

Leeds Museums and Galleries Annual Fees and Charges for 2023/24

Date: 20.3.2023

Report of: Head of Operations & Enterprise, Leeds Museums and Galleries

Report to: Chief Officer, Culture & Economy

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Leeds Museums and Galleries (LMG) schedule of fees and charges for the financial year 2023/24, and the recommendations for the commercial activities detailed.

A review of fees and charges is undertaken annually and has this year taken into account the current financial environment including the rate of inflation, the ongoing recovery still required following the recent pandemic, current and proposed income targets for 2023/24 whilst balancing this with the cost of living crisis. It has also drawn upon the recommendations from a recent commercial review by an external organisation, as well as considering any new income streams taking into account current trends and opportunities.

Overall, the key outcomes are to ensure Leeds Museums and Galleries can provide choice to visitors, offer value for money alongside specific discounts, deliver against agreed income targets in the next financial year and support Leeds 2023, in the year of culture.

Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officer, Culture & Economy approve the schedule of charges for Leeds Museums and Galleries for FY 2023/24
- b) The Chief Officer, Culture & Economy approve the implementation of the new fees and charges and associated policies as set out in the report from 24th April 2023

What is this report about?

- 1 Leeds Museums and Galleries fees and charges are reviewed and updated annually. This has traditionally taken place for each calendar year. From 2023, the schedule of fees and charges will be aligned with the financial year.
- 2 The review has taken into account the current financial environment including the rate of inflation, the ongoing recovery still required following the recent pandemic, proposed increased income targets for 2023/24 whilst balancing this with the cost of living crisis.
- 3 Further consideration has been given to balancing income generation with offering value for money, including the application of discounts, choice to visitors, and takes into account the proposed fees and charges to be levied by other departments in 2023/24 including Parks and Countryside and Arts, Events and Venues.
- 4 A whole service and an individual museum and gallery site approach has been applied taking into account the demographics of visitors, the visitor experience and the wider site offer.
- 5 A commercial review for Leeds Museums and Galleries was undertaken in 2022 by an independent organisation relating to venue admission charges, venue hire, catering and retail. Several recommendations are being taken forward, which relate to an increase in venue and wedding hire charges, to remove separate charges for additional staff costs where possible and to remove the wholesale discounts to anchor organisations. A more detailed admissions charges review will be undertaken during 2023/24.
- 6 All proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 are shown in Appendices 1-4.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 7 The fees and charges report impacts all wards, with specific ward members consulted where significant changes have been proposed only.
- 8 Three out of the nine of LMG's sites are currently free to general visitors: Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds City Museum, and Leeds Discovery Centre with a further site, Kirkstall Abbey remaining free for Leeds residents. It is important that this balance is retained particularly with the impact of the cost of living crisis.
- 9 Given the higher rate of inflation with an average of 9.1%¹ in 2022, an average of 10% increase is being applied to admission charges at charging sites. The actual costs have been rounded to the nearest whole figure to avoid operational difficulties with the management of coins.
- 10 Admission arrangements to Lotherton Hall are managed as part of the One Estate project and no changes are proposed to those charges within this report.
- 11 The financial reporting for Temple Newsam is currently under separate services and admission charges to the house only are included within this report. Joint tickets are available with the farm and are part of the Parks and Countryside schedule of fees and charges.
- 12 LMG also provides online bookings for Temple Newsam and Kirkstall Abbey and fees and charges have been adjusted by 5% to account for the booking fee.

¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/timeseries/d7g7/mm23>

- 13 Following the trial of a £1 admission fee at Leeds Industrial Museum for residents of Armley within the LS12 postcode and the neighbouring postcodes of LS3, LS4 and LS5, it is proposed that this charge remains for 2023/24 to add value to Leeds' Year of Culture and to continue to engage directly with local residents. The £1 local admission charge will continue to be promoted via web sites, social media and community hubs. Residents will still be required to show proof of address.
- 14 Approval has been also given separately to provide free access to sites for refugees and asylum seekers resident in Leeds.
- 15 Discounts will continue to be offered to Leeds card and Breeze card holders. The discount to Max card holders has been reviewed (2 adults and 2 children with one of the children being the named cardholder) and it is proposed that this aligned with the offer by other Leeds City Council visitor attractions such as Tropical World (1 adult and 1 child as the named cardholder).
- 16 The above discounts outlined in paragraph 15 and within Appendix 1 of the Fees and Charges Schedule apply only to general admission charges.
- 17 The service further proposes to retain the authority to offer promotional discounts and the marketing of special offers on all admissions offered at particular times to either stimulate business in quieter periods or to reach a particular audience. These will be part of a controlled marketing campaign and will include a review comparing data and reach against previous years.
- 18 A more detailed comprehensive admissions charges review will be undertaken during 2023/24 as recommended by the commercial review. This identified that admissions charges are currently below market rates.
- 19 Venue hire charges will be increased by 25% following the recommendations from the commercial review, which identified the charges at each site are 61% cheaper against other comparable benchmarked venues within the city.
- 20 All quotes for room hire will be timebound at 30 days.
- 21 The wholesale discount offered to Leeds Anchor Organisations will be removed and will be applied at the discretion of each Principal Keeper and Keeper relevant to key partnerships and stakeholders at that time at each site.
- 22 To recognise the working partnership arrangement made by community organisations which contribute to LMG's exhibitions, events programme, and audience engagement activities, generous hosting will also be applied, which provides free entry to sites where charges exist and to provide space free of charge where possible. This will be at the discretion of each Principal Keeper and Keeper and as recommended by the wider site team.
- 23 All records of hire will be kept with auditable trails of decision making and generous hosting will continue to be made through a specific application form for consideration.
- 24 Further work will be undertaken during 2023/24 for venue hire charges with the aim of introducing a Day Delegate Rate to replace the current hire fee with additional staff costs charge.

- 25 Principal Keepers and Keepers will retain the authority to negotiate best rates for unique and site specific chargeable events such as commercial filming. These uniquely charged events will be based upon standardised staffing costings as detailed in Appendix 3.
- 26 LMG will continue to build on its digital engagement accelerated during the pandemic and will continue to offer and retain the authority to create special ticketed events, free and at a premium rate dependant on the experience and audience for which it is aimed.
- 27 Following the commercial
- 28 review, it is proposed the fees and charges for weddings, and other celebratory ceremonies at the sites where it is available will be increased by 10% and will be inclusive of staff costs from 2023/24.
- 29 Fees and charges for the subsequent 2 years for weddings, and other celebratory ceremonies have also been proposed as it is known that bookings for these types of ceremonies can be made several years in advance. This supersedes the proposed fees and charges in the previous year's report as they do not sufficiently reflect the current financial environment and any bookings made with a deposit will be honoured against the fees and charges set at that time.
- 30 These fees and charges still exclude any additional fee levied by the Registrars.
- 31 Charges for LMG's learning and access workshops and schools membership have been considered and increased slightly below the rate of inflation as detailed in Appendix 4.
- 32 Entrance charges for Leeds LEA schools and SEND schools will continue to remain free, whereas the non LEA school admission per child charge will remain at £1.30 due to the increase applied to the costs of the workshops as outlined above.
- 33 Charges for LMG's curriculum planning packages will also remain unchanged to encourage further take up.
- 34 Fees for the Leeds Art Gallery picture lending scheme known as the Picture Library will be increased on average by 7.5% with a larger increase for 3rd party and business membership. See appendix 4 for further details. It is anticipated that any higher increases for individual membership will lead to reduced demand.
- 35 LMG continues to generate income from the Intellectual Property Rights and copyright from its images. This is managed through an agreement with Bridgeman Images, a leading specialist in fine art, cultural and historical media reproductions. This agreement is reviewed annually.
- 36 In addition, further commission is levied through our Print on Demand partners.
- 37 A new administration charge was introduced in 2020 and is applied to international or commercial borrowing for collection items arranged by LMG. This fee will be maintained and added to all loan correspondence.
- 38 Mooring fees at Thwaite Watermill are under a separate review in partnership with Canals and Rivers Trust.

