

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Members for Community & Regulatory Services and Health & Adult Care

Date of Meeting: 25th February 2013
Report of: Marketing & Business Support Manager (Leisure & Culture)
Subject/Title: Leisure & Culture Fees & Charges 2013/14
Portfolio Holder: Councillors Les Gilbert and Janet Clowes

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To provide the Cabinet Members with the required information in order to confirm the 2013/14 scale of charges for Leisure & Cultural Services.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Leisure & Culture Fees and Charges for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved, to come into effect on 1st April 2013.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The proposed scale of charges for 2013/14 aims to achieve the required 3% increase in customer receipts to ensure that the service operates within budget.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 N/A

6.0 Policy Implications (including carbon reduction and health)

- 6.1 It is important to ensure that use of leisure facilities for health improvement is encouraged and that maximising prices is not seen as a barrier to participation. This proposal takes into account key areas of the services where usage has decreased and aims to address that declining usage. The Everybody Options scheme also compliments the headline price levels by offering targeted, means-tested discounts of up to 40% for those who are unable to pay the full price levels for key activities.
- 6.2 Additional payment methods are also available to encourage regular participation including monthly Direct Debits and annual passes which offer further discounts to the casual activity rates.

7.0 Financial Implications (authorised by Director of Finance and Business Services)

- 7.1 The proposed fees and charges aim to meet the increased income target of 3% for 2013/14 through a combination of increasing fees where appropriate, and targeted price reductions to stimulate attendance in under-utilised spaces.
- 7.2 The proposal forms part of the normal annual review of the service charging levels in line with the service's Charging Strategy.

8.0 Legal Implications (authorised by Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 The provision of Leisure facilities is a discretionary service and is subject to powers primarily under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Apart from this specific power there exist more general powers in the Local Government Act, 1972 and the power of general competence in the Localism Act 2011.
- 8.2 Under S.19 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Local Authority may make any recreational facilities provided by it "available for use by such persons as it thinks fit either without charge or on payment of such charges as the authority thinks fit."

9.0 Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 The proposal forms part of the annual process for reviewing leisure and culture fees and charges. The 2013/14 proposals are low risk, however if the increased fees result in a net decrease in facility usage and income the proposals will be further reviewed in year.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The Leisure & Cultural Services Charging Strategy encourages an annual review of fees and charges, as well as regular monitoring throughout the year. The last set of changes was implemented on 1st January 2012. The 2013/14 proposal (Appendix 1) has been devised through careful monitoring of the attendances and occupancy levels as well as regular competitor analysis. Where the local market can bear a further increase, an average of 3% has been applied, rounded to the nearest 10p to reduce cash-handling costs.

Certain activities are currently declining, partly due to price levels, but also due to changing cultures around team sports. A number of these activities have proposed decreases in price level in order to stimulate growth and achieve the required income levels through increased usage.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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