

## Leisure and Sports Services Pricing Policy 2015/16



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| <b>Document Number</b>      | A unique identifier will be assigned to an approved policy.  |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>  | Head of Sport, Leisure and Community Development.  |
| <b>Contact Officer</b>      | Head of Sport, Leisure and Community Development   |
| <b>Approval</b>             | Policy: Recommended on the 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, Service Transformation Committee.<br>Ratified by Council on the 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2015.<br><br>Schedule of Charges: Recommended on the 9 <sup>th</sup> February 2015, Service Transformation Committee.<br>Ratified by Council on the 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2015. |
| <b>Effective Date</b>       | 1 April 2015   |
| <b>Modifications</b>        | N/A  |
| <b>Superseded Documents</b> | Derry City Council Leisure and Sports Pricing Policy<br>Strabane District Council Leisure and Sports Pricing Policy.   |
| <b>Review Date</b>          | Reviewed at the conclusion of the 12 week equality impact assessment consultation and on an annual basis as part of the budget estimates process.  |
| <b>File Number</b>          | TBC  |
| <b>Associated Documents</b> | Leisure and Sports Services Schedule of Charges (Appendix A)<br>Leisure and Sports Services Concession Summary (Appendix B)<br>Equality Screening Questionnaire (Appendix C)   |

## **1. Preamble**

### **1.1 Purpose**

1.1.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council Leisure and Sports Services Pricing Policy aims to:

- a) Ensure a consistent approach to pricing and charges across all leisure and sports facilities/services within Derry City and Strabane District Council.
- b) Provide value for money fairly and equally to all and to assist with increasing public access to Council facilities.
- c) Increase the number of people utilising the leisure and other facilities and so contribute to the health of the population and the quality of life.
- d) Ensure that prices are comparable with competitors in the Derry City and Strabane District Council area and on a regional basis.
- e) Demonstrate equality and transparency throughout the pricing policy and the associated schedule of charges.
- f) Ensure the policy will be practicable in that the processes involved will take full account of the need to show respect and recognise issues of dignity.

1.1.2 The policy sets out how the Council will approach and review pricing going forward.

1.1.3 The policy is for the information of staff, elected members, clubs, organisations and members of the public.

### **1.2 Background**

1.2.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council aims to provide value for money leisure and sports services to all its stakeholders including customers, citizens, visitors, clubs, organisations and businesses.

1.2.2 Having a standardised value for money pricing structure is an essential part of the Councils business, key to improving our services and designated as a key priority by elected members for the new Derry City and Strabane District Council.

1.2.3 As part of the leisure and sports services convergence process, a scoping exercise of prices in Derry City Council and Strabane District Council was completed and a charges working group made up of both officers and elected members was established to help create the new leisure and sports services pricing policy and schedule of charges for the Council.

1.2.4 In consultation with Derry City and Strabane District Councils Equality Manager, an equality screening process was undertaken on the pricing policy and schedule of charges with the outcome being to 'Screen In' the new policy with a 12 week

equality impact assessment to be completed in parallel with the introduction of the policy.

1.2.5 The pricing policy was approved and ratified by the new Derry City & Strabane District Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015 with the Schedule of Charges approved and ratified on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

1.2.6 The new pricing policy and schedule of charges was implemented on 1 April 2015.

## **2. Scope**

2.1.1 The policy works on the basis of establishing a standardised 'Flat Rate' price for all leisure and sports activities and facility hire for the Derry City & Strabane District Council with any concessions, discounts or commercial discretion calculated on a percentage, plus or minus from the flat rate.

