests to post a notice

Anyone who wishes to post a notice on a noticeboard can request access to it by contacting the key-holder listed on the noticeboard. The key-holder will arrange a time to meet the requestor at the noticeboard so that access can be provided or will ask a local retail key-holder to provide access.

If the key-holder and the requestor are unable to arrange a mutually suitable time to meet, the requestor can contact Council's customer service centre for assistance. Customer service staff will arrange for a suitable Council staff member to meet the requestor.

2. Appropriate notice guidelines

Any member of the Blue Mountains community can post on noticeboards, including but not limited to community and non-profit groups.

The Program Leader Place Management provides final approval for posting. Their assessment may include directions to change content or reduce the size of the notice, or a refusal due to the number of notices already posted (by the applying party or by others). Council strives to provide equitable use of the space available on noticeboards.

In general, notices and other materials posted on noticeboards should be in accordance with the content guidelines outlined in Council's *Display of Material on Council Premises Policy* and *Social Media Policy*.

The following guidelines apply specifically to noticeboards:

The document on Council's Records Management System is the controlled version. Please check that you have the current version before using a printed copy. HPERM: 21/106771

- Notices should publicise activities and/or events by non-profit, non-political organisations.
- Notices must publicise activities or events that are occurring within the Blue Mountains local government area or have specific relevance to the Blue Mountains community.
- Notices that are derogatory, defamatory or offensive are not to be approved or posted and will be removed without notice if posted.
- Information in a language other than English must be accompanied by a brief summary of the information in English.
- The name of the organisation responsible for issuing the notice must be clearly visible on the notice.
- Notices should contain the date of posting.
- Outdated notices will be removed.
- Council reserves the right to remove community information and notices at its discretion.
- Council takes no responsibility for the misuse of this service.
- Notices promoting political parties or political party events are not permitted.

Each noticeboard must display a laminated copy of the above guidelines.

If a key-holder or a Council staff member is unsure if a notice is appropriate to post, they must refer it to the Program Leader Place Management, who will approve or reject the request to post the notice.

2.1 Policing of content

Policing of content is essentially done by the community, with Council performing a general oversight role.

The Program Leader Place Management is the contact for any party questioning content guidelines or for anyone who has a complaint about a notice that has been posted.

Council may respond to a report of inappropriate notices and can restrict or permanently prohibit parties from accessing the noticeboards if they repeatedly post inappropriate materials. This decision is to be made by the Manager Economy, Tourism & Place and notified to the affected party in writing.

Parties who have been restricted or prohibited from using a noticeboard can appeal in writing to the Director Economy, Place & Infrastructure Services, whose decision on the matter will be final.

3. Maintenance and removal

Requests from the public to maintain and/or fix noticeboards are registered via a customer service request (CSR) under code S18-Community Noticeboards. This CSR is assigned to the Manager Economy, Tourism & Place to issue instructions for an asset inspector to conduct an on-site inspection confirming any works required.

The Technical Assistant (Place Management) is also responsible for monitoring the noticeboards (both content and condition), and they will refer maintenance requests to the maintenance team via CSR.

If the asset inspector deems the noticeboard in question to be irreparable, they must prepare a report detailing the asset damage, rectification methods and costs (if possible), a recommendation for long-term resolution (permanent removal, replacement, maintenance, etc.) and what actions were required to make the noticeboard safe. This report must be sent to the Manager Economy, Tourism & Place and the Property & Commercial Services team for final resolution of the CSR.

Decisions to remove a noticeboard should take into account the cost of repairing the noticeboard, its ongoing usage and service to the community, and viable alternative options for displaying notices in the surrounding area.

Final determination is made by the Manager Economy, Tourism & Place. If removal is the recommended action, approval to undertake removal works must be obtained by the Director Economy, Place & Infrastructure Services.

Related documents

This document should be read in conjunction with:

Legislation

- N/A

Other documentation

- Blue Mountains City Council, *Display of Material on Council Premises Policy*