

# Neighbourhood Services & Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission Report

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## **Community Services Charging Scheme**

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Sarah Russell

Lead director: Liz Blyth

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## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All wards
- Report author: Shilen Pattni
- Author contact details: 29 6564
- Report version number: 1

### 1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission with information regarding the response to the new charging scheme for the Council's community centres. This briefing follows on from an earlier report presented to the Commission on 4 June 2013 outlining the options following a review of the current charging scheme in operation across the Council's community centres. This earlier report outlined the adoption of a new simplified scheme to be introduced and applied in all Council community centres from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

### 2. Recommendations

The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission is asked to note and provide comments on the information and response received regarding the proposal to introduce a new charging scheme from 1st September 2013.

### 3. Background:

The report presented to the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013 outlined the options considered by the City Mayor and Executive for the adoption of a new simplified charging scheme for community centres.

This report outlined the proposal to revise the existing and complex scheme which contained 96 different rates of charge and replace it with a more streamlined and simple scheme with only 16 different rates dependent on use.

#### **Principles of the new proposed Fees and Charges scheme**

When developing a proposal for a simplified scheme consideration was given to the types of use and as a result the new scheme set out four bands which are aligned as closely as possible to existing rates to avoid disruption. The overall aim of the new scheme is to simplify and streamline charges and to avoid misinterpretation.

The objective of the new scheme is to ensure charges remain affordable, realistic, cost effective and fair and to do this usage has been categorised within bands as described below. The new scheme has been developed to be broadly comparable against existing rates to seek to ensure that it actively encourages voluntary and community groups to use community centres:

- 1 **Standard Rate** – This rate would apply to Leicester based businesses and residents for private hire. This rate also applies to Leicester based public sector partners who are either supported by budgets for provision of services or have the opportunity to draw down external funding. This type of charge has traditionally always been higher due to the nature of use. It is important to ensure that charges for facilities opening outside of normal core hours, for one off private hire, are set at a realistic price. This takes into account the true running costs of the facility, particularly increased staffing costs.
- 2 **Community Rate** - Community Groups - Fees for this group have been kept as low as possible.
- 3 **Instructor Rate** - Funded voluntary/community groups, activities charging for instruction and those clubs and groups charging local people fees for instruction, would be charged at a higher rate than the Community rate.
- 4 **Commercial Rate** – Other individuals, groups and organisations based outside Leicester. These charges are set at a commercial rate to ensure that a reasonable cost is recovered from commercial organisations.

Band	Facility		Standard Rate	Community Group Rate (Regular Bookings) 65% Discount	Instructor Rate [Regular Bookings] 40% Discount	Commercial Rate
I	Small Centre/Large Hall	per hour	20.00	7.00	12.00	50.00
II	Small Hall/Large Room	per hour	16.00	5.50	9.50	40.00
III	Medium Room	per hour	12.00	4.00	7.00	30.00
IV	Small Room/Office	per hour	8.00	3.00	5.00	20.00

Note: Charges are rounded to the nearest 50p (up or down)

The proposed scheme aims to protect non-commercial community access whilst charging for commercial activities at a commercial rate, and broadly maintains the status quo for overall income.

Where proposed charges are expected to be higher transitional support is proposed over a 7 month period to reduce the immediate financial impact on existing community and instructor led groups from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

### Benefits of the proposed scheme

The benefits of the proposed scheme are:

- a. A clear and simple charging structure that is easy to understand for customers and employees
- b. Fair, equal and consistent rates across community centres
- c. Acknowledgement of the different types of hirer using community facilities and appreciation of the important work by local communities.
- d. Recognition of local community volunteers
- e. Advance payment will enable groups to plan their finances and it avoids debts to the Council being built up
- f. Enables the ability to develop an online charging facility for room bookings similar to booking a hotel room

Following consideration by the Scrutiny Commission on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013, letters (Appendix B) were sent to over 300 groups and organisations who regularly hire community facilities.

