



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

Date of meeting: 15 March 2024

Subject: Parks Fees and Charges

Report by: Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Cabinet Member: Councillor Steve Pitt

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To seek approval for annual changes to the fees and charges levied for the use of Parks facilities for the financial year 2024-2025.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the fees and charges be approved in accordance with the attached schedules (Appendix A).

3. Background

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

3.2 Please refer to Appendix A 'Charges for 2023/24' for the proposed list of charges.

3.3 Site hire fees increase in line with CPI. Clarification is sought for charity events to provide assurance the money is being received by the named charities. Additionally where a commercial company is organising an event to raise money for charity and therefore paying the charity hire rate, a minimum donation to the charity equivalent to the difference between the charity hire rate and that of the commercial hire rate of the land would be expected.



- 3.4 The Reviving Victoria Park project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund is reaching conclusion on delivery of the capital works, with planned activities running until 2026. During this time the activities plan promotes a large number of events of differing types and sizes, as well as playing host to other community and commercial events that will be encouraged to use the park as a venue. The project team have developed guidance for events considered to be a 'good fit' for the park and an events pack to inform potential organisers of the amenities available, restrictions that will apply and the application process.
- 3.5 Charges are closely aligned to those already shown on the schedule for other parks and open spaces, but with a range to cater for differing sizes and funding parameters. The additional category for stalls allows assessment based on the number and size of stalls and a further category for food and drink concessions attending project events.
- 3.6 Personal and fitness trainer charges increase in line with CPI. A permit application fee is retained due to the administration involved in setting up a permit, but renewal fees have been removed to encourage annual update of relevant documentation. The deposit charge is £300 and consistent with the charge for events (where applicable).
- 3.7 Sports charges including football, cricket and rugby pitch hire charges increase in line with CPI.
- 3.8 Local benchmarking has shown the current charge to hire an adult football pitch, with use of changing rooms, is the lowest charge of any local authority in Hampshire.
- 3.9 The hire charges for the newly created Artificial Grass Pitches and grass pitches at King George V Football Complex are to be set by the operator, Hampshire Football Association to reflect the local market and quality of facilities available. The price for a grass pitch for a partner club matches the rate for hire of a council maintained pitch for the remainder of this season. These prices will be reviewed annually.
- 3.10 Great Salterns Golf Course continues to produce a net income for the council. Golfers pay for their round either by purchasing a season ticket, or by purchasing a 'pay-and-play' green fee. The course has retained an increased season ticket membership (compared to pre-pandemic) and the number of rounds played continues to outperform the south regional figures.
- 3.11 The course offers extremely good value locally and satisfaction levels are considered to be high. It is recommended that rather than applying inflationary increases, any increases are carefully targeted where opportunities are identified. Season ticket prices are proposed to increase by £10-30 subject to age and ticket type and green fees proposed to increase by £1, as shown in Appendix A.



- 3.12 Great Salterns promotes active and healthy lifestyles to all residents with a 40% discount on green fees to Leisure Card holders and concessionary rates to juniors, young adults and senior citizens.
- 3.13 Where course conditions are temporarily affected by factors outside the council's control, it is proposed that the Parks Manager and Course Professional may be given authority to apply a reasonable temporary reduction to green fees for the duration considered necessary.
- 3.14 The use of buggies is not permitted on the course when the course is waterlogged (usually over the winter months). Whilst this may lead to a reduced number of holes available on the course, those players who rely on a buggy may not be able to play at all. For 2024/25, it is proposed to apply a 15% discount to the cost of a season ticket to any player who is registered as an authorised buggy user at the course and holding the required insurance.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 Charges have been reviewed and adjusted, where appropriate, to reflect the rates currently being charged in the market, maximising income, but also ensuring value for money and retaining discounted rates where possible to charitable organisations and Leisure card holders.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix B.

6. Legal implications

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

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1 The fees and charges have been reviewed taking into account the need to maximise income whilst ensuring that services remain competitive.

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Signed by:

Stephen Baily
Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Appendices:

- Appendix A - Charges for 2024/25
- Appendix B - 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