

Report to: **Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

Date: **23 February 2017**

Title: **Events Policy Update**

Report of: **Events Task & Finish Group**  
**Chair: Cllr Ian Bramble**

Wards Affected: **All**

Date next steps can be taken: After recommendation to Executive

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**Recommendations:**

- 1. That the Panel approve the suggested principles for the revised SHDC events policy and consultation process as detailed in section 3.**
- 2. That the Events Task & Finish Group prepare a Events Policy based on these recommendations for approval at the next Executive meeting after the consultation is completed**
- 3. Once live, the policy is reviewed annually and the fees levied are reviewed as part of the regular SHDC fee & charge setting process**

**1. Executive summary**

- 1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel requested that a Task & Finish group be formed to review the Council's events policy.
- 1.2. This group has concluded its investigations and now recommends a set of guiding principles which would be used to form the basis of the new policy.
- 1.3. The key change will see the new policy being applied consistently. The emerging policy is not designed to generate profit for the Council, instead it is designed to remove ambiguity and ensure that officers can more easily support event organisers by having a clear policy and charging regime to follow.
- 1.4. The administration fee for all confirmed event bookings is to be increased to £55 from its current £50 fee. This fee will apply to all event bookings and is non-negotiable.

- 1.5. No charge will be made for the hire of any event land (other than when the right to hold the event is awarded via a tender process).
- 1.6. If a car park is required to be closed to enable the running of an event, then at the discretion of the Car Parks Senior Specialist, a fee equivalent to the estimated lost car park income will be levied where this can be justified based on historical data. Where it can be proved that additional car parking space is available despite the event being held, then no loss of parking charge will be made.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. The Overview and Scrutiny panel recommended at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015 that a task and finish group was set up to review the events policy of the council.
- 2.2. The existing SHDC events booking form is shown in Appendix 1. This would be updated when the new policy is agreed. There is no specific events policy currently – the booking form is the only ‘policy’ in existence and this had led to deviations and inconsistencies in applying the current charging methodology.
- 2.3. A series of meetings between the members and key officers has been undertaken. A consultation with the public also took place between June and August this year. Based on the information shared throughout the events review, the principles on which to base a new SHDC events policy have been prepared. The Council is not looking to make a profit from events and in any case, is precluded from doing so under Government legislation and Local Authority powers.

## **3. Outcomes / Outputs**

- 3.1. The events task and finish group have prepared a set of working principles, which look to minimise changes to the existing policy.
- 3.2. The changes from the current ‘policy’ and arrangements are:
  - 3.2.1. The administration fee for all confirmed event bookings is to be increased to £55 from £50. This fee will apply to all event bookings and is now non-negotiable.
  - 3.2.2. No charge will be made for the hire of any event land (other than when the right to hold the event is awarded via a tender process).
  - 3.2.3. If a car park is required to be closed to enable the running of an event, then at the discretion of the Car Parks Senior Specialist, a fee for opportunity cost of lost car park income will be levied where this can be justified based on historical data. Where it can be proved that additional car parking space is available within the town or parish despite the event being held, then no loss of parking charge will be made.
- 3.3. It is proposed that the fees and charges detailed are approved by Members as part of the annual fees and charges process and not specifically in relation to the approval of the emerging events policy. The policy should also be reviewed on an annual basis.

- 3.4. Once Members have provided feedback on the principles, the task and finish group will prepare the events policy, and consult with Members, Parish/Town Councils, local chamber of Commerce and prior consultation respondents & event organisers. Once complete, the policy will be recommended to Executive for approval, and if granted, will come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.

#### **4. Options available and consideration of risk**

- 4.1. The events task and finish group was formed to review the events process and charging methodology. O&S panel Members could opt to leave the events policy as is (as shown in Appendix 1). However, the task and finish group was formed to focus on inconsistencies in the application of the policy.
- 4.2. The overview and scrutiny panel can make recommendations to the events task and finish group to make changes to the recommendations presented.
- 4.3. The events task and finish group conducted a public consultation to aid the review of the council's events policy. This was held between June and August 2016 and was promoted by the Council's website, elected Members, press coverage and proactive contact with previous event organisers. 26 responses were received during this period and the group reviewed these responses before compiling the recommendations contained in this report. The group has advised these respondents that a further consultation will be completed ahead of the Council approving any revised policy
- 4.4. The subject of charging for events is highly emotive and the group Members have sought to achieve a practical solution which will limit impact on all groups, but which will achieve the aims of the Council to be consistent and fair in its dealings with event organisers.

#### **5. Proposed Way Forward**

- 5.1. The overview and scrutiny panel are requested to approve the recommendations highlighted in this report.
- 5.2. In conjunction with officers, the Events Task & Finish group will then prepare an Events policy based on these recommendations for approval at a forthcoming SHDC Executive after a further public consultation. It is anticipated the new policy will come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.
- 5.3. Officers will ensure that the proposed fees and charges detailed in any new policy will be reviewed as part of the wider SHDC fee & charge setting process, scrutinised by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel.

#### **6. Implications**

<b>Implications</b>	<b>Relevant to proposals</b>	<b>Details and proposed measures to address</b>
Legal / Governance	Y	The recommendations are not in themselves a new policy. The policy will be reviewed when it is presented for adoption by Council later this year. The Council cannot derive a profit from fees and charges. The approach presented in this report will see the Council aiming to recover its costs.
Financial	Y	The aim of the events policy is not to make a profit from events, instead it aims to improve the financial position by more consistently applying the charging policy for events. The new events policy will remove some previous inconsistency in application of fees.
Risk	Y	<p>The events task and finish group conducted a public consultation to aid the review of the council's events policy. This was held between June and August 2016 and was promoted by the Council's website, elected members, press coverage and proactive contact with previous event organisers. 26 responses were received during this period and the group reviewed these responses before compiling the recommendations contained in this report. If this reports recommendations are approved, a further consultation will be completed, before the policy is finalised and adopted for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.</p> <p>The subject of charging for events is highly emotive and the group members have sought to achieve a practical solution which will limit impact on all groups, but which will achieve the aims of the Council to be consistent and fair in its dealings with event organisers.</p>
<b>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</b>		
Equality and Diversity	N	N/A
Safeguarding	N	N/A
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	N/A
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	N/A
Other implications	N	N/A

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Current SHDC Event Booking Form. Note: The charges contained in here would change when the new policy is approved.

**Background Papers:**

- Report & appendices entitled "Events Policy Principles", presented to O&S October 6<sup>th</sup> 2016
- Scrutiny Scope for Events T&F Group