

Committee(s)	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	9 November 2015
Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee	18 November 2015
Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group	18 November 2015
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee – For Decision	23 November 2015
Subject: Fees and Charges 2016/17	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion

Summary

This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for a range of facilities and services provided at Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park for 2016/17.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The views of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee be received on the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
- The views of the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee be received on the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
- The views of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group be received on the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
- The views of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee, Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee, and Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee at their November meeting.
- The Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee agree the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

Main Report

Background

1. Charges for the wide range of recreation and sporting facilities that are provided in all the City Corporation's Open Spaces are reviewed annually. The current 2015/16 charges for Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park were approved by the Management Committee in November 2014.

Current Position

2. Over the summer, a Consultant was engaged to undertake a benchmarking exercise to compare the Hampstead Heath facilities charges with other local providers (see Appendix 2).
3. The Sports Advisory Forum have been consulted on the proposed charges for 2016/17. At the October meeting of the Sports Advisory Forum the Superintendent updated the Forum on the Service Based Review and the level of savings the Open Spaces Department is required to achieve over the next two financial years.
4. The review will require the Superintendent to look at alternative ways of delivering activities that are not part of our core obligations. This will involve exploring the possibility of using third-party providers for sports facilities, attracting sponsorship for sports, and increasing the income generated from these activities.
5. The proposed fees and charges include concessionary rates. Following the benchmarking exercise, a new revised concessionary charging policy has been proposed. This methodology will provide a consistent concessionary rate across the facilities which reflects a 40% discount on the standard adult charge.
6. Tennis courts at Queen's Park is currently charged by the half hour. From 2016/17 it is proposed that charging will be by the hour to provide consistency across the Division.
7. The charges for children's football coaching at Queen's Park and Highgate Wood have been removed. This is due to the introduction of licences to external coaches and providers.
8. Car parking fees were uplifted in 2015/16; therefore, it is not proposed to increase the charges for car parking in 2016/17.

Proposed Charges 2016/17

9. It is proposed that charges for 2016/17 be increased in line with the recommendations of the benchmarking exercise (Appendix 2). This exercise compared sporting facilities on a range of factors including location, price and quality. The prices set in Appendix 1 reflect the mid-range of the benchmarking exercise.
10. Where prices already reflected the mid-range price no further uplift has been proposed for 2016/17.
11. The Parliament Hill Bowling Club and Hampstead Heath Croquet Club have been consulted with respect to the revised charges for the facilities, as the public fees collected are passed on to the respective clubs.
12. Swimming charges have been reviewed and simplified. The book of 10 tickets for the price of 9 has been discontinued due to limited uptake in previous years.
13. For 2016/17, the prices for compound hire have been included for the first time. This is to assist the Superintendent when negotiating fees with

Contactors employed by neighbouring properties, businesses and organisations.

14. The charging year for Weddings and Civil ceremonies has been revised and brought into line with the financial year. Accordingly, the proposed charges from 1 April 2017 have been included in Appendix 1. It is necessary to set the charges for Weddings and Civil ceremonies two years in advance, as the bookings diary is opened on 1 January 2016 for 2017 ceremonies.
15. The charges for Education and Play have not been updated for 2016/17 as they will now form part of the Open Spaces Department Learning Programme, and will therefore be set for the Department at a later date.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. The current Management Policy Plan states at Policy 78 that *“recreational facilities will be managed in a way which recognises the right and ability of everyone to use and enjoy the Heath ...”* The proposals set out in this report contain a range of charges with concessionary rates that have been assessed against other local providers.
17. 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’*.
18. Income generation forms a critical contribution towards delivering the required level of savings over the next two years.

Implications

19. 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

20. The proposed sports and recreation fees and charges have been determined by a number of factors, not least providing continued access to sports facilities while encouraging young people to participate. The proposed fees and charges for 2016/17 introduce a standardised concessionary discount of 40% to ensure consistency.
21. It is also recognised that it will be necessary in the coming years to continue to review how charges are levied across all facilities, to ensure the required level of Service Based Review savings are achieved.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed Fees and Charges for 2016/17

Appendix 2 – Benchmarking exercise data

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