

Committee(s)	Dated:
Queen's Park Consultative Group	9 October 2018
Highgate Wood Consultative Group	9 October 2018
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	14 October 2018
Subject:	Public
Fees and Charges 2020/21 & 2021/22	
Report of:	For Discussion
Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	
Report author:	
Yvette Hughes – Open Spaces Department	

Summary

This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for a range of sports facilities and services provided at Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park for 2020/21. In addition, the report sets out the proposed fees and charges for Weddings and Civil Ceremonies for 2021/22.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee, Highgate Wood Consultative Group and Queen's Park Consultative Group discuss the proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 and 2021/22, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
- The views of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee, Highgate Wood Consultative Group, and Queen's Park Consultative Group be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee at their 13 November 2019 meeting.

Main Report

Background

1. Charges for the wide range of services, recreation and sporting facilities provided in all the City of London Corporation's Open Spaces are reviewed annually, to ensure that prices and ticket options are relevant and appropriate. The current 2019/20 (and 2020/21 Weddings and Civil Ceremonies) charges for Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park were approved by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee in November 2018.
2. The income generated from fees and charges contribute towards the cost of providing sports and recreational facilities across Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Current Position

3. The Hampstead Heath Track Forum, Swim Forum and the Sports Advisory Forum have been consulted on the proposed sports charges for 2020/21.
4. The proposed fees and charges include concessionary rates, offering a 40% discount on the standard adult charge, except where indicated.
5. Work over the past two years to encourage the level of compliance for payment at the Bathing Ponds has only seen a modest increase in income from these facilities.
6. Season tickets are now available to purchase online through the City of London Corporation website.
7. Work has been undertaken to improve signage, payment methods and cash payment arrangements. Unfortunately, the project to install contactless payments has been delayed and further work is required to implement this technology at the Bathing Ponds.
8. Sports fees and charges are not based on full cost recovery and are significantly subsidised by the City of London Corporation to promote participation in formal and informal recreation to support health and well-being.

Proposed Charges 2019/20

9. It is proposed that the charges for the athletics track, softball, rounders, sauna season ticket, tennis, fairs, bandstand hire, site compounds, event support charges (excluding the application fees) and bench sponsorship should be increased by 2.6% with rounding to aid cash handling, where applicable. The 2020/21 and the 2021/22 charges for Weddings and Civil Ceremonies have also been increased by 2.6%. These increases are in line with August Retail Price Index.
10. Following a review of the 2019/20 Park for London, sports facilities fees and charges benchmarking data, it is proposed that the fees for football, rugby, cricket and the hire of changing rooms are held at the 2019/20 rates. These charges were all at the higher end of fees when compared to comparators.
11. Following a London wide Athletics Track benchmarking exercise, it is noted that the fees for the Parliament Hill Athletic Track are significantly lower than comparators. Therefore, while a 2.6% increase has been proposed for 2020/21, the Superintendent will engage with the Parliament Hill Track Forum and the Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum over the next year to discuss above inflationary increases to the fees. It is proposed the increases would be spread over the next three years to allow time for the clubs using the facility to prepare for these changes.
12. Highgate Wood Metro Blind Cricket Team Support Scheme recognises a 50% discount on the changing room hire charge. This supports for the development of the sport.
13. The fees for pentanque, bowls, croquet and the Queen's Park pitch and put have been held at the 2019/20 rates to promote public participation in these activities.

14. It is proposed that swimming charges are held at the current rates for a further year. The Superintendent has commenced a review of the summer 2019 swimming season, which forms a discussion item within the meeting Agenda Pack.
15. Following local benchmarking we are proposing to increase car parking charges by 8% for 0-2 hours & 2-4 hours, and by 9% for the additional hours. However, taking account of these increases, the car parks across Hampstead Heath are still notably less expensive than local comparators. The additional hours charge is set to discourage commuter parking to ensure the parking facilities are available for Heath visitors.
16. It is proposed that the Parliament Hill and Golders Hill Park bandstands will be made available for hire in line with the existing hire arrangements for the Queen's Park bandstand.

Licencing arrangements

Commercial Dog Walking and Fitness Trainers

17. The Superintendent is undertaking a range of consultations to inform the introduction of licences for Commercial Dog Walking and Fitness Trainers. The outcome from the consultations and the proposed license arrangements will be discussed with Members ahead of implementation.

Bowls and Croquet

18. New annual licensing arrangements with the Parliament Hill Bowling Club and the Hampstead Heath Croquet Club have been agreed. As part of the licensing agreement two rinks will remain available for public play at all times. The green will be maintained by the Sports and Recreation Team at Parliament Hill, as part of their grounds maintenance Work Programme.
19. The new licencing arrangements will enable the Pavilions to be hired as meeting rooms during the winter months.

Fishing

20. A fee for a Hampstead Heath fishing license has been included in the proposed fees & charges. This covers the administration of the license.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

21. The proposed fees and charges directly support the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028 Strategic Outcomes A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape, B: Improved quality of life for Heath visitors, C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors and D: Greater number of and diversity of People taking care of the Heath.
22. This also contributes towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan 2018-23. Contribute to a flourishing society (1-4), Support a thriving economy (5) and Shape outstanding environments (9-12).

23. The proposed fees and charges support the three objectives and outcomes set out in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2018-19 (a) Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible, (b) Spaces enrich people's lives and (c) Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

Financial Implications

24. The City's Financial Regulations require all Departments to recover full costs when setting charges to persons or external organisations, or submit reasons to the appropriate service Committee when that objective is not met. It is therefore at the discretion of individual spending Committees to determine the actual level of fees and charges relative to the services they provide, after taking into account local considerations and priorities.

Conclusion

25. Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park continue to provide excellent value for money sports and recreational opportunities. The income generated through fees and charges contributes towards the cost of providing sports and recreational facilities and maintaining Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Proposed Fees and Charges for 2020/21 & 2021/22

Yvette Hughes

Hampstead Heath Business Manager - Open Spaces Department

T: 020 7332 3977

E: yvette.hughes@cityoflondon.gov.uk