The table below represents the numbers of groups receiving a reduction or increase in hourly charge:

Type of Group	No of groups	Paying less	Groups paying more, and between:					
			£1.00	£1-£2	£2-3	£3-4	£4-5	>£5
Cafes and Lunch Clubs	17	2	5	0	5	2	0	3
Commercial	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Community and Social	161	93	45	9	5	4	0	5
Dance	18	8	2	3	3	2	0	0
Education and Learning	43	23	10	6	2	2	0	0
Faith Groups	17	12	2	3	0	0	0	0
Health, Fitness & Wellbeing	30	13	5	3	6	2	0	1
Martial Arts	14	5	5	2	1	0	0	1
Older Peoples activities	7	5	2	0	0	0	0	0
Young people activities	4	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
Total	315	161	77	27	24	14	0	12
Percentage		51%	24%	9%	8%	4%	0%	4%

This breakdown includes groups who have also received discounts for key holding and as part of the access control scheme.

The highest level of reduction was £8.40 from a community group moving from an existing charge of £15.40 to a new rate of £7.00 per hour.

The highest level of increase was £21.90 from a commercial pharmaceutical company moving from an existing charge of £8.10 to a new rate of £30.00.

The table below outline the number of responses received from each centre

	Centre	Number of letters issued	Number of responses received	%
1.	African Caribbean Centre	20	1	5%
2.	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	69		
3.	Braunstone Frith Community Centre	4		
4.	Braunstone Grove	2		
5.	Brite Centre	11		
6.	Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	9	8	89%
7.	Coleman Lodge	12	2	8%
8.	Cort Crescent Community Centre	4		
9.	Eyres Monsell Community Centre	17	2	12%
10.	Fosse Centre	8		
11.	Gilmorton Centre	1		
12.	Home Farm Community Centre	5		
13.	Linwood Centre	8	1	13%
14.	Manor House Neighbourhood Centre	32	1	
15.	Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre	9		
16.	New Parks Neighbourhood Centre	5	1	20%
17.	Newfoundpool Neighbourhood Centre	9		
18.	Northfields Neighbourhood Centre	5		
19.	Oak Centre	4	3	75%
20.	Ocean Rd Recreation Centre	6		
21.	Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	5		
22.	Southfields Drive Community Centre	3		
23.	St Matthews Centre (not including sportshall)	13		
24.	Stocking Farm Community Centre	6		
25.	Thumby Lodge Community Centre	19		
26.	Tudor Centre	6		
27.	West End Neighbourhood Centre	23		
	Total	315	19	6%

The table below shows the number of responses received by the different types of hirer:

Type of Group	Number of letters issued	Number of responses received	%
Cafes and Lunch Clubs	17	2	6%
Commercial	4	2	25%
Community and Social	161	7	1%
Dance	18	1	6%
Education and Learning	43	2	5%
Faith Groups	17	2	12%
Health, Fitness & Wellbeing	30	1	3%
Martial Arts	14		0%
Older Peoples activities	7	2	29%
Young people activities	4		0%
Total	315	19	4%

#### Summary of comments:

From the responses received to date, those groups who will see a reduction have welcomed the change. Some groups who had anticipated an increase indicated they were surprised and pleased with the new level of charge. The table below outlines the responses the Council has received from each centre:

<p><b>African Caribbean Centre</b></p> <p>One response has been received to date expressing concern that the group has received subsidised and free use of the centre for over 25 years. The group meet on a weekly basis and travel from across the city. They collect money weekly to pay for keep-fit and other activity tutors. The group feel “to pay £1.80 per hour for room hire is unreasonable to ask for”.</p>
<p><b>Coleman Neighbourhood Centre</b></p> <p>Eight responses have been received mainly from groups receiving a reduction. Three groups who would see small increases had anticipated a change would be coming. All groups accepted the change, one stated “it’s not too bad, not as I expected”. Another group also mentioned “as the number is gradually dwindling we may not be running for many more months”, they continue to mention that “they appreciate the Council supporting their senior citizens group...”.</p>
<p><b>Coleman Lodge Community Centre</b></p> <p>Two responses received to date from Language classes both of which request the Council to consider reclassifying the group’s activities in order to receive a more favourable rate, the group states “I fully understand the current climate and your need to review rates, therefore I would like to apply for our group sessions to be considered for the Community Group rate, rather than being over charged at the current Instructor Rate”. The response also contained an unverified petition from 24 parents of attendees.</p>
<p><b>Eyres Monsell Community Centre</b></p> <p>Two responses have been received to date, the first expresses concern over some of the increases to be brought in “one of our largest groups and ‘earners’ (i.e income to the centre) at the centre will have to move to other premises. This will almost certainly be the end of the newly negotiated Drama group”. Another response seeks reconsideration of the charge based on the type of activity being delivered through volunteers.</p>

