



**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 15 March 2024

**Subject:** Museum Admission Charges Increases

**Report by:** Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Steve Pitt

**Wards affected:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

To update Members on increases in Museums Service admission fees and charges.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 To approve the admission charges as referred to in this report and as listed in Appendix 1.**

**2.2 That the Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services is given the authority to offer pricing in line with these fees and charges for bespoke requests.**

**3. Background**

3.1 In line with Audit Commission recommendations and Financial Rules the admission fees have been reviewed and market rates applied where appropriate. In the majority of cases, the increase is in line with CPI.

3.2 The museum service offers free admission to all its historic venues with the exception of the D-Day Story and Charles Dicken's Birthplace. Charles Dicken's Birthplace is free for all PO1-6 residents and schools. The D-day Story offers extensive discounts of up to 40% to all local residents every year. In addition, the museum team are running an ambitious D-Day 80 sponsorship drive to fund up to 10,000 local children to visit the museum for free including transport and



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an educational session. Sponsorship for over 1,400 children has already been secured. This project will focus primarily on low-income areas.

- 3.3 The D-Day Story and Charles Dickens Birthplace Museum admission tickets are priced very reasonably in comparison to other heritage attractions and general days out.
- 3.4 The Charles Dicken's Birthplace admission fees have not been raised for a considerable amount of time and given that admission will remain free to local people the proposal is to raise them by 20 % from the 1 April, 2024. This is still a very competitive price and accounts for the years where the price has remained the same. See appendix 1 for increases.
- 3.5 The D-Day Story admission fees were last raised in 2023 by 6% with no adverse effect or complaints. The admission price had not been recently raised in the years before that. It is therefore proposed to raise the admission tickets by 11% from the 1 April 2024. Leisure card holders will still receive a 40% discount and veterans of WW2 remain free.

## 4. **Reasons for recommendations**

These increases are necessary to meet service income targets and balance the rising costs of services and staff. The increase is necessary to address a budget shortfall. With so much on offer for free this is the best opportunity the service currently has for immediate and resource efficient income generation. There is a very low risk of any adverse feedback at all because of these increases which will bring the D-Day Story and Charles Dicken's Birthplace Museum closer in line with comparative venues. These charges have been benchmarked against a variety of local attractions. For example, a visit to D-Day Story will still be cheaper than a visit to the Spinnaker Tower. As we grow visitor numbers, particularly in this anniversary year of D-Day 80, this will have a positive cumulative effect to meet our income targets. This proposal has been thoroughly benchmarked against other local attractions and days out. See Appendix 2.

## 5. **Integrated impact assessment**

- 5.1 Integrates Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 3



**6. Legal implications**

6.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

**7. Director of Finance's comments**

7.1 The proposed increases are necessary if the Museums Service is to achieve its budgeted income targets. The impact of these prices increases on visitor numbers will need to be closely monitored, with future year's pricing reviewed should it be significantly detrimental.

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Signed by:

**Stephen Baily**

**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Admission Charges 2024 - 2025

Appendix 2 - Benchmarking

Appendix 3- Integrated Impact Assessment

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on



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Signed by:  
**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**