



Report of the Director Environments & Neighbourhoods

Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 28th June 2007

Subject: Community Centre Lettings Policy Review

Electoral Wards Affected:		Specific Implications For:	
Headingley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Equality and Diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hyde Park & Woodhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disabled People	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirkstall	<input type="checkbox"/>	Narrowing the Gap	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weetwood	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)		
Council Function	<input type="checkbox"/>	Delegated Executive Function available for Call In	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report
			<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

In April 2007, the Area Committee was delegated authority over community centres currently managed by Learning & Leisure, to add to its current portfolio of centres in the area. The purpose of this report is to gain approval to begin a review of the pricing policy across all community centres managed by the Area Committee, including consultation with user groups, to ensure that all organisations are charged a standard rate for the use of the centres.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Community centres play a vital role within the local community, hosting a variety of activities aimed at meeting the needs of local residents. These range from luncheon clubs for older people to community nurseries for under 5s. Centres are used for both recreational and educational activities, and can be hired by individuals for private functions.
- 1.2 Since July 2006, following Executive Board approval, community centres vested with the Neighbourhoods & Housing were devolved to Area Committees.
- 1.3 In April 2007, community centres vested with the Learning & Leisure will be devolved to Area Committees, following Executive Board Approval at its May 2007 meeting. All community centres owned by Leeds City Council will then come under the operational responsibility of Area Committees, with the Area Management officers overseeing day-to-day management.

- 1.4 Below is a list of Leeds City Council managed centres that will be affected by the pricing review:

Centre	Ward	Department
Headingley	Headingley	Environment & Neighbourhoods
Woodsley Road	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	Environment & Neighbourhoods
Meanwood	Weetwood	Ex Learning & Leisure
Little London	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	Ex Learning & Leisure
Woodhouse	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	Ex Learning & Leisure

- 1.5 A number of community centres in the area are owned and by Leeds City Council but have been leased to community organisations which are responsible for internal maintenance and management of the centres. These will not form part of the pricing review.

Centre	Ward	Department
Beckett Park	Kirkstall	Environment & Neighbourhoods
Burley Lodge	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	Environment & Neighbourhoods

- 1.6 City Services are contracted to undertake caretaking, cleaning and maintenance duties at the directly managed community centres. All booking requests are taken by the Lettings Unit within Learning & Leisure.
- 1.7 All directly managed community centres in the area run at a deficit, with levels of income varying dramatically between centres.
- 1.8 In the past, Neighbourhoods & Housing centres and Learning & Leisure centres were subject to different lettings policies, and pricing structures can vary from centre to centre. New users of community centres are subject to a uniform pricing policy, whilst existing users continue to pay what has been historically charged. There has been no increase in room booking or office space charges for some time.

2.0 Consultation on a new lettings policy

- 2.1 The Area Committee is requested to consider adopting a standard lettings policy across all community centres it has responsibility for. A new policy will ensure that all users in the area are treated fairly, and that a realistic budget can be set for each centre.
- 2.2 It is proposed that consultation be centred around the draft pricing structure as outlined at Appendix 1. The proposed structure was the result of a wide ranging consultation with centre users across the city in October 2005. The consultation showed that lettings were often on an ad hoc basis with some groups paying and others not. Appendix 2 outlines how current users may be affected by the pricing review. Prices charged for non Council run facilities were also taken into consideration (such as St Chad's Parish Hall, the Cardigan Centre etc). Whilst it will negatively affect some groups who are currently not charged for the use of a community centre, it is felt to be fair and transparent, maximising the benefit to non-

charging activities run by community organisations particularly aimed at older people, young people and children.

- 2.3 The Area Committee is asked to note issues in relation to how current users may be affected by the pricing review as detailed in Appendix 2. As this item relates to financial and business affairs of the organisations, the appendix is exempt under the Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3). The public interest in maintaining the exemption in relation to this appendix outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information by reason of the fact that by disclosing these details, information relating to the financial affairs of the named groups would become public knowledge, which could have a detrimental impact on the organisations.
- 2.4 Any extra revenue income generated in the first year of a revised lettings policy would be available to the Area Committee to spend at its discretion either on the community centre portfolio, or on other Area Delivery Plan priorities. In subsequent years the amount available to the Area Committee would decrease as annual overhead costs such as wage rises, utility costs etc, would be derived from the additional revenue generated from lettings.
- 2.5 A three month consultation process is proposed, which will be mirrored in other Areas, subject to individual Area Committee approval. If agreed, the consultation process will begin July 2007 with a view to a draft policy being presented for approval at the December 2007 Area Committee meeting.

3.0 Proposed consultation process

- 3.1 It is proposed that the consultation process begins with a detailed discussion with ward Members on the draft pricing policy on a ward by ward basis.
- 3.2 Other Area Management Teams will be consulted throughout the process to establish whether a citywide policy is preferred or not.
- 3.3 If supported by Members, the draft pricing policy will be sent to centre Management Committees and all organisations with regular bookings at community centres. Drop in sessions will be held at all centres to give organisations the opportunity to discuss the proposal with Area Management officers.
- 3.4 The results of the consultation will be presented to the December 2007 meeting of the Area Committee for a decision about adopting a standard pricing policy for community centres in the area.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are requested to:
 - a) Note the contents of this report; and
 - b) Agree to the undertaking of a review of the pricing policy across the Committee's community centre portfolio, including consultation with user groups.