



Hall Review Committee Information Session Q&A

Baden Powell Scout & Guide Hall:

Q: Maintain hall as a guide/scout hall – any works/improvements do not negatively impact on guide/scout use

- A. As a primary user of the hall, Guides and Scouts will be consulted about future works.

Q: Maintain free access/use

- A. Historical use agreements will be honoured through to the end of June 2026. Activities that benefit community and activate the hall will be considered for free access via a structured approval process.

Palais Theatre:

Q: How is the liaison officer expected to manage/assist difficult/serial hirers?

- A. Consistently applied booking processes will improve the customer experience and staff wellbeing. The Council officer will have the appropriate training in dealing with difficult customers.

Q: Franklin caravan park?

- A. The Franklin caravan park operations are being considered separately from the halls review. Revenue will contribute to the ongoing management of community halls and the park itself.

Q: Council doing bookings/maintenance – committees role?

- A. Bookings will be consistently managed through SpaceToCo with a Council officer administering the process and applying standard conditions to each booking.

Maintenance will be managed by Council's property team with casually employed caretaker positions helping to improve maintenance consistency, works planning and compliance to standards which include Work Health and Safety.

The Special Committees of Council (Hall Committees) will cease after 2025 Annual General Meetings (AGMs) are held.

Council's Social Resilience Team will work with the community to identify how previous committee members can continue to contribute to their community and/or hall.

Q: Wi-Fi/internet access at halls? Viable

- A. This is under consideration. Any investment decision would be informed by booking data and feedback from current and potential users.

Q: Will there actually be hall committee with Council doing all finance, bookings and maintenance?

- A. The Special Committee's of Council (Hall Committees) will cease at the 2025 AGMs.

Council will manage bookings, finance and maintenance activities henceforward.



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Q: What financial accountability will there be from Council to the community for their halls. Will it only be one line in the Council annual accounts?

- A. Council will prepare and share quarterly community hall reports, which will include such details as the use, income and expenditure.

Q: What happens with the ex-PMC – further discussion with the ex-PMC committee? Will this be a thing?

- A. The Palais Management Committee has been disbanded and there will be no further engagement with this group.

Discussions regarding activating the Franklin Palais and using any residual funds will be had with the community, and Council will invite the Franklin Progress Association to be involved as a key stakeholder.

Q: To match the beauty and quality of the Palais and the quality of hirers, the carpark really needs to be sealed – loose gravel and rocks is not welcoming or suitable.

- A. Any investment decision would be informed by booking data and feedback from current and potential users.

‘Friends of’ any hall, as a specific group of stakeholders will have the opportunity to promote/suggest such works to Council.

Judbury Community Centre:

Q: As far as I can see the Council has not enough staff to change a lightbulb on a high ceiling in Judbury.

- A. Taken as a comment.

Ranelagh Soldiers Memorial Hall:

Q: What about supporting the market traffic management \$\$\$ and other costs as funds from market are in the kitty

- A. Council recognises markets are local activation events and will transfer ‘activation/event’ funds from existing hall accounts to a locally “identified” group who can continue to activate and engage the local community through this type of event/activity at the hall. This structured process will be in consultation with relevant community members.

Income received from activation activities will be managed by the organiser and not taken by Council.

A percentage of future hall income will be reserved for supporting future local hall activation activities by local community members/groups.

Q: Community consultation was a waste of time. All halls going under Council run? No different models for each community. Joke LOL

- A. The wider community is the primary stakeholder for who consistent, equitable and safe access to community facilities is paramount. To achieve this aim, Council needs to implement a consistent structured booking process and standard of maintenance.

Council will work with each community to identify how they can continue to activate their hall, which may involve different models.



Q: How will you support friends of the hall exactly?

- A. Council will work with each community to identify how they can continue to activate their hall, which may involve different models.

Our support will vary based on the ambitions/aims of different groups. Councils Social Resilience Manager will be reaching out to all current hall committees to arrange times to meet to discuss next steps.

Q: When to hand in keys?

- A. Keys will be returned to Council at the Hall's 2025 AGMs or when the hall is moved over to the booking system SpacetoCo.

Future access for running local activation events will be discussed as part of next steps.

Q: What differences legally in terms of Council selling assets such as halls will there be between and when will the new system be introduced?

- A. There will be no change to Council's authority to dispose of assets, and no hall has been identified or planned for sale.

Q: How can the community ensure the halls remain in community hands? Especially when existing staff move on!

- A. There are two significant factors which should give the community some comfort that halls will remain in community use.

Firstly, all community halls are owned as 'public land'. Any sale of public land requires a significant process including public consultation and which includes an appeals process if needed.

Secondly, halls are sighted on land zoned 'Community Purpose' the purpose of which under the State Planning Scheme is;

- i. To provide for key community facilities and services including health, educational, government, cultural and social facilities.
- ii. To encourage multi-purpose, flexible and adaptable social infrastructure.

This zoning limits the allowable uses to community purpose.

As with all Council facilities and services, we encourage community members to engage with their local Councillors.

