

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2000

REVIEW OF CHARGES IN THE LETTING POLICY FOR COMMUNITY USE

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to advise members of the Education Committee of proposals to review the charges for accommodation use by community groups and to inform members about proposed review of the letting policy which will consider affording priority to out of school groups.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** A joint Letting Policy was agreed and has been in place for three years between Community Services Department and Community Education Service, standardising the charges and categories of subsidy agreed for the community use of schools and community services halls.
- 2.2** The Letting Policy identifies groups and organisations which the Council wishes to support in kind through the offer of subsidised access to council accommodation.
- 2.3** Within the Education Department, the Letting Policy takes account of the finite budget available to open schools outwith school hours to community groups, by the application of a letting plan across the Council Area.
- 2.4** The Letting Plan takes account of regular use of facilities and other facilities available locally. The plan endeavours to balance access, rationalise use of establishments and seeks to minimise the occasions when an establishment is open for only one user group.
- 2.5** The council supports a large number of community groups through the letting of premises. In the last financial year in excess of 13,000 lets were processed by Community Education for educational establishments.

3. REPORT

- 3.1** The Letting Policy in East Ayrshire presently recognises 7 separate categories of lets which differentiate the level of subsidy offered to each group or organisation. The Letting policy is attached as Appendix 1.

3.2 As a Council we have invested heavily in public consultation and while the policy is complex, leaflets which detail local information and accommodation availability have been produced and distributed through local offices and community groups.

3.3 The rate known as the economic rate takes account of the economic cost of the let. At present it is based on an average breakdown of costs across all educational establishments. The average breakdown is :

- £11 per janitor hour;
- £2 per cleaner hour;
- £16 per hour for property costs. Total £29 per hour.

3.4 It is proposed to increase the full economic rate by £1. This will result in an hourly increase of between 2p and 50p for the majority of user groups, depending on the subsidy which the group attracts:

	<u>2000/01</u>	<u>1999/2000</u>
Large Unit (Games Hall etc)	£35 per hour	£34 per hour
Medium Unit (Gym, Dining Hall etc)	£29 per hour	£28 per hour
Small Unit (Classroom etc)	£24 per hour	£23 per hour

3.5 As part of the budget process for 2000/2001 there has been a general inflation rate of 2.5%.

3.6 It is proposed to implement this increase from January 2001.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The department has an income target which is directly affected by letting charges. Although difficult to predict, it is anticipated that approval of this proposed increase will increase the income for the department by £2000 which will be offset by increased costs.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This review of charges is in line with the Councils policy of charging for services.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- (i) agree to the revised charges for the joint letting policy as detailed; and
- (ii) agree implementation of the revised charges from 1 January 2001;
and
- (iii) note the content of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

JM/AJ/SB
3 October 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: (01563) 576104, or Anne Jackson, Principal Community Education Officer, Tel: (01563) 576126.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR

Category 1 - Special Commercial Events - Negotiated Rate

- Any Special Events run on a commercial basis; for example Commercial concerts or Commercial dances i.e. large scale events

Category 2 - Standard Commercial Events - Full Economic Rate (FER) plus 15%

- All commercial lets run for financial gain or profit by individuals or commercial organisations; for example Sales, exhibitions or fairs, fashion shows.

Category 3 - Fund-raising and Social Events - 50% of FER

- Community or private events run for social, not financial gain; for example weddings, birthday parties, organisation's social events
- Fund-raising events run by youth, voluntary, charitable and not for profit organisations.
- Recreational commercial lets run on a regular basis targeting young people
- Departmental use outwith the letting plan
- MP surgeries
- Councillors surgeries outwith the establishment's letting plan

Category 4 - Parents Groups fund-raising - 20% of FER

- Fund-raising events run by Parents Organisations in support of their school activities - a maximum of 2 per year per school.

Category 5 - Regular meetings - 10% of FER

Within the establishment's letting plan :

- Regular community group lets e.g. mother and toddlers, sports groups, school activities youth groups, community councils, church groups and community group committee meetings;
- Meetings of political groups (including business of political parties) and trades unions

Category 6 - Priority Areas, as identified in Regeneration Strategy - 50% of Cat 5 Charge

- all groups named above in Category 5

Category 7 - 100% Remission of rate

- departmental use of their own premises, within the letting plan
- councillors surgeries within the establishment's letting plan.

Elections

In respect of the use of Council premises for all elections, charges will be set in accordance with National Provisions in force.

Charges

Large Units - including assembly halls, main halls dining halls, games halls, theatres, lecture halls and swimming pools.

- £34 per hour

Medium Units - including small halls, gymnasia and kitchens

- £28 per hour

Small Units - including classrooms, general purpose rooms, meeting rooms, workshops, dressing rooms and staff rooms

- £23 per hour

NB Any additional janitation/cleaning costs will require to be charged separately.

AGENDA