

## Report of Development Manager

### Report to Chief Officer Parks and Countryside

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018

### Subject: Tropical World Pricing

Are specific electoral wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:	
Appendix number:	

### Summary of main issues

1. This report seeks authorisation to increase the entrance charges at Tropical World from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019.
2. Comparisons show entrance charges at Tropical World are currently £4.81 cheaper than the average for adults and £6.02 cheaper for children in comparison to other regional attractions. The attraction is also unique in allowing children under 5 to enter for free, compared to most other attractions where this applies to children under 3 or younger still.
3. There are times during the summer holidays in particular and at weekends and bank holidays when the attraction is at capacity. Advice from commercial marketing companies is that the best option to raise income in these circumstances is to increase prices.
4. It is not anticipated that there will be a significant reduction in the number of visitors and the projected revenue increase is anticipated at £110k each year.

## **Recommendations**

1. The Chief Officer Parks and Countryside is recommended to approve the increase in entrance charges at Tropical World from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report seeks authorisation to increase the entrance charges at Tropical World from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.1 The Arnold and Marjorie Ziff Tropical World at Roundhay Park is one of Leeds' most popular family attractions with around 400,000 visitors each year, situated 3 miles north of Leeds City Centre off the A58 Wetherby Road at Oakwood. A number of improvements have taken place including a new entrance space and retail facility, children's party and education zone, along with a new 'walk over' crocodile enclosure and general electrical improvements.
- 2.2 More recently work was completed on further improvements including a new conservatory extension to the Explorer's Café, a new toilet block with changing facilities, a new aquarium and improvements to the nocturnal zone. In February 2017, further improvements were completed to the 'creature corner' area to complement the Aztec theming in the aquarium below along with improvements to the waterfall house area which also see the introduction of new species including caiman, boa constrictors and vampire crabs.
- 2.3 Between 2010/11 and 2017/18, the council's core funding from government has reduced by around £239 million and in addition the council has faced significant demand-led cost pressures. This has also impacted on the Parks and Countryside service, which has seen a 50% reduction in budget of around £7m when comparing before 2010 to 2018/19, with further savings expected in 2019/20.

## **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 Prices for entrance into Tropical World have not been reviewed since Feb 2017 following which an inflationary increase occurred when the current entry prices were introduced as set out below:

Description	Entrance Fee £
Adults	6.20
LeedsCard	3.70
'Extra' cardholders	2.50
Breezecard	2.50
5 to 15 year olds	3.10
Under 5s	Free

- 3.2 A comparison of pricing at relevant attractions in Yorkshire has been conducted and is summarised in the following table:

<b>Attraction</b>	<b>Adult (£)</b>	<b>Child (£)</b>	<b>Free Ticketholder</b>	<b>Annual Pass (£)</b>
Askham Bryan Wildlife and Conservation Park	6.95	5.95	Under 3s	
Cannon Hall Farm, Barnsley	6.95 (weekday saver 4.95)	6.95 (weekday saver 4.95)	Under 2s	
Chatsworth House	23.00	14.50	Under 4s	
Filey Bird Garden	6.00	5.00	Under 2s	Adult: 19.00 Child – 15.00 Student/OAP – 17.00 Family – 70.00
Harewood House	16.50	8.50	Under 4s	
Hesketh Farm, Bolton Abbey	5.50	6.00 (3.00 under 2's)	Under 1s	
Ponderosa, Batley	5.50	5.00	Under 2s	
The Deep, Hull	12.15	10.35	Under 3s	Included in ticket
The International Centre for Birds of Prey	11.40	6.30	Under 4s	Family of 2 adults & 2 kids 31.05
Tropical Butterfly House, Sheffield	13.20	12.20	Under 2s	Adults: 46 Children: 36 OAP/Student: 42
York Bird of Prey Centre	9.00	7.50	Under 3s	Adult 45.00 Child 35.00 Family of 4 – 140.00 Family of 5 – 160.00
Yorkshire Wildlife Park	16.00	14.00	Under 3s	Adult 60.00 Child/OAP 55.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>£11.01</b>	<b>£8.52</b>		

- 3.3 A similar exercise was conducted a year ago when the average adult admission was £10.52 and child admission an average of £8.18. The current average prices are 5% and 4% more respectively and these comparisons show that there is scope to increase charges as Tropical World is currently £4.81 cheaper than the average for adults and £6.02 cheaper for children in comparison to other regional attractions. The attraction is also unique in allowing children under 5 to enter for free, compared to most other attractions where this applies to children under 3 or younger still.

