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| Committee(s): | Date(s): |
| Epping Forest and Commons Committee | March 10 2014 |
| Subject: Sports and Miscellaneous Charges for the City Commons | Public |
| Report of: The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and the City Commons | For Decision |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>This report reviews the charges for sports facilities and miscellaneous items that are provided by the City Commons Division and seeks approval for the proposed charges for 2014-15.</p> <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the proposed charges for 2014-15 | |

Main Report

Background

1. Charges for the provision of sports facilities and other items are reviewed annually. The charges for 2013-14 were approved by your Committee in February 2013.
2. 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 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.
3. Croydon Rugby Football Club rents space for two rugby pitches at Spring Park and Caterham Pumas Football Club rents space for a soccer pitch on Coulsdon Common. These pitches are cut at the start of the season, after which the clubs are responsible for marking and maintaining them.
4. Logs are often produced as a bye-product of land management activities. City Commons has a policy for the disposal of surplus timber arisings that allows volunteers to obtain logs free of charge and staff to get them at a discount. Logs are not sold directly to the public.

5. The City Commons Division has three rooms suitable to be offered as meeting venues to external groups. The rooms at Merlewood and Ashted are available to use free of charge by groups whose activities contribute to the management of the City Commons. All other groups pay a hire charge.
6. The basic rate of VAT is included in the room hire charge. 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 regular, steady income for very little outlay or risk. At the time of writing this has amounted to £1,245 for 2013-14.

Proposals

8. It is proposed that the charges for 2014-15 are increased by 3%. This mirrors the increase that Your Committee recently approved for charges at Epping Forest.
9. The charges agreed for the 2013-14 financial year are currently being applied. They are shown in the following table, together with the proposed charges for next year.

| Item | 2013-14 Charge | 2014-15 (With 3% Increase rounded) |
|---|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Sports Charges | | |
| Spring Park, 2 Rugby Football Pitches (for Season) | £407.00 | £419.00 |
| Coulsdon Common, 1 Football Pitch (for season) | £218.00 | £225.00 |
| <i>N.B. These pitches are cut at the start of the season and then the club is responsible for all pitch marking and goal posts.</i> | | |
| Miscellaneous Charges | | |
| Sale of Logs, per 3 tonne trailer load | £69.00 | £71.00 |
| Room Hire (per hour) | £25.00 | £26.00 |

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. The provision of sports facilities supports the City Together Strategy theme 'A World Class City which is vibrant and culturally rich'. Linked to this is the associated Open Spaces Strategic Aim: 'Promote opportunities to value and enjoy the outdoors for recreation, learning and healthy living'.

Implications

11. Increasing the charges by 3% will ensure that costs are fully recovered for the provision of sports facilities and miscellaneous items for the 2013-14 period.

Conclusion

12. It is proposed that charges for sports pitches and miscellaneous items are increased by 3% for 2014-15 as shown in the above table.

Appendices

- None

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