



## Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

### East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008

### Subject: Community Centres – Progress on a Local Pricing and Discounts Policy

#### Electoral Wards Affected:

All Inner east wards

Ward Members consulted  
(Referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council  
Function

Delegated Executive  
Function available  
for Call In

Delegated Executive  
Function not available for  
Call In Details set out in the  
report

#### Executive Summary:

The Area Committee established a time-limited working party to look at how a local charging and discounts policy for those Community Centres delegated to the Committee could be developed and operated.

This report updates the Area Committee on the work undertaken so far by the working party. It proposes a standard price list for the use of Community Centres in Inner East for which it is responsible for and a system for working out discounts for users/usages which the Area Committee considers have community benefits.

The report asks for approval to consult Forums and existing user groups on the attached charging and discount framework; with feedback to be considered by the Working Group in preparing a policy for approval in time for implementation in October 2008.

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report on the work of the Inner East Community Centres Working Party and to ask the Committee to endorse the rationale and framework for pricing and discounts the group has arrived at - so that a wider consultation can begin with current users, local Forums and the Council's Lettings Unit.

- 1.2 The results of the consultation and discussions will be brought back, via the Working Group, to a future meeting of the Area Committee together with a final, recommended charging and discounts policy and price-list for approval.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 At the meeting in October 2007, the Area Committee were presented with a discounts matrix to stand alongside our policy for charging for room hire at inner East community centres.
- 2.2 The matrix represents the logic according to which decisions on subsidy can be made. It should be clear and transparent so that groups and individuals involved understand how the charges were arrived at. As a reminder, the matrix is included in Appendix A.
- 2.3 However, the actual room bookings and charge administration will be carried out by the City services Lettings Unit on behalf of all Area Management Teams. In order to make this a workable process, we have to arrive at a simple price list (appendix C) which could be input into a database the Lettings Unit will operate.
- 2.4 Importantly, this will also ensure a clearer, more easily understood price list for users to see pinned up in their local community centre or attached to their booking form.
- 2.5 This pricelist includes a description of what discounts and additional charges are applicable depending on when the facilities are used (e.g. weekends), who by and what for. This has been calculated using the agreed matrix.
- 2.6 It is important to stress that this proposed pricing policy/list will only apply to those Community Centres that have been delegated by Executive Board to the Area Committee to oversee the local management and charging arrangements. Currently these are:
- Alston Lane Community Centre (Seacroft)
  - Henry Barran Centre (Gipton)
  - Cross Gates Community Centre
  - Richmond Hill Community Centre

## **3.0 MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 When the Area Committee debated these issues at the October 2007 meeting, there were some unanswered questions which the working party has now had a chance to clarify. These were:
- 3.1.1 **Room hire in evenings and at weekends when additional caretaking and cleaning costs have to be taken into account.** The group recommends that the evening use of rooms follows the earlier suggested charging principles and levels of discount. Weekend use, on the other hand, commands an additional £5.00 flat rate on top. Wellbeing funding from the Community Engagement work stream will be available to subsidise large weekend events benefiting wider community.

- 3.1.2 **The use of the community centres for private functions resulting in substantially increased costs of caretaking and cleaning.** At present, the Lettings Unit charges a flat rate of £450 for a large hall for a maximum of 5 hours. For additional time, there is an hourly charge of £17 and a £9 charge for use of kitchens. The group recommends that we continue with those charges adding the actual cost of caretaking and cleaning.
- 3.1.3 **The use of community centres as an office base.** This issue is outside of the scope of the work of the group. A formula based on the size of occupied space is being developed.
- 3.1.4 **The use by the youth services and user rights of further education institutions.** This issue is currently being dealt with by the Partnership Team and will give us a city wide solution.
- 3.1.5 **Public consultation – timetable.** The consultation with groups currently occupying the centres could start as soon as the Area Committee agree the charges. It would take form of meetings with groups looking at their individual circumstances and price lists being posted in all community centres.
- 3.2 The results/impact of examining existing use of centres and charges in comparison to the principles agreed in the charging matrix and the clarifications listed above, are illustrated in appendix B.
- 3.3 As a result of these clarifications and on applying the agreed matrix, Appendix C shows the proposed prices and discount rates for room hire in delegated Inner East community centres.

#### **4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

- 4.1 There are no additional implications for Council policy and governance

#### **5.0 LEGAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.
- 5.2 There may be some resource implications for the use of the Wellbeing budget providing assistance to groups through its existing Small Grants scheme.

#### **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members:
- a) note the report and findings of the working group
  - b) agree the attached pricing and discounts list as a basis for consultation with existing user groups, local Forums and Council Lettings Unit.
  - c) Following the results of consultation, delegate the responsibility to prepare a final pricing and discounts policy to the Member Working Party to be presented to the Area Committee for approval in time for implementation in October 2008.