Q: Background: Ranelagh Soldiers Memorial Hall was purchased by 39 Ranelagh families in 1920-24. Council is owner of the title. 1990's - Ranelagh playground also paid for by local families, now Council is owner of Title. Council were going to sell this asset but community rallied. Thank God we did 😊

- A. Council's current ownership of assets once built and owned by community groups reflects changing societal needs. It is often the case that the historic decision to transfer ownership of these assets to Council was based on small community groups inability to maintain the asset. There are several examples in the Huon Valley where Council received ownership and restored such buildings for community benefit.



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Council does not want to sell these assets, but we do want the community to rally again by using the halls.

Mountain River Hall:

Q: Who answers questions re facilities?

- A. Council's Property Services Unit. Please email hvc@huonvalley.tas.gov.au or by phoning 6264 0300.

Q: Who cleans after events?

- A. Council will engage a contract cleaner, and halls will be on a schedule for cleaning.

Q: Who lets hirers in?

- A. Where caretakers are available, they will let hirers into the halls, otherwise alternatives will be provided such as key safes and/or keyless entry.

Q: Can we spend money how we want to? E.g heating

- A. Existing funds will be quarantined for each hall and are still required to go back into the hall. Expenditure on physical works is required to have Council approval as per the current system.

Council intends to discuss building needs for each hall, with consultation with the community, and Council will then deliver agreed works as part of our annual capital works program.

Q: If facilities are not-for-profit purpose how can we better activate the hall?

- A. We have seen a variety of community events, pop-up markets, movie nights etc. and acknowledge that none of them are profit-driven but instead provide significant community benefit.

Partnerships with other local groups or businesses can assist with funding including in-kind donations to the group, certain grants or hosting of low-cost activities.

Q: How do committee members get reimbursed for purchases for events?

- A. It is business as usual until the end of financial year.

Future hall activation activities (and how funds are managed) will be discussed with the Social Resilience Team as part of next steps.

Q: What do we do with cash that is collected?

- A. Petty cash will need to be deposited into the committee bank account before 30 June 2025.

Q: 1 caretaker for all halls or 1 each?

- A. It will not be one caretaker for all halls or one each. The caretaker can be from the existing committee members or the wider community. There could be more than 1 caretaker if the need arises or shared among several halls.

A decision will be evidenced by booking volumes and maintenance needs.



Q: Could “friends” groups become incorporated if they wanted?

- A. Yes. The level of formality required by any group is theirs to consider based on their aims.

Council’s Social Resilience Team can help advise this decision making if required.

Q: Can we still apply for grants? I write grant applications regularly for Mountain River Hall

- A. Under the current arrangements, Hall Committees should be seeking Council approval (i.e. landowner consent) for grant submissions. In future it will be possible for any hall user to work with Council on a proposal, including grant applications to improve community halls.

It should be noted that community groups, such as progress associations, can sometimes access grant opportunities that Council may not be eligible for.

Q: Comment: without a group recognised by Council, who has some form of control, there will inevitably be a loss of motivation I suspect.

- A. That would be an unfortunate outcome based entirely on whether the groups desire is to control the space or control the type of activities that happen within the space.

Groups as well as individual users can look forward to a high degree of creative control over events and activities that occur in their hall, which will also provide a great benefit to the local community.

We heard that the broader community appreciate the activities that the committees have run, which include, Christmas parties, bushfire preparedness sessions, craft groups, play groups, monthly movies, fund raisers for local people/projects, monthly pizza nights, new neighbours' welcome events, food relief, music events, markets and more... We genuinely hope that committee members will continue these activities as ‘Friends of the hall’.

Friends of the hall groups will remain a significant contact point for Council as they act as local connectors. In programs such as ‘preparing for and recovering from a disaster’, this connection between a local community and Council are vital.

Q: The funds in our bank accounts are a mix of hall hire fees, grant incomes and fundraising activities. Shouldn’t a significant proportion remain in our “friends” bank account?

- A. The existing fund in committee’s bank account will be quarantined for individual halls. It will be recommended that as part of the transition arrangements, any residual funds after agreed works have been completed, could go back to the community group if they comply with certain criteria i.e. bank account, etc.

For example, the group will then have control of that money to spend on events or to contribute to desired building works.

Where there is no formal “friends of” group, Council will hold the funds for that specific hall and the funds will contribute to building works.



Southport Community Centre:

Q: Will bookings for the halls cover management committee sponsored events? At present those events don't include venue hire.

- A. Bookings that are done by the existing committee that form a "friends of" will have free usage of the hall until 30 June 2026. Based on data from the first year of bookings and management, discussions regarding ongoing fees and the criteria for future 'community benefit' fees will be held closer to that time.

Any hall users can already access a lower 'community benefit' booking rate and we are looking to include a \$0 rate for bookings that demonstrate clear community benefit. This will expand the opportunity of low-cost hall usage to the whole community beyond the existing committee volunteers.

Q: How does local community prioritise asset maintenance? What of improvements?