#### Linwood Centre

One response received to date, indicated a “feeling that is wrong to be charged to use their own community centre when currently revenue is being collected for rent from office space to organisations that have allocated revenue funds in their budgets.” It is felt that charging the community will have a negative impact on encouraging more use of the centre. The group also states that “community groups have no unallocated revenue funds in which to pay rent as all funds are either allocated to tutor costs or funding to deliver specific projects only”. The group also suggested that “there is unused space in the Linwood building that is not being rented out and could be in the future to bring in extra revenue funds without charging local community groups.”

#### Manor House Neighbourhood Centre

One response has been received to date, the group feel that given the substantial amount of voluntary time given to developing the centre and operating the facility consideration should be given to the value of this. “We feel we give a great deal of time, for free, and this should be matched by the LA”. The response continues to thank the Council for the support the group has received and on a more general point state “we are pleased that you have simplified the charging structure. You have given a great deal of time to ensure the increases are brought in slowly, over time. This is helpful. Some of our groups that are key holders will pay slightly less. Only a small number of our groups with few users may struggle to pay their new rates”. The group also acknowledged the move to advance payments “we welcome the opportunity for cash payments to be taken in advance or on the day. This is helpful”.

#### New Parks Community Centre

One response received to date from a group seeking reclassification due to the nature of their activities and the type of organisation. This will be considered subject to further information from the group to determine whether the current classification is correct or should be changed.

#### Braunstone Oak Community Centre

Three responses received to date, one group accepted the small increase of 10p. The other two responses from dance groups are seeking reconsideration on the type of organisation “people working in their sessions were volunteers” and they “relied on bigger numbers in the winter to help pay toward the cost of the centre in summer when numbers were low”. One group suggested their “instructor was not paid a professional fee only a small amount in recognition of the work she did with young people” Both groups would receive an overall increase of £2.70 per hour each after transitional support ended in March 2014 which is deemed correct based on the current classification.

In conclusion the responses received have been reviewed and carefully considered. It has been acknowledged that the scheme is a lot more simple and easy to understand, and with an appreciation of the need to ensure that charges are fair and consistent. Where groups have requested a reclassification consideration will be given on a case by case basis, to ensure that the scheme is applied consistently across the city. As outlined in the previous report the new charges are set to be implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> September with transitional support over seven months, until March 2014, to reduce the immediate financial impact.

## 4. Details of Scrutiny

The issues in this report were originally considered by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013

## 5. Financial, legal and other implications

### 5.1 Financial implications

This report considers options for the design and implementation of a new charging scheme for public and other external use of community centres. The move to simplify and standardise charges across the estate is welcome. The Executive will wish to consider whether the broad aim of maintaining income at current levels, together with the proposals for transitional support, are appropriate and sustainable in the context of the challenging financial pressures upon the Council over the coming years.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, City Development and Neighbourhoods, ext. 29 7390

### 5.2 Legal implications

Advice has been provided to the Report author on: the Council's equality obligations concerning the existing groups that are described in this Report and new groups; and means to assess the potential for any unintended disadvantage to new groups. General advice has also been provided to the Report author on consultation obligations.

Greg Surtees, Senior Solicitor. Ext: 296453

### 5.3 Equality Impact Assessment

An EIA was conducted which did not highlight any significant impact across any protected characteristic. The impacts identified were both negative and positive dependent on whether groups received an increase or reduction in charge. It is felt that in considering the overall impact the new scheme has maintained its key principles to provide fairness, consistency and subsidy of non-commercial hire, evidenced by the analysis of over 50% of groups receiving a reduction, while applying a fairer charge for commercial activities.

### 5.4 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None.

## 6. Background information and other papers:

August 2013

None

**7. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix A – EIA

Appendix B – Letter to hirers

**8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

No

**9. Is this a “key decision”?**

No



## **Equality Impact Assessment for Service changes / Budget proposals**

An EIA is a tool which will help you assess whether there are any positive or negative equality impacts on people affected by proposed changes requiring formal decision.