- a) It has been acknowledged that previous prices are already heavily subsidised and set well below market rates.
- b) The policy aims to align and standardise free of charge (FOC) concession pricing on designated activities for those aged over 65 with the national retirement age.
- c) The policy aims to retain free of charge concession pricing on designated activities for those aged under 5 years.
- d) The policy aims to standardise concession pricing on designated activities for children, juniors, over 65's, full time students and the economically disadvantaged, at 75% of Flat Rate.
- e) The policy aims to establish clear eligibility criteria outlining definitions of concessions, eligibility restrictions and evidence/proof required to obtain a concession.
- f) Off Peak pricing rates of 75% of 'Flat Rate' have been introduced based on a reduced schedule of charges for designated activities on identified days and times for pay and play activities.
- g) Discretionary pricing flexibility with strict approval processors have been retained to allow scope for sales promotions, official Council supported events and member service issues etc.
- h) The standardisation of commercial rates at 300% to be applied when subsidised facilities are hired to commercial organisations.

- i) An equality impact assessment on the new policy is to be commissioned and a review of the policy completed at the conclusion of the assessment process and on an annual basis.

### **3. Definitions**

3.1.1 A list of key definitions that relate to the policy and schedule of charges are outlined below. For further detail on concession definitions and eligibility criteria please refer to the concession summary in Appendix 2.

- a) Flat Rate – The standardised rate or peak rate for admission to an activity.
- b) Off Peak – Monday to Friday before 5:00pm and all day Sunday.
- c) Off Peak Rate - A discounted rate based on 75% of flat rate at off peak times.
- d) Concession – An eligibility criteria for discounted admission rates.
- e) Concession Rate - A discounted rate based on 75% of flat rate.
- f) Free of Charge – Free Admission to a designated activity.
- g) Child/Junior – Those aged 5 – 17, under 18 years until 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.
- h) Full Time Student – Those in enrolled in full time tertiary education.
- i) Economically disadvantaged – Those in receipt of a designated benefit.

### **4. Policy Statement**

#### **4.1 Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **4.1.1 Director**

- a) Ensure the policy adheres to all Council policies and procedures.
- b) Ensure the policy is aligned to the Councils corporate objectives and community plan.
- c) Ensure the policy adheres to all Council governance procedures.
- d) Authorise and approve the policy for committee recommendation.
- e) Present the policy for approval and Council committee.
- f) Approve the implementation of the policy.

##### **4.1.2 Head of Service**

- a) Establish development and review of the policy and schedule of charges for director approval.
- b) Oversee the implementation and communication of the policy.
- c) Ensure the policy is being adhered to throughout the service.
- d) Authorise any discretions associated with the policy.
- e) Assist the director in their responsibilities.

#### 4.1.3 Service Managers

- a) Ensure the implementation and communication of the policy to relevant staff and customers within their facilities and area of responsibility.
- b) Ensure the policy is being adhered to on a day to day basis within their facilities and area of responsibility.
- c) Ensure the appropriate application of commercial rates, concession admission, off peak admission and all policy variables.
- d) Ensure appropriate authorisation of commercial rates and discretionary flexibility is in place as required.
- e) Assist the head of service in their responsibilities.

#### 4.1.4 Duty Officers/Supervisors/Lead Attendants.

- a) Ensure they have a knowledge and understanding on all aspects of the policy and seek clarification as required.
- b) Ensure relevant staff within their site have a knowledge and understanding on all aspects of the policy and seek clarification as required.
- c) Ensure the policy is implemented and communicated to relevant staff on their site and within their area of responsibility.
- d) Ensure the policy is being adhered to on a day to day basis on their site and within their area of responsibility.
- e) Address any non-compliance to the policy and inform their line manager of any breach of policy.
- f) Ensure the policy is communicated appropriately to customers and users of their site and area of responsibility.
- g) Ensure front of house systems are updated and correlate with the most recent schedule of charges outlined.
- h) Assist the service manager in their responsibilities.

#### 4.1.5 Front of House Staff

- a) Ensure they have a knowledge and understanding on all aspects of the policy and seek clarification as required.
- b) Ensure compliance with the policy at all times and ensure it is being adhered to on a day to day basis on their site and within their area of responsibility.
- c) Address any queries from customers and escalate these queries to the duty manager as required. (e.g. commercial rates).
- d) Ensure appropriate eligibility and proof for concession members is obtained and kept on record.
- e) Ensure front of house systems are correlated with the most recent schedule of charges outlined and escalate any discrepancies to the duty manager as required.
- f) Assist the duty manager with their responsibilities.

