

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT**

To: COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE EDUCATION COMMITTEE		Subject: COMMUNITY FACILITIES: REVIEW OF CHARGES AND LETTING GUIDELINES 2001/2002
From: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION		
Date: 21 December 2000	Ref: JMcG/JS/MC	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This paper refers to those buildings available for let under the control of the Department of Community Services but excluding the Civic Centre, Airdrie Town Hall, and Bellshill Cultural Centre.
- 1.2 At a special meeting on Wednesday 3 November 1999 the community services committee approved a new set of charges and guidelines for the let of community centre, schools, community education centres and libraries. The new charges were implemented at the beginning of the current financial year and it was agreed that they should be reviewed annually thereafter.
- 1.3 This paper sets out amendments to be introduced in the light of operational experience. It also proposes further harmonisation of certain charges in line with sport and recreation facilities.

2. REVIEW OF CHARGES

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 It is proposed that the cost of all lets will rise in line with the forthcoming budget settlement for 2001/2002. It is further proposed that hours or parts thereof be charged at the full hourly rate.
- 2.1.2 In addition it is proposed that the cost for the let of a sports hall for adult team sports on Sundays will be harmonised with charges for similar facilities in sports centres.
- 2.1.3 The cost of all school football pitches and pools for non-school use will be brought into line with those charged by the sport and recreation section of the community services department.
- 2.1.4 For groups with running lets presently within Categories 1 to 3 of the letting guidelines one-off special social events including fundraisers will be charged at Category 3 rates.

2.2 Where school building is let by the day school involved

- 2.2.1 Prior to the most recent reorganisation of the Council the education department had implemented a revised policy regarding the above. This policy allocated a sum of money direct to schools to cover the cost of those activities generated and supported by the school which took place outwith normal janitorial hours. A central budget to cover strategic use of schools for sport, music and cultural initiatives was also established. Schools were recharged by the Community Education Service at the Janitors hourly rate when they used the school as the 'sole' user.
- 2.2.2 It is proposed that this system be fully reinstated and that schools be charged for PTA, School Board and other school sponsored activities at the appropriate janitorial hourly rate.
- 2.2.3 Where the school is not the sole lessee such lets will continue to be provided free of charge.

3. NOTICE GIVEN BY LESSEES

- 3.1 It is intended that a standard 14 day notice period for lets be retained. There have been problems with a number of lessees not giving timeous notice. This causes disruption particularly where one lessee has to be moved or a let cancelled to allow a special function (e.g. parents evening, wedding) to take place.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the community services and education departments issue a joint circular emphasising the need for forward planning of lets so that community groups are not unduly disadvantaged or disrupted.
- 3.3 Running lets in schools will only be cancelled if the school wishes to use the accommodation for specific educational purposes (e.g. exams, parents evenings).

4. HIGH RISK LETS

- 4.1 It is proposed that for particular social functions which have potential risk regarding public nuisance or damage to property officers are given discretion as to which buildings are used and the termination time of such lets.

5. SCHOOL LETTING YEAR

- 5.1 The present school letting year includes a break for the October school holiday week and a very early December finish for running lets. It is proposed that school buildings be open for let during the October week and that the letting period be extended by one week in December.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The harmonised let charges and guidelines introduced a year ago have generally operated successfully. Close monitoring has identified certain areas where further rationalisation was needed and others, such as social events where clarification of the application of guidelines was required. The amendments set out in the above report should lead to a more equitable, logical and transparent usage pattern for community facilities.

6.2 Members are asked to:

- (i) approve the amendments to the letting charges and associated guidelines for community facilities set out above.

Paul Gutas
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