Service change involves redesigning or reshaping, (and in some cases the removal of) current service provision – whether directly provided by Council officers or commissioned by the Council for provision by an external provider.

Budget proposals should arise from service changes that you are considering throughout the year in light of the current financial climate. The EIA for budget proposals should cover the same issues as considered for service changes.

Our public sector equality duty requires us to ensure that we do not discriminate against any protected group or person with protected characteristics (see below) covered by the Equality Act 2010 when taking decisions that affect them. Potential negative impacts that we disregard or ignore could mean discrimination. We also have a duty to actively promote positive impacts that advance equality of opportunity. The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

What to do: The service change / budget proposal EIA contains 3 steps:

### Step 1 The proposal

This part of the EIA examines the proposed change to the service and potential equality impacts takes place at the start of the planning process.

### Step 2 Consultation

This part of the EIA covers the outcome of the consultation with service stakeholders about service change proposals.

### Step 3 The recommendation

The final part of the EIA presents the recommendation for decision along with potential positive and negative equality impacts of the recommended action.

Any issues identified in the above EIA process requiring action should be addressed in a SMART EIA action plan.

Remember to keep your supporting information and analysis as your evidence base (including any needs assessments informing the start of the planning process) in case

of challenge to the contents of your EIA, your interpretation of the evidence used to support the EIA, or your interpretation of protected groups affected.

## Equality Impact Assessment for service changes / budget proposals

<b>Name of service</b>	<b>Community Services</b>
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### Date of assessment:

<b>Start date</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
04-04-2013	-- - - - -

<b>Lead officer and Contact details</b>	<b>Shilen Pattni 296564</b>
<b>List of other(s) involved</b>	<b>Steve Goddard Liz Blyth</b>

### What is this EIA about?

(Please tick✓)

<b>Budget proposal for existing service or service contract to achieve savings</b>	
<b>Budget proposal for new or additional service expenditure</b>	
<b>Budget proposal for capital expenditure</b>	
<b>Commissioning a new service or service contract</b>	
<b>Changing or removing an existing service or service contract</b>	✓

### Step 1: The proposal (how you propose to change the service)

#### Question 1:

<b>What is the proposal/proposed change?</b>
<p>a. Introducing the new scheme from 1st September 2013, providing a 65% discount for community groups and 40% discount for instructor led activities from the proposed new standard rate.</p> <p>b. Where revised charges are expected to be higher than existing charges for existing groups hiring space in community centres, to provide transitional support over a seven month period.</p>
<b>Who will it affect and how will they likely be affected?</b>
<p>This will affect a range of existing groups who hire community facilities. Based on a snapshot at a specific period in time analysis showed that from an extract of 347 groups, 96 groups would see their charge reduced and 251 would see charges increase by varying amounts.</p> <p>The proposed scheme attempts to drive out the inequality of the existing charging scheme which has built up over time and a historical application of the scheme. Overall the proposed</p>

scheme attempts to apply a fair, consistent and reasonable charge for the use of community centres across the city which would not have an adverse impact on new communities and groups.

While transitional support will be provided to existing groups to bring them in line with the proposed scheme it is not felt that this approach is disadvantageous to new groups/communities given that the overall aim is to address the inequality of charging across the city.

**Question 2:**

**Will the proposal have an impact on people because of their protected characteristic? Tick the anticipated impact for those likely to be affected by protected characteristic.**

	No impact	Positive impact	Neutral impact <sup>1</sup>	Negative impact	Impact not known
Age		✓		✓	
Disability		✓		✓	
Gender reassignment		✓		✓	
Pregnancy and maternity		✓		✓	
Race		✓		✓	
Religion or belief		✓		✓	
Sex (gender)		✓		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓		✓	

**Question 3:**

**For those likely to receive a positive impact, describe the likely positive impact for each group sharing a protected characteristic. How many people are likely to be affected?**

