



Policy on sites for political representation and advocacy (adopted 24 March 2023; rev 28 October 2023)

Council Market Policy

Midcoast Council updated its Market Policy in March 2023. It shows how Council considers applications to run markets and defines operating criteria and requirements that market operators must satisfy if Council licenses a market.

Under "1 Operating Criteria", dot point 11 states:

Market Operators are to allow political representation and advocacy at markets ensuring the same equitable and non-discriminatory access to sites as all other stallholders. Representation and advocacy activities are to be restricted to the confines and immediate vicinity of the allocated stall site.

Black Head Bazaar Stallholder Agreement

Our current Stallholder Agreement (28 October 2023) states:

Political representation and advocacy groups will pay the fee required by our Political Representation and Advocacy Policy. All other parts of this Stallholder Agreement apply to these groups..

For many years, we have welcomed local community groups to set up stalls without charge. During that time, we have also had infrequent requests by mainstream political parties for sites and based on verbal advice from Council, we have not charged site fees. Since the start of COVID-19 pandemic, we have been receiving many more requests for multiple market bookings from both mainstream and alternative political parties.

How we interpret political representation and advocacy

We consider that “political representation and advocacy” in Council’s policy means the use of a site by a political party, or elected politicians and/or their staff, or individuals. They may be seeking election/re-election, or they may be promoting their activities or achievements, or both.

We also consider that when a party or individual purports to provide “community information”, it is representing political interests and is not a community group.

While Council’s Market Policy requires that we allow political representation and advocacy and ensure equitable and non-discriminatory access to sites, it does not prevent us from charging site fees. As the market operator, we control the location of sites.

Policy for political representation and advocacy sites

Black Head Bazaar Incorporated adopts this policy for requests from individuals or parties for political representation and advocacy sites.

1. We will allocate sites for use by individuals or parties for political representation and advocacy, as Council’s policy requires.
2. We will charge a standard site fee. A site is 3 m by 3 m and all structures and signage must be within the site.
3. We will set aside one area at each market where all sites for political representation and advocacy will be located.
4. The individual(s) who operate the site must stay within the site or its immediate vicinity. They must not represent or advocate politics or distribute information outside of their site.