



COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

PROPOSED LETTING CHARGES FOR LINLITHGOW BURGH HALLS

REPORT BY HEAD OF CULTURAL, COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise members of the proposed letting charges for the Linlithgow Burgh Halls, scheduled to re-open in Spring 2010.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To approve the content of the report and the revised pricing structure as set out in the Appendix – Proposed Letting Charges for Linlithgow Burgh Halls.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| I Council Values | Focusing on our customers needs

Being honest, open and accountable

Making the best use of resources |
| II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment) | The refurbished facility will require restricted access to technical resources for health and safety reasons. |
| III Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property) | The income generated by these charges is designed to offset some of the increased running costs resulting from the capital investment in the property. |
| IV Consultations | Consultation with local elected members and previous regular user groups has been undertaken. This report was considered by the Cultural Services PDSP at its meeting on 16th |

February and no adverse comments were received.

It is recommended that customer feedback on pricing is continually monitored and reviewed to ensure effectiveness and any significant issues reported to the panel.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

- 1** Linlithgow Burgh Halls is a Grade A listed building situated in a prominent position in the town. It has played a significant role in the life of the local community for generations but had fallen into a state of disrepair.

A £5m funding package was secured to transform the venue into a first class community arts and heritage facility. The construction project is due for completion in April 2010 and the building will re-open to the public after a 3-4 week commissioning period.

- 2** In setting the charges within this pricing structure we have strived to ensure that they are affordable and not prohibitive to potential customers. Equally, that they reflect the quality of facilities provided and generates sufficient income to ensure the venue's sustainability.

Consideration has been given to the previous hire charges for the Burgh Halls and the business plan submitted to the three external funders i.e. Historic Scotland, Heritage Lottery Fund and the Scottish Arts Council. Benchmarking with other venues and similar types of facilities has also been undertaken to ensure that pricing is in line with customer expectations.

- 3** Three price levels have been set to recognise the different types of potential customers and their ability to pay:

- Non income generating community groups (and WLC)
- Income generating community groups
- Commercial organisations

Package prices are being developed for weddings and private parties and these will be finalised once the catering contract has been awarded.

We are also considering offering discounts to certain categories of users and we intend to consult interested parties on this proposal.

E. CONCLUSION

The redeveloped Linlithgow Burgh Halls will offer high quality facilities for letting to a wide range of potential customers; from community activities and events to business seminars and conferences, and wedding receptions and other private functions. The potential income generation is an important element of the business plan to ensure

that the venue is financially viable.

The pricing structure has been developed to offer the customer value for money while recognising the substantial running costs involved. It is anticipated that there will be a high demand for the unique facilities that the venue will offer and the proposed pricing structure will establish an appropriate mechanism to maximise this income stream.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1 - Proposed Letting Charges for Linlithgow Burgh Halls

Contact Person: Colin Hutcheon, Arts Services Manager, Howden Park Centre, Howden, Livingston EH54 6AE

Tel. 01506 773857

e-mail: colin.Hutcheon@westlothian.gov.uk

Alistair Shaw, Head of Cultural, Communities and Economic Development Services

16 February 2010