39 Prices within LMG's 7 shops and 3 cafes are considered to be outside of these charges and will change to maintain a retail sales value based on the costs of the product plus an industry standard profit margin.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

40 LMG delivery contributes to the council strategies of inclusive growth, health and wellbeing and the climate emergency, and this schedule of fees and charges through the generation of key income will further support the services work relating to these 3 pillars.

41 The fees and charges support LMG's strategic objective of being more sustainable and responsible financially and environmentally.

42 Offering free admission at LMG's City Centre sites and for Leeds residents at Kirkstall Abbey, along with specific discounts for key groups offers access to high quality venues with safe accessible spaces.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

43 Extensive benchmarking has been undertaken as part of the commercial review with comparisons drawn with not only other museum and galleries but also wider heritage attractions.

44 Although fees and charges are increasing, the city centre sites remain free entry, along with Kirkstall Abbey for Leeds' residents. Discounted admission rates also apply where these charges are levied.

45 Community projects and other initiatives such as free access for carers, LMG volunteers and Max card holders are also in place to support access and to remove additional financial barriers.

What are the resource implications?

46 The implementation of the fees and charges for 2023/24 does not require any additional financial resource.

47 An increase of earned income is, however, required by the service to support the Directorate budget pressures during 2023/24.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

48 Not implementing the proposed new fees and charges for 2023/24 will make the required income targets difficult to achieve putting pressure on the service to manage budgets effectively.

49 The implementation date of Monday 11th April 2023 will allow for existing advertised rates to be amended and operational changes to be made.

50 Additional staff training will be provided for the implementation of any new or increased charges identified in this report.

What are the legal implications?

51 The proposed admission charges are to apply from Monday 11th April 2023 to allow for existing advertised rates to be amended and to raise public awareness.

52 The terms and conditions for commercial hire have recently been updated with the support of the legal team within Leeds City Council.

53 The proposed price increases will not exceed the key decision threshold and the decision is operational.

54 Due regard has been given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration, and an Equality and Diversity impact screening form has been completed. See EDCI screening attached. Where LMG have discounted for specific characteristics, these are shown within the EDCI and support council priorities and those of Arts Council England as a National Portfolio funded organisation. In addition, it is noted that the ongoing practice of premium hire charges at visitor attractions is a commercially driven process.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

55 An option not to increase fees and charges was considered. This would, however, create budget pressures and would constitute a notable budgetary risk.

56 The introduction of charging at the free sites is complex and would require further consideration and consultation. Changes have, therefore, not been considered for the purpose of this report. A wider admissions review will, however, be undertaken during 2023/24 as recommended by the commercial review.

How will success be measured?

57 The impact of the revised fees and charges will be monitored and reported on annually. This will account for visit numbers (forecast and actuals).

58 Support from colleagues in financial management services, on a quarterly basis will ensure that any significant impact from the proposed changes is managed in line with budgets.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

59 This report highlights general admission charge changes for Abbey House Museum, Leeds Industrial Museum, Thwaite Watermill and Temple Newsam. Charges will be implemented from Monday 11th April 2023.

60 This report highlights general charges for commercial activities within Leeds Museums and Galleries effective from Monday 11th April 2023

61 This report highlights the school charges effective from the start of the academic year in September 2023

62 This report highlights the charges for the Picture Lending Scheme at Leeds Art Gallery effective from 1 November 2023.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Admission fees proposed against market comparison
- Appendix 2 – Commercial charges
- Appendix 3 – Standardised costing for use as a base for charging bespoke fees within the Museums and Galleries service
- Appendix 4 – Educational fees and charges
- EDCI screening

Background papers

- None