



## Minutes of the Fees & Charges Working Group held via Zoom 15 September 2020 at 6pm hosted via zoom

**Present:** Cllrs P O'Connor (Chairman), J Amis, G Blundell, F Carter, J Flowerdew (voting substitute for C Mahn), G Jones & N Bailey (Deputy Clerk) Dan Henry (Chairman Costessey Sports)

### To receive apologies for absence

**FC011/20:** Cllr Mahn (other commitments) & D Bowles, Buildings Officer (unwell)

### To confirm substitutes

**FC012/20:** Cllr Flowerdew for Cllr Mahn

### To receive declarations of interest

**FC013/20:** None declared.

### To confirm the minutes of the Fees & Charges Working Group on 21st July 2020

**FC014/20:** It was noted that these had been approved by Full Council, with an item deferred for further discussion at this meeting.

### To consider operational requirements for changing room use

**FC015/20:** Costessey Sports Club were seeking access to toilets at the Costessey Centre, Longwater Lane and Breckland Hall at Breckland Park. A commitment through to the end of April 2021 had been requested. Risk Assessments were in place for the buildings, and measures restricted the use of certain areas. One-way systems in corridors limited the number of groups sharing a facility. A background paper had been circulated, and if necessary, officers could displace hirers from the Owen Barnes Room to enable footballers and their spectators access to the changing room toilets at weekends. Cleaning would be undertaken by Costessey Sports Club.

### **RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL: Prioritise footballers' toilet access to Breckland Hall changing rooms until the end of April 2021.**

**FC016/20:** With the majority of the Costessey Centre hirers requiring the Stafford Hall for additional space, it was not possible to agree access to the changing room toilets for footballers and their spectators. Costessey Sports Club had been quoted £300 per month for portable toilets which needed to be located somewhere on site. The Multi Games Area could be an option, but alternatives might be suitable. Although it was hoped restrictions would be lifted in the future, Costessey Sports were seeking a commitment until the end of April 2021. Costessey Sports would be responsible for the hire and cleaning of the portable toilets. Although a long-term hire agreement might offer savings, it was suggested Costessey Sports did not commit to one, as restrictions on hall use could be lifted earlier than April 2021.

Further enquiries should be made around the feasibility of direct access to the changing rooms. This would reduce caretaking costs, as a member of staff had to be on site if the building was open to the public. **Action: Buildings Officer**

### **RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL: Contribute £37.50 per week to Costessey Sports Club for the provision of portable toilets at Longwater Grounds until the end of April 2021.**

### To consider the pitch hire fees for 2021/22 season

**FC017/20:** Dan Henry answered questions from Town Councillors, including the cost of hiring other facilities and pitches outside of Costessey. A comparison of fees had been circulated the previous year, and was included in the meeting papers. Papers also included the T&C's of the Football Foundation Facilities Grant which had contributed to the build cost of the Costessey Centre.

A clause in the agreement restricted the increase of fees beyond the Retail Price Index, without prior written consent. A 10% increase had been approved for the season 2018/19, with no increase for 2019/20. The annual tournament fee of £110 per day was out of scope of the FA grant. Costs associated with pitch care and preparation had been circulated, but it was acknowledged that these did not include staff time and equipment running costs. Dan Henry requested a more detailed breakdown, as there was a perception that the pitch hire fees covered the costs. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

**RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL: Increase 2021/22 Pitch Hire fees in line with the September 2020 Retail Price Index. Annual tournament to remain at £110 plus VAT per day.**

**To consider any interim changes to the 2020/21 hall hire fees**

**FC018/20:** The halls re-opened on 7<sup>th</sup> September, but some of the regular groups were not ready to return. Enquiries for private party hire had dipped significantly, and pre-booked events were being cancelled due to government restrictions on gatherings. Under normal circumstances, a booking had to be cancelled more than a month before the event, to avoid a charge. This worked well as the bookings team rarely received cancellations at the point hall hire payment was due. For comparison, fees from other similar venues had been circulated, and it was acknowledged that the halls were a service to the community which were subsidised by all Costessey Council Taxpayers. Sessions were available on Friday and Saturday evenings. To encourage use, Cllr Blundell proposed a 'flat fee' of £100 inc VAT (1:30pm to 11:30pm on a Friday, and 1:30pm to midnight on a Saturday) for the Stafford Hall, Jerningham Room & Dinneen Hall which would align all of the larger rooms with the current charges for Breckland Hall & The Owen Barnes Room. The offer was a marketing angle, and banners/website/social media etc could promote the offer.

**RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL: Introduce a mid-year reduction in hall hire fees for private hire of the Stafford Hall, Jerningham Room & Dinneen Hall to £100 inc VAT (1:30pm to 11:30pm on a Friday, and 1:30pm to midnight on a Saturday)**

**FC019/20:** Cllr Flowerdew left the meeting at 7:50pm

**To consider hall hire fees for 2021/22**

**FC020/20:** It was acknowledged that estimating the 2021/22 income from hall hire was going to be a challenge. Any small increase in charges would have a limited impact on revenue.

**RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL: No increase in hall hire fees for 2021/22. A reduction in hall hire fees for private hire of the Stafford Hall, Jerningham Room & Dinneen Hall to £100 inc VAT (1:30pm to 11:30pm on a Friday, and 1:30pm to midnight on a Saturday)**

**FC021/20:** The meeting finished at 8:15pm

**Chairman:**

**Date:**