

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 26TH MARCH 2008

CHARGES FOR LEISURE SERVICE 2008/09

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for revised charges for a range of Leisure Services provided by the Council for implementation from 1st April 2008.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 Within a framework of Best Value it is necessary to regularly review services and associated charges in order to continuously improve and ensure an appropriate balance of business and social objectives
- 2.2 In 1998, the Council approved a policy on charging which was based upon the Accounts Commission publication 'The Challenge of Charging'. The revised prices contained within the appendices of this report have been developed in accordance with the principles of this policy.
- 2.3 This report covers charges for Arts and Museums; Leisure Development; Library, Registration and Information Services; Dean Castle Country Park / Countryside Services; and elements of Outdoor Amenities services. Separate reports have been issued to cover Community Recreation (as charges are being jointly reviewed in conjunction with the Educational and Social Services Department) and Cemeteries.
- 2.4 A number of key factors and approaches have been utilised in determining the proposed charges for these services and these include specific service reviews in areas such as golf courses and sports coaching, current market trends, comparable costs of other local authorities and private sector providers and the impact on customer demand. Appendices 1 to 5 outline details of the proposed charges on a service by service basis.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The increases submitted for approval should raise overall income by 3% which matches the assumption made during the budget construction process. The proposed charges seek to balance the need to generate increased income with the need to provide services at affordable prices.
- 3.2 It is difficult to accurately predict total income levels and the impact of increases in charges on income generated for specific activities, however based on knowledge of the local market, it is expected that the prices proposed in this report will allow income targets to be met.

4. LEGAL/ POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The review of charges is in line with the Council's policy on charging for services.

5. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's Leisure Services Assist in the delivery of a wide range of the outcomes of the Community Plan. Charges have been reviewed and proposed to ensure that accessibility for the whole community is balanced with the need to meet income targets.

- 5.2 In terms of the Eliminating Poverty Theme of the Community Plan Leisure Services respond directly to Aim 3 action 3.3 as detailed below

- 'to promote and support access to leisure, recreational and cultural activities'

Recorded outputs associated with this action include a broad range of free or reduced access services for the whole community including the SHOUT card for over 8,000 primary school aged children incorporating free kids clubs and free swimming, reduced cost CHIP Health development classes and free access to lifestyle referral and the CHIP Van , free access to a network of walking groups through the CATCH walking development initiative, free access for young people to an extensive range of diversionary activities including night leagues, StreetSport cages and StreetSport express, discounted tickets at the palace Theatre, free access to a events at Dean Castle Country Park and free access to a wide range of library and information services.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) approve the proposed charges outlined in Appendices 1 to 5 to be implemented from 1st April 2008; and
- (ii) otherwise note the content of this report

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG
14th March 2008

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Implementation Officer – (john.griffiths@east-ayrshire.gov.uk)