

TOWN AREA COMMITTEE**21 NOVEMBER 2016****REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS****2017/18****SPORTS PITCH HIRE & CEMETERY SERVICE FEE AND CHARGE ADJUSTMENT****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with further information in regards to the council's annual fee and charge review, specifically the proposed increase for a number of cemetery service charges as well as a proposed increase to the current sports pitch hire charge.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members approve the proposed 2017/18 fee and charge adjustments for the hire of the main Sports Village sports pitch as detailed in the table at section 3.11 of this report.
- 2.2 Members approve the proposed 2017/18 fee and charge adjustments for elements of the cemetery service as detailed at section 3.14 of this report.

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The council's annual review of fees and charges is essentially the point in time each year that the existing level of fees and charges are reviewed with consideration for: the level of inflation, benchmark authority charges for similar services and the charging level for any comparable local service alternatives that might be accessed as opposed to the councils service and therefore might influence the councils determination of adjusting its own fee and charge income / cost level.

- 3.2 This report considers the 2017/18 proposed charging level for both the hire of the newly created sports pitch at the councils recently acquired Sports Village site and in regards to the council's cemetery service a number of significant charging adjustments to various elements of that service.

3.3 2015/16 AVAILABLE COUNCIL PITCH HIRE

- 3.4 In 2015/16 there were 2 council managed football pitch sites available for hire, the Country park and Thorpe end, both in Melton Mowbray. The Thorpe end pitch is used annually, and solely by a single junior Sunday league team who have been permitted to use the pitch in lieu of a charge (the current block season booking charge is £292 for up to 20 matches) for maintaining the playing area (cutting and marking) of the pitch themselves. The Country park pitches (x2) are currently still in use and maintained by the council, however there are no longer any changing

facilities fit for purpose, the pitches themselves are in essence being over played and are becoming increasingly degraded and a decision has been made to close these pitches down permanently and look to transfer all official football matches up to the new Sports Village site.

3.5 SPORTS VILLAGE PITCH HIRE

3.6 The Sports Village site offers a much improved facility for the hire of the new football pitch. This new site offers good quality changing, shower and toilet facilities for both the teams as well as the match officials. Additionally a recently installed covered stand with seating is a significant improvement over what was offered formally at the country park site. The new pitch itself offers a new and well-maintained playing surface with new barriers, fencing and lighting which together with a high level of upkeep equates to a quality sports pitch with good associated player and spectator facilities.

3.7 An extensive review of sports pitch hire charges carried out between January and March 2016 looked at all similar Leicestershire local authority pitch hire charges. After analysing the results from this exercise, it was found that Melton Borough Council is currently charging considerably lower fees compared to the rest of the Leicestershire local authorities.

3.8 The table below shows the high, low, median and average single use hire charge with changing facilities.

3.9

Bench marking statistics combined basket	High	Low	Median (7x Leicestershire Districts)	Average	MBC current price is higher/lower to median
Hire of pitch and *changing facilities- (2016/17 Melton charges)		MBC- £30 for both			
Adult £30	£91	£30	£60	£60	- 50%
Junior £30	£69	£26	£35.50	£43.50	- 15.5%

*Changing facilities are no longer available in the Country Park , the Thorpe end site does have basic changing facilities but it should be noted that these are in decline

3.10 The table at 3.11 suggests a 2017/18 single use football pitch hire charge adjustment for Melton considering both the average charge from the above comparators group for adult rates plus changing facilities (all hire charges now to include changing /shower /toilet facilities) with some allowance for current financial limitations whilst offering a competitive commercial charge. Melton does not currently offer a lower charge for Junior football however a suggested charge for junior football plus changing based on the average charge from the above table is included for consideration. Lastly it suggests an uplift in the charge for the block booking of a sports pitch that has been calculated to offer a substantial discount over

multiple single use pitch hire bookings , offering customers good value (the proposed season block booking equates to £20.40 per match) for up to 20 matches per season with any additional income that may be generated to be used to help cover the increased costs of higher maintenance and general upkeep levels.

3.11

Amenity	Description	2016/17	2017/18
Football	Hire of Pitch and Changing Facilities		
	Adult	£30 00	£50.00
	Junior	£30.00	(£43.50)
	Adult or Junior block booking (Up to 20 matches)	£292	£488

3.12 CEMETERY SERVICE CHARGING

3.13 The annual review of cemetery charges utilises a benchmark group of authorities with corporate cemetery services that has previously been used for the same purpose.

:Information provided in Appendix A was used to determine the 2017/18 cemetery charge and fee adjustments and where applicable it shows benchmark group comparator charges. It will be noted that not all elements of the cemetery service are provided by all the groups' authorities; however there is sufficient information to suggest Melton's charge and fee adjustments with regards to charges elsewhere levied by authorities that are roughly comparable.

:This report has been prepared to offer information and detail as to the level of the proposed 2017/18 fee and or charge uplifts suggested for both sports pitch hire and a number of cemetery service provisions. Some of the proposed increases are significant due mostly to periods where 'inflation only' adjustments have been applied annually.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report provides some detail in regards to the factors considered when proposing annual fee and charge adjustments, as such it is not expected to directly give rise to any policy or corporate implications.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report does propose a number of significant fee and or charge increases and therefore there will be a financial implication in regards to the potential income levels that might be expected as a result of either supporting or rejecting the proposed adjustments. There are no direct resource implications as a result of this report.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 There are not expected to be any legal or powers implications as a result of this report.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There are not expected to be any community safety implications as a direct result of this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 There are no direct equalities issues or implication that should result from this report. The proposed adjustment to the sports pitch hire charge is intended to bring this council charge into line with other charging levels for similar provisions in this area. With the cemetery charges being comparable with other nearby charges.

9.0 RISKS

9.1 **Probability**



Very High A					Risk No.	Description
High B						
Significant C		1,2			1	Members do not approve the proposed increase for sports pitch hire
Low D					2	Members do not approve the proposed increases for the cemetery service
Very Low E						
Almost Impossible F						
	IV Negligible	III Marginal	II Critical	I Catastrophic		

→
Impact

10.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 There are no climate change implications as a result of this report.

11.0 **CONSULTATION**

11.1 The proposed fee and charge adjustments have been subject to a number of challenges and qualifications, they have been drawn up following internal discussion to reflect the current charges being applied for similar services by benchmark authorities as well as the annual inflation rate and have been debated with reference to the cost

of any local alternatives that might be available.

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 The councils sports pitch hire is available to anyone who wants to book and hire it therefore it is of relevance to all the wards within the Borough .The cemetery service is available to all residents of the Borough but is specifically there to provide a corporate cemetery for residents of Melton Mowbray (and therefore wards Sysonby, Newport Egerton Dorian & Warwick will be mostly effected) Outside of the Town the many village and Parish cemeteries responsible for their own fees and charges are provided for residents living local to them.

Contact Officer R Selvon

Date: 11th November 2016

Appendices : Appendix A- Cemetery charges benchmarking

Background Papers: None

Reference : X : Committees\TAC\2016-17\211116\HR- Fees and Charges