

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	11th March 2019
Subject: The Commons, Sports and Miscellaneous Charges	Public
Report of: Andy Barnard – Superintendent of The Commons	For Decision
Report Author: Hadyn Robson – Business Manager	
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report reviews the charges for sports facilities and miscellaneous items that are provided by The Commons Division and seeks approval for the proposed charges for the financial year 2019-20.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree the proposed charges for the 2019/20 financial year as detailed in Table 1, on page 3. 	

Main Report

Background

1. Charges for the provision of sports facilities and other items are usually reviewed annually. The charges for the 2017-18 were approved by your Committee on 15 May 2017. There was no review in 2018.
2. The City of London Corporation's financial regulations require all departments to recover full costs when setting charges to persons or external organisations or submit reasons to the appropriate committee when that objective is not met. Therefore, it is, at the discretion of individual spending committees to determine the actual level of fees and charges relative to the services they provide, after considering local matters and priorities.
3. Caterham Pumas Football Club rent space for a football pitch on Coulsdon Common. This pitch is cut at the start of the season, after which the club is responsible for the marking and maintenance.
4. Logs, charcoal or cord wood may be produced as a by- product of land management activities. The Commons has a policy for the disposal of surplus timber arisings that allow The Commons volunteers to obtain logs free of

charge and staff to get green cord or logs at a discount. Logs are not sold directly to the public.

5. The Division has rooms suitable as meeting venues to external groups. The rooms at Burnham Beeches, Merlewood and Ashted are available to use free of charge by groups whose activities contribute to the management of open spaces. All other groups are charged
6. The basic rate of VAT is added to the cost of services associated with room hire. VAT on solid fuel is charged at 5% and seasonal rental of sports pitches is zero rated subject to HMRC conditions being met.

Current Position

7. The income generated from sports and miscellaneous charges provides a small, but steady income from very little outlay or risk. This amounted to £1334.00 in this financial year and reporting up to 20th February 2019.
8. City of London employees currently pay £24.00 per ton inclusive of VAT for green cord wood.
9. The football pitch charge has, historically, been a 'one off', season long payment and is included in the sum quoted in point 7.

Proposals

10. The charges agreed for the 2017-18 financial year are currently being applied and are shown in the table below, together with the proposed charges for the next financial year 2019-20.
11. It is proposed that all charges for the financial year, 2019-20 are increased by 10%. This is above inflation but reflects that there was no review of charges for the previous financial year, 2018-19, and will, additionally assist in meeting the annual efficiency savings targets.
12. It is proposed that room hire at Burnham Beeches increases by 10% on a sliding scale, depending on number of attendees, up to a maximum of £332.00 for a full day.
13. The sports pitch charge does not reflect the fees currently charged by neighbouring Local Authorities or Epping Forest and we plan to engage in consultation with the sports club concerned to address this prior to the next iteration of this report.
14. The proposed charges include 'rounding up' to simplify transactions.
15. An administration fee of £50.00 will be applied to all licences.

Table 1

Item	2017-18	2019-20
<u>Sports charges</u>		
Coulsdon Common, 1 Football Pitch (for season)	£299.00	£329.00
<u>Miscellaneous Charges</u>		
Sale of split logs, per 3 ton	£95.00	£105.00
Sale of green cord wood per ton	£24.00	£27.00
Room hire at Ashtead and Merlewood – per hour	£36.00	£40.00
Room hire at Burnham Beeches	Half day £121.00- £152.00 Full day £242.00 - £302.00 and £3.60 + VAT a head for refreshments	Half day £134.00 - £168.00 Full day £267.00 – £333.00 and £4.00 + VAT a head for refreshments

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. The proposals in this report support the Corporate Plan 2018-23:

Contribute to a flourishing society

- People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
- Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need

Shape outstanding environments

- We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable environment
- Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained.

The proposals in this report also support the Open Spaces Department Business Plan:

A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.

1. Our open spaces, heritage and cultural assets are protected, conserved and enhanced
2. London has clean air and mitigates flood risk and climate change
3. Our spaces are accessible, inclusive and safe
4. Our habitats are flourishing, biodiverse and resilient to change

B. Spaces enrich people's lives.

5. People enjoy good health and wellbeing
6. Nature, heritage and place are valued and understood
7. People feel welcome and included
8. People discover, learn and develop

C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

9. Our practices are financially, socially and environmentally sustainable
10. London's natural capital and heritage assets are enhanced through our leadership, influence, investment, collaboration and innovation
11. Our staff and volunteers are motivated, empowered, engaged and supported
12. Everyone has the relevant skills to reach their full potential

Implications

Financial

17. Increasing the charges by 10% will ensure that costs are fully recovered for the provision of sports facilities and miscellaneous items for the 2019-20 period and a modest contribution is made to income beyond that point.
18. The increase is above the rate of inflation but reflects that there was no review of charges for the financial year 2018-19. Additionally, the increase will assist in meeting the annual efficiency targets.

Conclusion

19. It is proposed that charges for the sports pitch and miscellaneous items are increased by the amounts shown in the table above.
20. The sports pitch charge does not reflect the fees currently charged by the Local Authority neighbours. We plan to engage in consultation with the sport club concerned to address this prior to the next iteration of this report.

Hadyn Robson
Business Manager
The Commons

T: 01372 279083

E: hadyn.robson@cityoflondon.gov.uk