

Decision Maker: Environment Portfolio Holder

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Environment PDS Committee on

Date: 16 April 2013

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: PARKS AND GREENSPACE – FEES AND CHARGES

Contact Officer: Stephanie Waddington, Principal Greenspace & Countryside Development Officer
Tel: 0208 464 3333 E-mail: stephanie.waddington@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Nigel Davies, Executive Director of Environment and Community Services

Ward: All Wards

1 Reason for report

To seek approval for revision of the existing charging policy for BEECHE (Bromley Environmental Education Centre at High Elms) and the introduction of charges for outdoor fitness trainers which use the Borough's parks and open spaces commercially.

2 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Portfolio Holder:

2.1 Approves the revised charges for BEECHE which will be implemented from 1 May 2013; and

2.2 Approves the introduction of charges for outdoor fitness trainers which use the Borough's parks and open spaces commercially; these charges will be implemented from 1 May 2013.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: New Policy: Introduction of charges
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Quality Environment Supporting Independence
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Potential additional income of up to £12k
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost Potential additional income of up to £12k
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Parks & Greenspace (BEECHE)
 4. Total current budget for this head: Cr £55,470
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2013/14
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 1 FTE, 1PT 3 casual staff – BEECHE; 1 PT – Parks staff
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Within existing hours; any additional hours will be funded by income generation
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None: Service is non-statutory
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Estimated 150 clients
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3 COMMENTARY

BEECHE CHARGES

- 3.1 Bromley Education Centre at High Elms (BEECHE) is the Borough's only environmental education and visitor centre. Opened in 2008, and based in High Elms Country Park, 2 qualified teachers deliver environmental education courses to schools throughout the Borough and into Kent and Surrey. Courses delivered range from habitats and pond-dipping for pre-school and primary through to 'A' level field courses and Continuing Professional Development courses for teaching staff. All courses are linked to the national curriculum or delivered in consultation with the visiting schools.
- 3.2 BEECHE is also open at weekends and in the school holidays using casual staff to meet and greet the public. They disseminate a wide variety of information (ranging from information on parks and green spaces across the Borough, to walking routes and environmentally themed information - for example recycling and green waste composting) to the visiting public and provide small scale craft activities for children.
- 3.3 Following the Parks & Greenspace review in July 2011 and subsequent restructure; the Parks & Community Development team are in the process of reviewing BEECHE and in particular the associated work and income streams to ensure sustainability of service delivery.
- 3.4 Areas have been identified in the existing charging structure that requires amending in order to simplify and better reflect the current financial constraints and to seek increase income.
- 3.5 Detailed commentary of the reasoning behind the charges outlined below can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.6 Summary of revised BEECHE charges :

<i>Reference paragraph on Appendix 1</i>	<i>Group type</i>	<i>Existing charge</i>	<i>New charge</i>
1.1	Reception – Yr 9 Renamed to Reception – Year 11	Full day charge £210 (peak) £135 (off peak) Half day charge £150 (peak) £110 (off peak)	Full day charge £215.25 (peak) £153.75 (off peak) Half day charge £138.50 (peak) £112.75 (off peak)
1.2	GCSE	£13.45 per pupil	
1.3	Pre School & Special Needs	Full day – no current charge Half day - £118	
1.4	Pre-school leaders Max. 20 time 12.30 - 15.00	£235	Charges deleted (absorb in to group or CPD charges)
	After School Club Leaders max. 20 time 10.00 - 12.00	£350	

