

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Monday 13 March 2023 by the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee.

Item No

7. **BEREAVEMENT FEES AND CHARGES**

- 7.1 The service manager for Coronial and Bereavement Services introduced the item which outlined the Bereavement Services team proposal to increase fees by 4% for burials, cremations and memorials from 1st April 2023, with some exceptions (as outlined within the report).

The purpose of the report was to provide detail on, and seek agreement for, the proposed price increases.

- 7.2 **RESOLVED:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure** Policy Committee:-

1. Agree a general 4% increase (rounded up) to all Bereavement Services fees and charges from 1st April 2023, alongside the specific changes listed within the report.

7.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 7.3.1 Raising fees as outlined is recommended in order to minimise the impact delivery cost increases will have on the service delivered to customers.

7.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 7.4.1 Not increasing fees would lead to a significant reduction in the quality of services provided.

- 7.4.2 Increasing fees by more than 4% to match inflation would be beneficial for the development and delivery of the service but would provide an additional financial burden on bereaved customers when accessing this essential service at a time when cost of living is already increasing significantly.

8. **LIBRARY THEATRE FEES**

- 8.1 The Service Manager introduced the report which sought approval for the proposed increase in hire fees for the use of the Library Theatre, to reflect increasing cost pressures and the need to ensure financial sustainability for the future.

- 8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure** Policy Committee:-

1. Approve the proposed Scale of Charges for the Library Theatre to take

effect from June 2023 set out at paragraph 1.6 of the Report.

8.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 8.3.1 It is recommended that Committee approve proposed increase to Library Theatre Hire Fees.
- 8.3.2 It is recommended that this increase comes into effect 3 months after Committee make their decision.

8.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 8.4.1 The option of keeping fees at their current level was considered. However, this would put the Library Theatre in a situation where it will cease to cover its running costs and will no longer be financially viable. Removing the Library Theatre as a venue would reduce the options for lower priced venues and have a particular impact on amateur dramatic and community group performances.
- 8.4.2 The Library Theatre's bar prices have been increased to raise revenue and reflect increasing costs of stocking the bar. However, this is not a viable alternative option for the longer term, as the bar cannot generate sufficient revenue on its own to cover the wider increased running costs.

9. **BIODIVERSITY WORKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

- 9.1 The Head of Parks and Countryside introduced the report which sought approval to appoint a Task and Finish Group to oversee work to respond to the declaration of a Nature Emergency in Sheffield. Membership will be drawn initially from the Communities, Parks, and Leisure Policy Committee. The Terms of Reference of the Group were appended to the report.
- 9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure** Policy Committee:-

- 1. Approve the appointment of a Task and Finish Group on the terms of reference at Appendix A to oversee work to respond to the Nature Emergency declared by Sheffield City Council on 16th June 2021.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 9.3.1 The Task and Finish Group will bring together a small, focused group of members to examine key challenges around the nature emergency and provide clear advice and direction to officers developing an action plan for the Council and city. Cross party representation will mean that political agreement is reached at an early stage of the process allowing the strategy to progress. The group will feed back advice given, and progress on the work programme to the Policy Committee, so the Committee can make informed decisions on any future actions.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 9.4.1 An alternative would be to deliver a series of Knowledge Briefings for the Policy Committee. This was rejected as it would not enable constructive debate and advice to be provided to officers.