

Briefing note on Parks Events Licensing and Fees

1) £20k budget transfer

The parks events budget of £20k was combined with a £20k budget from Arts and Events in 2009/10. The £40k fund was then made available to community groups as a Grant Fund Application, which enabled community groups to bid for funding upto £2k for community events.

2) Events Licensing Fees and Process

The whole process for applying for licences has been recently been reviewed and a new schedule of charges has been put forward to cabinet. The issue re some groups paying and some not arises from historical agreements between groups and parks and where some groups have agreed such waivers with park managers, via councillors etc. The purpose of the review was to ensure consistency across all events and the events team will need support from parks to enforce the new charges at all times in order to make it work.

The following is an extract from the report that has gone forward to cabinet for approval:

'Introduction of the 'Community Event' rate at a flat charge of £20 for all applications

In 2008-09 we have 110 events we waived fees for and 90 events we charged between £42-84 (the previous community /non-pitch sports group rate). There is no real line between those charged and those not charged other historic agreements and this is hard to justify.

Introducing a blanket application charge of £20 makes it much clearer and fairer. The income would cover the new insurance policy for community events and potentially blanket PRS licences.

- For those events that haven't previously paid, the charge of £20 would add value with insurance and PRS cover included (minimum insurance policy they would previously have been liable for would be approx £100).
Please note: there may be a very small number of events for which the insurance policy is not included due to high risk activities (eg fairground rides / extreme sports) or other exceptions that fall outside the scope of the policy, but these are expected to be in the minority and will be highlighted on application.
- For community events that have previously paid, the charge would be halved, with insurance and PRS included.
- A framework would be drawn up for what classifies a 'community event', which will also transfer to insurance policy framework and the festival fund.
- Charges above the community level rate would be subject to the usual charges with minor changes to simplify structure. '

What is a Site Licence?

A Site Licence serves two main functions – it provides a process of applying for permission from Bristol City Council to use a park on a particular date and time, and enables us to consider the health and safety implications of your event. This information is also shared with the Bristol Safety Advisory Group and other relevant agencies, to ensure that events in parks are run safely and successfully.

There is usually a fee for all events based on whether it is a community event, a local or national charity or commercial organisation (apart from via historical agreements mentioned above). There may also be a refundable bond to cover the cost of any reinstatement works that may be required following an event.

The Site Licence application process is important for several reasons:

- It ensures the events diary is up to date and exposes any potential clashes
- Allows the Events Team to provide advice on public health and safety issues
- Enables the Park Manager to advise on park protection and consultation requirements
- Provides useful information on the usage of the park
- Provides the opportunity to conduct debriefs where there have been issues with an event
- Provides legal protection for both the event organiser and BCC by ensuring that we have all considered and complied with our duty of care

Changes

All events will still be required to apply for a licence, but this will make it easier for community events to understand their responsibilities and determine whether they will be charged any fees. It will also transfer the principle to any future funding policies so that community event organisers are aware of what financial support they may be eligible for (subject to Cabinet approval).

Insurance

BCC have worked with Insurance Services to introduce a new insurance policy for community events from January 2010. Community event organisers will now be able to obtain Public Liability Insurance (£5 million) included within the new £20 application fee charge . There will be clear guidelines issued with the policy on who is eligible for the scheme and what the policy covers. It is hoped this will encourage new community groups to deliver events as this will represent a significant financial saving.