#### 4.1.6 All Staff

- a) Ensure they have a knowledge and understanding on relevant aspects policy and seek clarification as required.
- b) Ensure compliance with the policy at all times and ensure it is being adhered to on a day to day basis.
- c) Escalate any questions, queries or non-compliance to the relevant officer as required.

#### 4.2 General Principles

In general all staff are responsible for ensuring the correct and appropriate application of the policy however staff within key areas of the service such as front of house and duty officers primarily will be responsible and accountable for ensuring the policy is adhered to at all times.

### 5. Legal & Policy Framework

#### 5.1 Linkage to Corporate Plan

Derry City and Strabane District Council's corporate plan 2015 – 2019, sets out Council's commitment to deliver improved service delivery and value for money. Fundamental to this commitment is the structure and standardisations of the leisure and sports pricing policy working in parallel with quality service provision.

### 6. Impact Assessment

6.1 The leisure and sports services policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment and a copy of the equality impact assessment screening questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

6.1.1 An equality impact assessment has been commissioned including a 12 week consultation process.

#### 6.2 Impact on Staff and Financial Resources

6.2.1 It is acknowledged that there may be a period of adjustment whilst staff become familiar with the new policy and pricing structures and schedule of charges.

6.2.2 It is not envisaged that there will be any significant ongoing implementation issues in regard to staff and financial resources. In the short term, however, resources will be required to make staff aware of the new policy and in reviewing existing processes. It is considered that these requirements can be met within existing resources.

#### 6.3 Sustainable Development

6.3.1 In so far as the policy promotes engagement of citizens through the screening in of the equality impact assessment, subsequent consultation processors, and

annual reviews of the policy being in place, there is a positive contribution towards the Sustainable Development Duty.

## **6.4 Other impacts**

- 6.4.1 The adoption of the policy will facilitate a more robust and standardised approach to pricing across the organisations leisure and sports services and facilities.

## **7.0 Implementation**

### **7.1 Responsibilities**

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Head of Service with other employee responsibilities outlined in section 4.1 of the policy.

### **7.2 Support and Advice**

For the policy to be successful, all staff within the leisure and sports services department will have to have the confidence and knowledge of the policy, its structure and its intended application and understand their responsibilities. Briefings outlining the key changes and new structures of the policy will also be provided.

New employees will be provided with information on this policy as part of their induction training. Ongoing support and guidance in relation to the operation of this policy will be provided.

### **7.3 Guidelines and Forms**

The schedule of charges, concession summary, site specific pricing guides, publicity and information are all relevant in the implementation of the policy.

### **7.4 Communication Strategy**

Information on pricing will be available in all leisure and sports facilities and their associated web and social media sites.

This policy will be available on request from a Lead Officer for governance and improvement and will also be accessible through the council's website. [www.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com](http://www.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com).

Responsibility for the communication of this policy to staff lies with the service managers.

### **7.5 Health and Safety**

The Council recognises that dealing with the public can cause anxiety, particularly where there is a risk of aggression, verbal abuse and violence. Such issues should be identified through the risk assessment process and suitable control measures introduced.

## 7.6 Risk Management

Failure to comply effectively with the policy may lead to lost opportunities to improve council services, generate revenue and future sustainability of the service.

## 7.7 Monitoring, review, evaluation.

Monitoring of the policy will be completed by staff as outlined in section 4.1 above. In addition to this the Councils internal audit processors will also contribute to the monitoring process.

Reviews and evaluations of the policy will be completed at the conclusion of the equality impact assessment consultation period and annual evaluations and reviews of the policy will be aligned with the budget estimations process for the Council.