- A. In addition to Council's own programmed inspection routine and the expectation that the caretaker(s) will report maintenance needs, users can send an email to Council advising of any maintenance or improvements recommended for the hall. Council will assess the request and schedule works as required.

SpacetoCo also includes an option for users to provide maintenance and improvement feedback.

Q: The Southport committee maintains extensive grounds. Part of this is implementing themed tree plantings such as "pocket forest" (Swift Parrot habitat_ and Bush Pantry (edible nature foods). Is this maintenance?

- A. This is a good example of 'low risk' works that Council would allow the community to undertake. It may also be possible that establishing a local Landcare group would be useful.

Q: Why are you disbanding the committee model? Is this part of your risk management strategy? Sure, committee members want less 'boring' admin work BUT who will convene "friends". What status would they have?

- A. To improve customer experience, access and to better understand how halls are being used, Council is implementing basic controls which includes a consistent booking process and standard of maintenance.

When these primary functions move to Council, community groups are able to hold community events and activities that activate the halls.

Under this new structure there is no need for the formality of a hall committee and associated administration, compliance and risk issues.

The community themselves may wish to determine the level of formality their groups prefer and how these should be convened.

Council's Social Resilience team will assist in these discussions where required.

It is envisaged that existing groups who hold events will continue to do so, while other people or groups will also begin to host their own events.

Council will promote the new model to book halls, inviting all community members to try these spaces for events.



Q: What about Mutual Obligation Workers? We have active workers who meet weekly.

A. This is a unique circumstance to be discussed with the Southport Hall Committee.

Q: The current Terms of Reference only refer to manage and maintain – not activate. Will the Terms of Reference for community involvement be updated? How would they be applied, monitored to a “friends” group?

A. The Terms of Reference are specifically for special committees of Council. As the hall committees will no longer be a special committee of Council, the terms of reference will no longer apply.

Q: What is the definition of activate? The Southport committee has defined this broadly (and successfully) to include local histories.

A. The goal of space activation is to use halls as community-focussed places that serve the needs or interests of the local community. This could include local markets, crop-swaps or workshops or just any opportunities to bring people together.

Q: How will donations be accounted for?

A. Donations for the hall will not be required to be provided to Council. If an event holder is able to accept donations, those proceeds are entirely theirs to manage.

Q: Southport has prepared itself to have a role in emergency management – as a place of information and post emergency occupation (managed by Council). How will this work under no committee structure?

A. Council believes all halls can have an important role in emergency management, with Southport being a great example with their stand-alone power and communications systems. Council’s will discuss this aspect with communities and together, make clear the role of individual halls in emergencies, and how people can support their community to prepare for and recover from an emergency.

Q: What are the protections for alternative “friends” structure?

A. Council’s Social Resilience unit will assist in discussions and provide resources covering alternative structures and their pros and cons.

Council will also provide additional information on insurance coverage for events.

Ultimately any community group wishing to formalise it’s structure will need to carefully consider the structure that best suits the groups objectives and aims.

Q: We have mutual obligation worker who cleans the hall. Will cleaning be undertaken by the Council?

A. Council will engage a contract cleaner, and halls will be on a schedule for cleaning.

Q: Southport centre property was donated by the Community (The Bradley family). How will this community contributions be safeguarded?

A. See answers to Q17 and 18



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Q: Can we continue to quarantine funds for community history publications? At present we publish and distribute these books e.g. issue invoices & receipt funds. Will Council do this, or will we need a formal entity to receipt and distribute these funds?

A. See answer to Q31

Council will not take on the administration of these books or the proceeds from book sales.

Q: I now understand that Council Committees will no longer exist. If each group wanted/needed to operate a bank account, it needs to become a legal entity. Is there some way that this admin burden can be lifted from the new “friends” group?

A. Each bank has specific requirements. It would be best to discuss options with the appropriate banking institution.

Council’s Social Resilience unit will assist in discussions and provide resources covering alternative structures and their pros and cons.

Q: When paying out money, we sometime have up to 10 payments prior to and after events. Do we still have 2 people on or committee that can make & authorise payments?

A. All hall hire will be managed through the booking system SpacetoCo including bond refunds. It will be the responsibility of the “friends of” groups on how they manage their event finances.

Q: Does the committee get some input into hall hire approval based on local knowledge?

A. To ensure that the hires are appropriate, bookings will be required to be approved by a Council officer when they are made in SpacetoCo. Any issues that arise from the bookings will be Council’s responsibility.

Such matters can be discussed with individual hall communities.

Q: Friends – how they are formed? Who auspices it? Especially if money included. Check s& balances/process. What are options for groups if they are managing activities/events/\$

A. Council will generally consider auspicings in circumstances where;

- The community led project aligns with Councils strategic plan and has demonstrable benefits to the community.
- The project is a one-off or short term where it is otherwise unreasonable for the auspicee to become incorporated.

Council’s Social Resilience unit will assist in discussions and provide resources covering alternative structures and their pros and cons.