**From the range of 347 groups – 96 groups would receive a positive impact by way of a reduction in the hire charge.**

**Question 4:**

**For those likely to receive a neutral impact, describe the likely impacts (both positive and negative) for each group sharing a protected characteristic and how they result in a neutral finding. How many people are likely to be affected?**

n/a

**Question 5:**

**For those likely to receive a negative impact, describe the likely negative impact for each group sharing a protected characteristic. How many people are likely to be affected?**

**From the range of 347 groups – 251 groups would receive a negative impact by way of an increase in the hire charge to varying amounts dependent on the nature and room hired. This is likely to see some groups facing difficulties in immediately meeting the increase rates.**

<sup>1</sup> Where likely positive impacts combined with likely negative impacts leave the person no better or worse off

### How can these negative impacts be reduced or removed?

It is intended that these impacts are reduced by providing transitional support introducing the new rate over a period of seven months and also providing support on a case by case basis to identify alternative sources of funding to support a group's activities.

### Question 6:

#### Is there other alternative or comparable provision available in the city? Who provides it and where is it provided?

There are a range of alternative providers for hireable space across the city. Given that the rates for community and instructor led activities remain significantly subsidised by the Council it is clear that Council run community facilities are more cost effective.

The table below provides an outline comparison of charges for alternative venue against the proposed scheme:

Community Groups, local voluntary organisations	Average Charge per hour						
	Proposed Community Group Rate 65% Discount	Community Services Existing	Braunstone Civic Centre	Leicestershire County Libraries	Clarence House	County Schools (Brockington College)	Leicester Schools Schedule of rates
Halls	7.00	8.20	11.95	-	12.50	13.50	16.83
Meeting Rooms	4.00	5.40	4.76	6.25	7.10	11.00	4.34
Consulting/Interview Rooms	3.00	3.50	4.76	6.25	5.00	11.00	4.34

Instructor led activities (fee charged)	Average Charge per hour						
	Proposed Instructor rate 40% Discount	Community Services Existing	Braunstone Civic Centre	Leicestershire County Libraries	Clarence House	County Schools (Brockington College)	Leicester Schools Schedule of rates
Halls	12.00	13.10	11.95	-	12.50	13.50	16.83
Meeting Rooms	7.00	9.60	4.76	6.25	7.10	11.00	4.34
Consulting/Interview Rooms	5.00	6.20	4.76	6.25	5.00	11.00	4.34

Private and Commercial	Average Charge per hour								
	Braunstone Civic Centre	Leicester Schools Schedule of rates	Proposed Standard Rate	Existing Private Bookings Rate	Clarence House	County Schools (Brockington College)	Leicestershire County Libraries	Existing Commercial Rate	Proposed Commercial Rate
Halls	13.95	16.83	20.00	23.20	29.17	26.50	-	38.20	50.00
Meeting Rooms	5.50	4.34	12.00	15.10	12.30	13.50	16.25	25.00	30.00
Consulting/Interview Rooms	5.50	-	8.00	9.60	10.00	-	16.25	15.60	20.00

#### Can this alternative or comparable provision reduce or remove the negative impacts identified in Question 5? If not, why not?

Based on the information above it is not likely that alternative venues will reduce or remove the negative impact as they appear more expensive.

#### Would service users negatively affected by the proposal be eligible to use this alternative or comparable provision, and would it meet the service users' identified needs?

Alternative provision would be on the basis of identifying and hiring alternative community facilities that are outside of Council control (Private venues) which are also likely to levy a charge to service users.

**Question 7:**

**Will any particular area of the city be positively or negatively affected by the proposal, compared to other parts of the city? Describe where this is likely to take place, and why.**

The range of 347 groups are spread across the city

**Question 8:**

**Is it likely that there may be additional negative impacts arising over the next three years that need to be considered? Describe any additional negative impacts over time that could realistically occur.**

No additional impacts have been identified.

**Question 9:**

**What data/information/analysis have you used to inform your equality impact findings?**

Information and data extracted from gathering information about the usage and hire of community centres at a specific point in time.

**Date completed** ...4 April 2013.....

**Step 2: Consultation on the final proposal**

**Question1:**

**What consultation on the final proposal has taken place? When, where and who with?**

A total of 315 groups were written to formally to indicate the impact on their specific case, following which discussions would take place to determine any further impact and if any further support is required which will be determined on an individual case basis.

