



**Report of Development Manager**

**Report to Chief Parks and Countryside Officer**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021**

**Subject: Lotherton Pricing**

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

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

- This report seeks authorisation to increase the entrance charges at Lotherton from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021.
- A comparison with regional attractions show that there is scope to increase charges as Lotherton is £2.71 cheaper than the average for adults and £4.37 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.
- Consultation was undertaken by the Museums and Galleries service concerning a proposal to reduce public opening hours at the hall to just weekends and Leeds school holidays. Analysis of the results demonstrated little support for this proposal, with 64% who either disagreed or strongly disagreed. There was however support from 79% of those who responded for an increase in the cost of a day ticket, with 60% favouring a 5% increase.

**2. Best Council Plan implications** (see the [latest version of the Best Council Plan](#))

- An Efficient, enterprising and healthy organisation – making the best use of our resources.
- Inclusive Growth - supporting the city's economic recovery from COVID-19 and building longer-term economic resilience.

### 3. Resource implications

- The subject matter of this report concerns the potential to achieve around £31k additional income by an above inflation increase in the admission price to enter Lotherton Estate.

### Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officer Parks and Countryside is recommended to approve the following increase in entrance charges at Lotherton from 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021:

Description	Entrance fee £	Leeds Card £	Leeds Card Extra £
<b>Individual Tickets</b>			
Adult	8.75	7.00	5.25
Child (5 to 15 years old)	4.40	3.50	N/A
Family (2 adults, 3 children)	26.25	21.00	15.75
Under 5s	Free	N/A	N/A
Max card (for looked after children, children with additional needs and their families)	Free	N/A	N/A
<b>Group</b>			
Pre-booked groups of 15 adults or more	6.50	N/A	N/A
<b>Lotherton Annual Membership</b>			
Adult	26.25	N/A	15.75
Adult Leeds Card 60	21.00	N/A	N/A
Couple	42.00	N/A	25.20
Couple Leeds Card 60	33.60	N/A	N/A
Family A (1 adult and up to 3 children)	39.35	N/A	23.60
Family B (2 adults and up to 3 children)	59.00	N/A	35.40
Family A (1 adult and up to 3 children) Leeds Card 60	31.50	N/A	N/A
Family B (2 adults and up to 3 children) Leeds card 60	47.25	N/A	N/A
Child	13.10	N/A	N/A
Additional child	13.10	N/A	N/A

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

- 1.1 This report seeks authorisation to increase the entrance charges at Lotherton from 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.1 In July 2011 the Council's Executive Board considered a report that set out a programme of investment into Lotherton estate with the aim to become a coherent, quality visitor attraction. Since then the estate has been managed through a joint project board in collaboration with Parks and Countryside along with Museums and Galleries. Under this joint working initiative, income to the whole estate has steadily risen from £575k in 2010/11 to £1.2 million which represents a growth of £630k - an increase of 110%. This in turn has had a positive impact on reducing the level of net subsidy associated with the management of the holistic estate.
- 2.2 This growth has been in part driven by a commitment to the promotion and expansion of the onsite event programme (including the Lotherton Christmas Experience), supported by a series of investments into both the visitor focussed elements of the estate and also its infrastructure. Some of the improvements undertaken include the following all of which have helped develop the estate in a sustainable way:
- The development of an adventure playground and improved children's play
  - Establishment of a new vehicular access route
  - Improved visitor parking
  - Improved signage and interpretation
- 2.3 Penguins were introduced to a new purpose built enclosure in November 2017 ahead of the launch of Lotherton Wildlife World in March 2018. This saw a new visitor centre opened along with the introduction of new species including warty pigs, capybara and tapir. Further improvements planned in future including the following:
- Africa zone: utilising the existing walk in aviary structure to create a Masai themed centre to include a display/events area with mongoose exhibit
  - Tropical: an existing area will be remodelled to provide an undercover space with new exhibits developed that will include tropical themed species of birds, insects and amphibians.
  - Children's zone: the intention is to create a small children's zoo with some small farm type animals with associated hand wash facilities.
- 2.4 The financial position reported at the Council's September Executive Board identified an estimated budget gap of £163.3m for the period 2021/22- 2023/24. At that time a gap of £118.8m was identified for 2021/22 with the result that a number of budget savings proposals were identified to deliver a balanced budget position. The council budget was approved for 2021/22 at a meeting of all councillors on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

### 3. Main issues

3.1 A budget saving proposal identified related to reducing opening hours at Lotherton Hall, however following consultation it is now proposed that an increase on admission prices based on 5% is implemented from 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

3.2 Prices for entrance into Lotherton were introduced in 2012 and current prices (from January 2020) are as set out below.

Description	Entrance fee £	Leeds Card £	Leeds Card Extra £
<b>Individual Tickets</b>			
Adult	8.30	6.60	4.95
Child (5 to 15 years old)	4.15	3.30	N/A
Family (2 adults, 3 children)	25.00	20.00	15.00
Under 5s	Free	N/A	N/A
Max card (for looked after children, children with additional needs and their families)	Free	N/A	N/A
<b>Group</b>			
Pre-booked groups of 15 adults or more	6.00	N/A	N/A
<b>Lotherton Annual Membership</b>			
Adult	25.00	N/A	15.00
Adult Leeds Card 60	20.00	N/A	N/A
Couple	40.00	N/A	24.00
Couple Leeds Card 60	32.00	N/A	N/A
Family A (1 adult and up to 3 children)	37.50	N/A	22.50
Family B (2 adults and up to 3 children)	56.00	N/A	33.60
Family A (1 adult and up to 3 children) Leeds Card 60	30.00	N/A	N/A
Family B (2 adults and up to 3 children) Leeds card 60	45.00	N/A	N/A
Child	12.40	N/A	N/A
Additional child	12.40	N/A	N/A

3.3 A comparison of pricing at relevant attractions in Yorkshire was conducted before coronavirus related restrictions were introduced and is summarised in the following table.

