

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	9 March 2015
<b>Subject:</b> Sports and Miscellaneous Charges for Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and the City Commons.	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and the City Commons	<b>For Decision</b>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report reviews the charges for sports facilities and miscellaneous items that are provided by the Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons Division and seeks approval for the proposed charges for 2015-16.</p> <p><b>Recommendation(s)</b></p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve the proposed charges for 2015-16</li> </ul>	

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. Charges for the provision of sports facilities and other items are reviewed annually. The charges for 2014-15 were approved by your Committee on 10 March 2014.
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 or cord wood may be produced as a bye-product of land management activities. Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and 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 green cord or logs at a discount. Logs are not sold directly to the public.

5. The division has three rooms suitable to be offered as meeting venues to external groups. The rooms at Burnham Beeches, Merlewood and Ashtead are available to use free of charge by groups whose activities contribute to the management of the Open Spaces. All other groups are charged.
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. This amounted to £2,400 in 2014-15.
8. Employees currently pay a donation for green cord wood. This arrangement will be formalised with the introduction of a standard charge in 2015-16.
9. A local bench marking exercise has been undertaken at Burnham Beeches to assess room hire charges. This has indicated that charges can be increased by up to 25% and remain competitive with other providers in the area.
10. The football pitch charge is commensurate with equivalent charges in the Croydon area. It is difficult to bench mark the charge for rugby pitches because they are not generally available for hire in the Bromley area.

### **Proposals**

11. It is proposed that a standard charge for green cord wood is introduced.
12. The table below shows that the proposed charges for room hire at Burnham Beeches increase on a sliding scale up to a maximum of £250 for a full day.
13. It is proposed that all other charges for 2015-16 are increased by 10%. This mirrors the increase that Your Committee recently approved on 12 January 2015 for charges at Epping Forest.
14. Charges that are subject to a percentage increase are rounded to simplify transactions.
15. The charges agreed for the 2014-15 financial year are currently being applied. They are shown in the following table, together with the proposed charges for next year.

<b>Item</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<b><u>Sports Charges</u></b>		
Spring Park, 2 Rugby Football Pitches (for Season)	£419.00	£461.00
Coulsdon Common, 1 Football Pitch (for season)	£225.00	£248.00

Item	2014-15 charge	2015-16 charge
<b>Miscellaneous Charges</b>		
Sale of split logs, per 3 tonne trailer load	£71.00	£78.00
Sale of green cord wood	Donation	£20/ trailer
Room hire at Ashtead and Merlewood (per hour)	£26.00	£29.00
Room hire at Burnham Beeches	½ day £85-£100. Full day £175 - £200 + £3 head for refreshments	½ day £100 - £125. Full day £200 - £250 + £3 a head for refreshments

### Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. The review of charges supports the City Corporation's Core Value 'The right services at the right price' and the associated departmental strategic aim of 'improving our use of resources through increased income generation...'

### Implications

15. Increasing the charges by 10% will ensure that costs are fully recovered for the provision of sports facilities and miscellaneous items for the 2015-16 period.

### Conclusion

16. It is proposed that charges for sports pitches and miscellaneous items are increased by the amounts shown in the above table.

### Appendices

- None

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