**Question 2:**

**What potential impacts did consultation stakeholders identify?**

The majority of groups who responded accepted the rationale for the change and had anticipated that there would be an impact. Some groups indicated that the change was not as much as expected and were able to absorb the impact. Some groups did not accept the classification for their group and type of activity for which consideration is being given on a case by case basis.

**What positive impacts were identified? For people with which protected characteristics?**

Groups have indicated that the new scheme is simple and easy to understand

**What negative impacts were identified? For people with which protected characteristics?**

Some groups have indicated difficulty as numbers are currently reducing for their group. It was accepted that transitional support would help and further assistance would be provided in promoting activities.

**Question 3:**

**Did stakeholders indicate how positive impacts could be further promoted? How?**

To publicise the new charges wider.

**Did stakeholders indicate how negative impacts could be reduced or removed? How?**

No additional measures were put forward, however consideration is being given on a case by case basis to how the scheme applies to specific groups.

**Date completed** .....31-7-13.....

### Step 3: The recommendation (the recommended decision on how to change the service)

**Question 1:**

**What changes are being recommended?**

- a. Introducing the new scheme from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, providing a 65% discount for community groups and 40% discount for instructor led activities from the proposed new standard rate.
- b. Where revised charges are expected to be higher than existing charges for existing groups hiring space in community centres, to provide transitional support over a seven month period.

**Who will be affected by these changes?**

This will affect a range of existing groups who hire community facilities. 315 groups were written to, with 161 groups paying less and 154 with charges increase by varying amounts.

The proposed scheme attempts to drive out the inequality of the existing charging scheme which has built up over time and a historical application of the scheme. Overall the proposed scheme attempts to apply a fair, consistent and reasonable charge for the use of community centres across the city which would not have an adverse impact on new communities and groups.

While transitional support will be provided to existing groups to bring them in line with the proposed scheme it is not felt that this approach is disadvantageous to new groups/communities. As with the existing scheme the new scheme also provides for temporary development concessions which would be provided to groups on a case by case basis.

**Question 2:**

**What is the anticipated impact of these changes on people who share the following protected characteristics? Tick the anticipated impact below:**

	No impact	Positive impact	Neutral impact <sup>2</sup>	Negative impact	Impact not known
<b>Age</b>		✓		✓	
<b>Disability</b>		✓		✓	
<b>Gender reassignment</b>		✓		✓	

<sup>2</sup> Where likely positive impacts combined with likely negative impacts leave the person no better or worse off

	No impact	Positive impact	Neutral impact <sup>2</sup>	Negative impact	Impact not known
Pregnancy and maternity		✓		✓	
Race		✓		✓	
Religion or belief		✓		✓	
Sex (gender)		✓		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓		✓	

**Question 3:**

**For those likely to receive a positive impact, describe the likely positive impact for each group sharing a protected characteristic. How many people are likely to be affected?**

A total of 161 groups are likely to receive a reduction in charge.

The Council has established partnership agreements with Community Associations and other local stakeholder groups who are interested in the development of their local facilities. In the spirit of this partnership it has been agreed that the partnering organisation shall receive 50% of the income generated through the development of new activities by the group. This income is shared to enable the group to build its financial capacity and reinvest in the development of the facility and provision of activities.

**Question 4:**

**For those likely to receive a neutral impact, describe the likely impacts (both positive and negative) for each group sharing a protected characteristic and how they result in a neutral finding. How many people are likely to be affected?**

**Question 5:**

**For those likely to receive a negative impact, describe the likely negative impact for each group sharing a protected characteristic. How many people are likely to be affected?**

154 groups are expected to receive an increase in charge for use of community centres at varying levels from £0.10 over £5.00 per hour.

**How can these negative impacts be reduced or removed?**

The impact of this change will be reduced by providing transitional support over a seven month period.  
 The Council has established partnership agreements with Community Associations and other local stakeholder groups who are interested in the development of their local facilities. In the spirit of this partnership it has been agreed that the partnering organisation shall receive 50% of the income generated through the development of new activities by the group. This income is shared to enable the group to build its financial capacity and reinvest in the development of the facility and provision of activities.