Attraction	Adult (£)	Child (£)	Free Ticketholder
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

<b>Attraction</b>	<b>Adult (£)</b>	<b>Child (£)</b>	<b>Free Ticketholder</b>
Filey Bird Garden	6.00	5.00	Under 2s
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
The International Centre for Birds of Prey	11.40	6.30	Under 4s
Tropical Butterfly House, Sheffield	13.20	12.20	Under 2s
York Bird of Prey Centre	9.00	7.50	Under 3s
Yorkshire Wildlife Park	16.00	14.00	Under 3s
<b>Average</b>	<b>£11.01</b>	<b>£8.52</b>	







- 3.4 These comparisons show that there is scope to increase charges as Lotherton is currently £2.71 cheaper than the average for adults and £4.37 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.
- 3.5 There are times during the summer holidays in particular and at weekends and bank holidays when the attraction is extremely busy. Advice from commercial marketing companies is that the best option to raise income in these circumstances is to increase prices.

#### **4. Corporate considerations**







##### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 As indicated above, consultation was undertaken by the Museums and Galleries service concerning a proposal to reduce opening hours at Lotherton Hall in the light of the budget situation that the council faced. A survey was made available online over which received 2,836 responses. A summary of the key responses is as follows.





### How often do you visit Lotherton?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Once a week or more		26.11%	735
2	Once a month		30.44%	857
3	Four times a year		22.95%	646
4	Once a year		10.05%	283
5	Less than once a year		7.85%	221
6	Never		2.59%	73
			answered	2815
			skipped	21






### How far do you travel to visit Lotherton?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Less than a mile		1.36%	38
2	Between 1 and 3 miles		18.02%	502
3	Between 3 and 5 miles		25.66%	715
4	Between 5 and 10 miles		30.33%	845
5	Between 10 and 20 miles		18.09%	504
6	More than 20 miles		6.53%	182
			answered	2786
			skipped	50




### Who do you usually visit Lotherton with?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	By myself		4.87%	135
2	With my family		61.30%	1698
3	With friends		5.16%	143
4	With a mix of family and friends		28.66%	794
			answered	2770
			skipped	66

**Given the council's financial position outlined above, do you agree with the proposal to reduce the public opening hours of Lotherton Hall to weekends and Leeds school holidays only?**

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree		7.13%	200
2	Agree		19.67%	552
3	Neither agree nor disagree		9.19%	258
4	Disagree		24.12%	677
5	Strongly disagree		39.90%	1120
			answered	2807
			skipped	29

**Would you support an increase on the cost of a day ticket in order to contribute more to sustaining Lotherton? (Concessions would be maintained)**

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	I do not support an increase		21.69%	608
2	I support a 3% increase (from £8.30 to £8.55 for an adult day ticket)		31.64%	887
3	I support a 5% increase (from £8.30 to £8.70 for an adult day ticket)		46.66%	1308
			answered	2803
			skipped	33

4.1.2 There is little support for a proposal to reduce public opening hours at the hall to just weekends and Leeds school holidays with 64% who either disagreed or strongly disagreed. There was however support from 79% of those who responded for an increase in the cost of a day ticket, with 60% favoured a 5% increase.

## 4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 An equality screening form has been completed and is attached for these revised charges.

## 4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 The proposal in this report make the following links to the Best Council Plan.

- An Efficient, enterprising and healthy organisation – making the best use of our resources.
- Inclusive Growth - supporting the city's economic recovery from COVID-19 and building longer-term economic resilience.

### Climate Emergency

4.3.2 The proposal does not have a link to addressing the climate emergency.

#### **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

4.4.1 The subject matter of this report concerns the potential to achieve around £31k additional income by an above inflation increase in the admission price to enter Lotherton Estate.

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

4.5.1 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.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 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.

### **5. Conclusions**

5.1 The main proposal is to increase charges for adults from £8.30 to £8.75, along with increases for Lotherton Annual Membership and card holders. This will allow the council to ensure that under 5s can still enter free of charge. **It also means that 'Extra' cardholders (in receipt of defined benefits) and Breezecard holders would retain a significant discount.**



## 6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer Parks and Countryside is recommended to approve the following increase in entrance charges at Lotherton from 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021:

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<b>Individual Tickets</b>			
Adult	8.75	7.00	5.25
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Under 5s	Free	N/A	N/A
Max card (for looked after children, children with additional needs and their families)	Free	N/A	N/A
<b>Group</b>			
Pre-booked groups of 15 adults or more	6.50	N/A	N/A
<b>Lotherton Annual Membership</b>			
Adult	26.25	N/A	15.75
Adult Leeds Card 60	21.00	N/A	N/A
Couple	42.00	N/A	25.20
Couple Leeds Card 60	33.60	N/A	N/A
Family A (1 adult and up to 3 children)	39.35	N/A	23.60
Family B (2 adults and up to 3 children)	59.00	N/A	35.40
Family A (1 adult and up to 3 children) Leeds Card 60	31.50	N/A	N/A
Family B (2 adults and up to 3 children) Leeds card 60	47.25	N/A	N/A
Child	13.10	N/A	N/A
Additional child	13.10	N/A	N/A

## 7.

### Background documents<sup>1</sup>

None

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### 1.1

<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.