- 3.4 Visitor surveys over the summer in 2013 and 2014 have been conducted which demonstrate that around 60% of visitors are from outside Leeds. The following table provides more detail based on 535 people surveyed in 2013 and 368 in 2014.

<b>Visitors</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
All Leeds postcodes	39%	41%
Outside Leeds	61%	59%

- 3.5 In terms of frequency of visit, 74% indicated that this was either their first visit or that they would only visit once a year (75% in 2013). The remaining people surveyed indicated that 18% would visit every 6 months (16% in 2013), which means that only 8% visit more frequently than every 3 months (10% in 2013).
- 3.6 The age profile of visitors demonstrates the importance of Tropical World as a family attraction. 37% of visitors were aged 26 – 55 (33% in 2013), with 21% aged 0 – 4 (17% in 2013) and 19% aged 5 – 12 (20% in 2013). The remaining visits were 13% from those 55 and over (11% in 2013), with 10% of visits from those 13 – 25 (19% in 2013).
- 3.7 There are times during the summer holidays in particular and at weekends and bank holidays when the attraction is at capacity. Advice from commercial marketing companies is that the best option to raise income in these circumstances is to increase prices.
- 3.8 The proposal is therefore that the following price increases will be implemented from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Proposed Entrance Fee £</b>
Adults	7.00
LeedsCard	5.60
'Extra' cardholders	4.20
Breezecard	3.50
5 to 15 year olds	3.50
Under 5s	Free

- 3.9 This will allow the Council to ensure that under 5s can still enter free of charge, with all other fees increasing in line with the increase for adult entry. A LeedsCard discount of 20% would be applied with a 40% discount for 'extra' cardholders (in receipt of defined benefits) and Breezecard holders would gain entry at the 5 to 15 year old entry price. The impact of the proposed price rise is anticipated at £110k in 2019/20.

## **2. Corporate considerations**

### **2.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 2.1.1 A consultation document outlining the pricing proposals in detail was included on the leeds.gov.uk website in the 'getting involved' section of the Parks and Countryside content for nearly 3 weeks up until the close on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018. The consultation was also publicised on social media.
- 2.1.2 There were 3 responses to the consultation offering a view on the proposed price rises, with 1 in support, 1 raising concern about comparisons with private attractions and 1 indicating that improvements should be made to the attraction.

### **2.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 2.2.1 An equality screening form has been completed for these revised charges which concludes that as the existing concessions for children and those on defined benefits are being retained due consideration has been given.

## **2.3 Council policies and best council plan**

- 2.3.1 The Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030 sets out an objective to ensure all Leeds' communities are successful. A part of this is detailed as ensuring local cultural and sporting activities are available to all, and that there are high quality green spaces which are clean and looked after.
- 2.3.2 The Council Business Plan sets out as one of its objectives to become a more efficient and enterprising council. Maximising income and trading, and reducing costs and increasing value for money comes as part of this objective. The revision of Tropical World entrance charges therefore contributes to this aim.

## **2.4 Resources and value for money**

- 2.4.1 The proposal is therefore that the following price increases will be implemented from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019:

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Adults	7.00
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'Extra' cardholders	4.20
Breezecard	3.50
5 to 15 year olds	3.50
Under 5s	Free

- 2.4.2 This will allow the Council to ensure that under 5s can still enter free of charge, with all other fees increasing in line with the increase for adult entry. A LeedsCard discount of 20% would be applied with a 40% discount for 'extra' cardholders (in receipt of defined benefits) and Breezecard holders would gain entry at the 5 to 15 year old entry price. The impact of the proposed price rise is anticipated at £110k in 2019/20.

## **2.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 2.5.1 The effect of the proposed price increases is projected at £110k therefore the decision is considered as operational in nature and is therefore not eligible for call in. There are no issues with regard to access to information.

## **2.6 Risk management**

- 2.6.1 These price changes come as part of a wider aim across the Council to meet budget targets. If price increases were not implemented then there would be a risk that future budget targets would not be met.

## **3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 The main proposal is to increase charges for adults at Tropical World from £6.20 to £7, with other fees going up in line with this increase. A LeedsCard discount of 20% would be applied with a 40% discount for 'extra' cardholders (in receipt of defined benefits) and Breezecard holders would gain entry at the 5 to 15 year old entry price. The projected revenue increase is anticipated at £110k each year.

#### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 1. The Chief Officer Parks and Countryside is recommended to approve the increase in entrance charges at Tropical World from 7th January 2019.

#### **5. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

5.1 None.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.