	Childminders & children (Course aimed at Children) Time: 10.00 - 12.00	£120	
1.5 & 1.6	CPD 1/2 day per person at BEECHE	n/a	£75
	CPD Full day per person at BEECHE	£120	£150
	Exclusive school CPD 1/2 day*	£215 (no limit to participant numbers)	£50 per person (minimum 6 participants)
	Exclusive school CPD full day*	£355 (no limit to participant numbers)	£90 per person (minimum 6 participants)
1.7	Forest School at BEECHE	£113 per session	Per session £138.50 (peak) £112.75 (off peak)
	Setting up/delivering Forest School in school location*	n/a	Full day charge £215.25 (peak) £153.75 (off peak)
	Delivering Forest School in school location*	n/a	
1.8 & 1.9	Events and activities	½ day events	In the region of £30-40
		Full day events	In the region of £50-60
		Small scale craft activities in BEECHE £1	£1-3 depending on materials
		Buzz £4.70 per child for up to 2 hours	£6 per child
1.10	Group visits Scout/Guide /Community groups – guided walks & short activities	£1.15 per head	£2.00 per head - minimum charge £40 (up to 1.5 hours);
	Visits of 1.5+ hours ; and bespoke sessions	n/a	By negotiation based on hourly rate and materials required
1.11	Room hire (09.00 to 16.30 weekdays)	£18.85 per hour	Full day charge £215.25 (peak) £153.75 (off peak) Half day charge £138.50 (peak) £112.75 (off peak)
	Room hire peak (16.30 - 22.00 evenings & weekends)	£12.40 per hour	£20 per hour 2013/14 increasing to £25+rpi in 2014/15
	Room hire for commercial organisations	N/A	By negotiation

Commercial Fees & Charges

- 3.7 There is a growing demand by outdoor fitness trainers to use the borough's Parks and Green spaces to undertake commercial fitness classes for financial gain. Currently there is no official charge or system by which a personal trainer can legitimately apply to use the Borough's parks.
- 3.8 The Borough charges fees for all other commercial organisations to use its parks and green spaces for financial gain.
- 3.9 The Borough needs therefore to implement a system of managing and regulating these individuals / organisations for the safety of other park users and those participating in the fitness classes.
- 3.10 A detailed rationale behind the proposed charges can be found in Appendix 2
- 3.11 Proposed Fees and Charges: The figures proposed below are suggested as realistic and fair in view of the fact that seasonal changes, bad weather etc will impact on the personal fitness trainers' ability to provide outdoor classes. This is reflected in the 2 session's annual fee proposal. This is an initial fee which can be monitored as to their success. If the fees were too high it is envisaged that providers would not sign up.

<i>No of clients</i>		<i>Annual Fee</i>
3 or less		No charge
4-10 clients	1 x session per week	£250
	2 x sessions per week	£350
11-20 clients	1 x session per week	£500
	2 x sessions per week	£650
21 -30 clients	1 x session per week	£650
	2 x sessions per week	£750

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The review of fees for BEECHE is in line with existing policy and therefore there are no policy implications.
- 4.2 The introduction of fees/charges for personal trainers and organisations using the Borough's parks & open spaces for reward is a new activity and will be an amendment to the existing Parks & Greenspace fees and charges policy.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Appendix 3 shows income generated from schools and other activities at BEECHE for 2012/13 and the potential income that would be generated in 2013/14 if the revised charges are approved. The expected income of £64.5k for 2013/14 is £9k more than the 2013/14 budget. This additional income will be built into the budget for 2014/15.
- 5.2 At this stage it is estimated that up to £3,000 may be generated from the commercial fees and charges, however it is not known how many applications will be received. The situation will be monitored and should this amount be achieved then it will be built into the budget for 2014/15.

- 5.3 The VAT status of the fees is not known at this time. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

BEECHE CHARGES

- 6.1 BEECHE revised charges – no implications

COMMERCIAL FEES & CHARGES

- 6.2 A system of registration, application and checking would have to be introduced. The personal trainer would have to apply and provide accredited Fitness Industry Association (FIA) approved training qualifications, risk assessment, lesson plan, Public liability Insurance document, signed licence / agreement upon which a permit / licence would be issued.
- 6.3 A draft licence has been approved by Legal and is included as Appendix 4

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full set of historical fees and charges for the Environmental Education Service and (former) Countryside Service• Full set of benchmarking across London Boroughs