

From: Stephen O'Neill
Sent: 18 September 2017 14:51
To: Licensing; Jennifer Wilson
Cc: Dawn Schultz; CityEvents
Subject: FW: Review of Licensing Fees 2017

Good afternoon,

I note that the proposed Fee Review Options document does not take in to account the use of parks and open spaces for events which require a temporary licence, it appears to have been written with static commercial venues in mind and therefore does not take account the negative impact that the proposed changes will have on the non-commercial events which serve the people of Aberdeen.

“Where the capacity is above 1500, the fee proposed has been increased by approximately 100%. Given the small number of venues in Aberdeen City that possess a capacity above 1500, it is expected that there will be a small number of such applications. Though the discounted fee for such applications has been calculated here for completeness, it is anticipated that the vast majority events of 200+ capacity are likely to be commercial in nature and ineligible for that discount. The committee previously decided that any non-commercial events would be charged a discounted fee for a public entertainment licence.”

The above statement does not cover PEL's which are granted for the use of events in the City's parks and open spaces. The Capacity of all of our parks and open spaces is far greater than 1500 and the majority of events which take place in them are community, charity or non-commercial activities.

“1.9 This proposed change will therefore allow the fee structure to accurately represent the broad costs of licensing and enforcing a range of public events without negatively impacting smaller community and charity functions that will still require such licences and will also be eligible for the discounted rate.”

I do not believe the above to be a true reflection of the impact that the proposed changes will have to community, charity or council run events which are free of charge. The definition of “smaller” when reviewing venues in the city differs greatly when considered in the terms of an outdoor event. For example the below charity / community / non-commercial events would see an 100% increase based on the proposed changes:-

Aberdeen Mela: Capacity 6000
Jazz on the Green: Capacity 2500
Anchor Wipe Out: Capacity 1000
Friends of Duthie Park: Capacity 5000
Friends of Seaton Park: Capacity 1000
Celebrate Aberdeen: Capacity 2000
ACC Hogmanay: Capacity 5000
ACC Fireworks: Capacity 15000

I can understand the rationale for weighting events based on their capacity for events which are commercial in nature or charge an entry fee as the greater the capacity equals an increased income but for events which are free of charge it will place an unfair burden. With free events, the greater the capacity the higher the cost in delivering the event safely. Therefore it does not make sense to burden these charitable/community organisers with additional costs because their event has a large footfall – these events will often be the ones which support greater inclusion and access to people who would not normally be able to afford to attend commercial events.

As with all types of licence applications, it is inevitable that more straightforward applications will cost less to administer than more complex ones. It is not required, nor is it the aim of the Licensing structure to match costs and expenditure penny for penny. Such a system would require costs to be charged back to the applicant after the licence had been granted and would be based on a level of time recording that would prove extremely onerous, especially given the fact that such work is split across several officers in multiple Council Services.

Out of interest; what is the workload difference between a straightforward and a complex application (other than the time it takes consultees to review and prepare a response) and is this directly linked to the capacity of the event or are there other considerations?

In order to ensure that there is no additional burden on community, charity and non-commercial events, and that the statements made within the report are factual, the above must be addressed before a final report is considered at committee. I believe, and strongly recommend that, the fees for Discounted Temporary Licenses (which would cover all of the events named above) remains static.

I would appreciate a response to my comments above and further information as to the next step of the process following consultation.

Kind regards,
Stephen O'Neill
Senior Events Officer

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From: Arlene Dunbar

Sent: 15 September 2017 12:53

Cc: Geoff; CityEvents

Subject: FW: Review of Licensing Fees 2017

Apologies please find attached the fees options.

Regards

We are collecting feedback on our customer service so we would be grateful if you could take a couple of minutes to tell us how we did. Please use the link below to complete our short survey.



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From: Licensing
Sent: 15 September 2017 12:48
Cc: Geoff Cooper; CityEvents
Subject: Review of Licensing Fees 2017

Dear Licence Holder

Review of Licensing Fees 2017

A wholesale review has been carried out in relation to the scale of fees which Aberdeen City Council charges for issuing a range of civic licences.

The Licensing Committee accepted that the fee options in the attached document are to be the subject of a month-long consultation, commencing on 18th September 2017 and ending on 11th October 2017. A further report, together with any comments you make, will be put before the Licensing Committee on 19 December 2017. If the proposed increases are approved in December, they will take effect from 1 January 2018.

We would like to hear your views, particularly if you currently hold one of the licences likely to be affected by the proposals.

We would welcome your comments by **11 October 2017** being made by email to licensing@aberdeencity.gov.uk; or by writing to the Licensing Team, Business Hub 6, Level 1 South, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB.



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