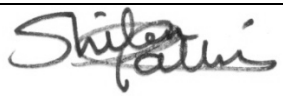
**Question 6:**

**Are there any actions required as a result of this EIA?  
 If yes complete the EIA Action Plan on the next page. List up to 3 priority actions.**


**Date completed** ...5-8-13.....

This EIA has been completed by:



Lead officer (signature)	
Date	05-08-2013

The EIA has been signed off by the Equality Officer:

Equality officer (signature)	
Date	5-8-2013

This EIA has been signed off by the Divisional Director:

Divisional Director (signature)	Liz Blyth
Date	12-08-13

## EIA Action Plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from the Equality Impact Assessment. These should be included in the relevant service plan for performance management purposes.

Equality Objective	Action required	Target	Officer responsible	By when?
Example: To know equality profile of all service users.	Example: collect monitoring data on disabled users (currently not being provided)	Example: To have data for first performance review	Example: Joe Smith	Example: Start collection of data in April 10
Try to address the negative impacts above	Work with groups to promote activities or find alternative funding sources to support the groups' activities.	Groups securing alternative funding	Shilen Pattni	31 March 2014
	Work with groups to look at the feasibility of reorganising session times to minimise costs	Groups able to reorganise session times to share and reduce costs.	Shilen Pattni	31 March 2014

### What to do next?

If this EIA has identified any issues that need to be addressed (such as plugging a data gap, or carrying out a specific action that reduces or removes any negative impacts identified), complete the attached EIA Action Plan to set out what action is required, who will carry it out, and when it will be carried out/completed.

Once your EIA has been completed, (signed by the equalities officer **and countersigned by your Director**) the equality officer will work with you to monitor this action plan.

Equality officers: Sonya Osborne 29 7738

Sukhi Biring 29 6954

EIAs will be made widely available and published on the Councils website and intranet.



# City Mayor

## **APPENDIX B – LETTERS TO SERVICE USERS**

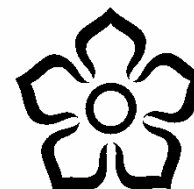
**Please ask for:**

**Direct Line:**

**E-Mail:**

**Fax No:**

**Date:**



**Leicester**  
City Council

Dear XXX

I am writing to let you know about new charges that the council proposes to implement in all its community centres from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. This letter tells you about the impact on your group and we would like your comments as a valued customer of council facilities.

### **Why are we changing the scheme?**

The existing scheme of charges has been in operation for over 20 years. It is overly complicated and out of date, and not applied consistently in some facilities because of historical patterns of use.

### **About the new scheme**

- The proposed scheme aims to ensure that charges for community centres operated by the council are affordable, realistic, cost effective and fair to all customers. Charges should reflect the type of use and the time the building is used.
- It is designed to be broadly comparable with existing rates to encourage voluntary and community groups to use community centres.
- It introduces a clear and simple charging structure that is easy for customers and staff to understand.
- The scheme acknowledges the different types of hirer using community facilities and the important work carried out by local communities.
- It recognises local community volunteers and the valuable service they provide.
- Under the new scheme, you will need to pay for room hire in advance, which will enable groups to plan their finances more effectively. Groups will be able to pay by cash or credit/debit card.

Please find enclosed a copy of the new scheme.

After reviewing the nature of your activity and the type of room(s) you hire, we have calculated that your [org/community grp/service] will [be required to pay/receive] a/an £00.00 [increase /reduction] in charges. This will bring your new hourly rate to £00.00 p/h, which has been calculated as follows:

Existing scheme

Room hired:	Cost per hour
<b>Total</b>	

New scheme: Type of use: Community Group, Instructor, Standard, Commercial

Room hired(Room designation: Small hall, large room, etc.)	Cost per hour
<b>Total</b>	

We anticipate that some groups may need support to meet the new charges. After careful consideration, we are proposing to phase in the increase for your group over seven months from September 2013 until March 2014 – see the table below:

Current Charge from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2013	Charge from 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2013	Charge from 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2014	Charge from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014

We want to hear your views and comments.

You can talk to the managers of our community centres, who will also be able to answer any questions that you may have.

Alternatively we would welcome your views and comments on the new scheme in writing: use the address at the top of this letter or email [communityservices@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:communityservices@leicester.gov.uk). To ensure your comments are properly considered, please write to us by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

Yours sincerely