

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE:	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE:	24 March 2011
DIRECTOR:	Annette Bruton
TITLE OF REPORT:	Bookings and Lettings Review: Progress Report
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/11/017

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report provides an update on the progress on the implementation of the bookings and lettings review, and present proposals to revise staffing arrangements for evenings and weekends lets, as well as revised lettings charges for implementation from August 2011.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the committee:

- i. Note the progress being made in implementing the bookings and lettings review.
- ii. Approve the principle of implementing new staffing arrangements for evenings and weekends lets, subject to the outcome of detailed engagement with staff and trade unions by Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure.
- iii. Approve increases in charges for lets for educational establishments of an average of 4%.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The review sought to improve the quality of the service provided from a customer perspective, while ensuring improvements in delivery, therefore achieving revenue budgetary efficiencies.

The total Janitorial budget for Education, Culture and Sport for 2010/11 is £1.74 million. Of this £116K is currently budgeted specifically for overtime to

support lettings in educational establishments, whereas actual expenditure, required to cover the volume of evening and weekend lets is in excess of £300K.

The budget for income from lettings within educational establishments for 2010/11 is £373K.

It is estimated that the use of Facility Support Assistants for evening and weekend lets, would generate a full year saving of approximately £100K. This could significantly reduce the current shortfall within the janitorial budget, and reduce the reliance on staff being paid at enhanced overtime rates.

Based on increasing charges for lets by an average of 4%, this should generate approximately £15K additional income, which would contribute slightly towards meeting increasing costs, and reducing the current shortfall within the janitorial budget.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Background

At their meeting of 18 February 2010, the Education, Culture and Sport Committee agreed to the implementation of new Policy and Procedures for Bookings and Lettings across City Council Sports and Educational establishments.

The Committee requested Officers to provide updates to subsequent Committee meetings on the progress with the implementation of the bookings and lettings policy.

Update on Implementation

- Learning from some of the problems experienced last year, earlier application deadlines have been set in order to ensure that all lets are processed in time for new lettings period, starting in August 2011.
- Applications for internal City Council lets were invited for during February and March 2011, with the intention being that these can be allocated in advance of applications for community lets being processed.
- Applications for community lets will then be invited during April and May 2011

- Electronic application forms, rather than paper ones were introduced in late 2010, to ensure more efficient and secure delivery of let application.

Charges for Non-City Residents

- Education, Culture and Sport Committee agreed that 'varying charges should be applied to those living outwith the City boundary by using an Accord Card'. At the Council meeting on 10 February 2011, it was agreed that the Accord Card would be 'rolled out' as a citizen card to enable Aberdeen City residents to gain preferential charges for a range of services, which may include lettings.

Review of management of lets on site

- Facilities Management have been developing a number of options for providing cover for evening and weekend lets.
- After consideration of the various options, it is suggested that staffing arrangements for evenings and weekends lets use the newly created post of Facility Support Assistants.
- Presentations were made to staff and trade unions by Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure in early February 2011, and initial feedback from both groups suggested that they were unsupportive of the changes being presented.
- It has therefore been proposed that further meetings take place with staff and trade unions during April and May, in order to move this issue forward.
- It is proposed that officers from Education, Culture and Sport engage in these discussions, to ensure that the eventual staffing arrangements meet the requirements and available budgets for lets within Education, Culture and Sport establishments.

Annual review of charges for lets

- Whilst it is acknowledged that charges for lets did increase for many groups last year, as part of bookings and lettings review, it is considered to be good practice to increase charges by a small amount each year, in line with inflation, rather than increasing them less frequently by larger margins.
- This also means that income should increase incrementally, in order to help cover increased costs of providing lets, including energy, cleaning and janitorial costs.
- The prevailing Consumer Price Index is currently approximately 3.5%, whereas the Retail Price Index is approximately 4.7%. It is therefore proposed that Core Charges be increased by an average of 4%, to reflect a point between these two indices, and new proposed charges are set out in the enclosed Appendix 1.

- Core Charges would be discounted, as appropriate to reflect particular user groups, (eg. 50% reduction for junior groups).

6. IMPACT

The report relates to the arts, heritage and sport strand of the community plan, specifically in relation to the sports, leisure and recreation vision of developing Aberdeen as an “Active City” and in relation to ensuring that our community has ‘access to services of a high quality that meet their needs.’ under the ‘We value our people’ strand and Single Outcome Agreement Outcomes 6, ‘We live longer, healthier lives’ and 13, ‘We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.’

The report also links to Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking through culture, arts and sport:

- Increase participation in sport, provide support for athletes and reward excellence
- Ensure high quality, well managed sports facilities in Aberdeen
- Recognise the contribution of sport, culture and arts to promoting the area as a tourist destination
- Recognise the role of sport and arts in tackling anti-social behaviour

The report relates to *Fit for the Future: a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Aberdeen City 2009-2015*, which has 5 key objectives:

- Promote and increase opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity for everyone in Aberdeen
- Provide a comprehensive and high quality range of sports facilities in Aberdeen City Council
- Maximise the social, educational, health and economic benefits of sport and physical activity in Aberdeen city
- Develop and sustain pathways which nurture local, regional and national sporting people to reach their potential
- Raise the profile of sport in Aberdeen

The report also links to the *Vibrant Aberdeen: the Cultural Strategy for Aberdeen*, the draft *Learning Strategy* and the *Aberdeen City Council Out of School Care Policy 2008*.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Sports Transformation Programme – approved at Council 13 Feb 2008
- Digest of Charges for Sports Facilities; Scotland 2008/2009- A research study by SportScotland
- ‘The Challenge of Charging’ – Accounts Commission 1999

- 'Fit for the Future': A Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Aberdeen City
- 'Vibrant Aberdeen': A Cultural Strategy for Aberdeen
- Aberdeen City Council Learning Strategy
- Out of School Care Policy 2008 Aberdeen Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- '2006 Accord for the Protection of Children in Scottish Sport' – Children 1st & SportScotland
- Henderson Loggie External Audit Report on School Lets (2006/07)
- Report & minutes of Education, Culture & Sport Committee of 18 February 2010

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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APPENDIX 1

Proposed Revised Core Lettings Charges – 2011/12

Category	Current Core Charges (per hour) 2010/11 (Net of VAT)	Proposed Core Charges (per hour) 2011/12 (Net of VAT)	Notes
Group 1 (Classrooms/ GP rooms)	£8.84	£9.20	
Group 2 (1 Badminton Court sized facility)	£10.70	£11.10	
Group 3 (2 Badminton Court sized facility)	£21.40	£22.20	
Group 4 (3 Badminton Court sized facility) (Multi Use Games Area)	£32.10 £32.10	£33.30 £33.30	Inc Floodlights
Group 5 (4 Badminton Court sized facility)	£42.80	£44.40	
Group 6 (Full Size All Weather Pitch)	£64.20	£66.60	Per Game (ie. 1.5 hours), Inc Floodlights
Group 7 (Swimming Pools – based on 4 lanes)	£41.40	£44.40	£10 per hour reduction for unsupervised Pools