

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET28 NOVEMBER 2019Report by Director of EducationEDUCATION DEPARTMENT - CHARGING FOR SERVICES 2020/21**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet of the outcome of the charging for services exercise carried out within the Education Department and to submit for approval the proposed fees and charges for 2020/2021.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. The Cabinet is asked to approve the following recommendations:

- Service Area 1 - Catering Service – School Meals  
To increase charges by 5% in line with approved budget savings package 2018-2021
- Service Area 2 - Wraparound Care  
To retain charges at their current level.
- Service Area 3 – Instrumental Music Service  
To retain charges at their current level
- Service Area 4 – Provision for Pupils with Additional Support Needs who reside out with the Authority  
Revised charge to be set for 2020/21 following consideration of 2019/20 outturn.
- Service area 5 - School Transport – Privilege Place  
To retain charges at their current level.
- Service Area 6 – Easter Schools  
To increase charges by 10%.

**IMPACT OF CHARGES FOR 2019/2020**

3. In terms of the impact of changes made to charges in 2019/20, the main points are seen as:

- Charges for wraparound have been maintained at the hourly rate of £2.25 since August 2017. Since then demand for the service has increased significantly year on year with a 31% increase in income from 2017/18 to 2018/19. The expansion of free early learning and childcare from 600 to 1140 hours from August 2020 will however impact on the overall demand for and capacity to offer this service to parents/carers.

- Charges for instrumental music were again maintained at £300 per annum during 2019/20. Despite this, uptake to date for the current school session has dropped by around 10% compared to last session. Charges for instrumental music within East Renfrewshire continue to be amongst the highest when benchmarked against other local authorities. The outcome of a judicial review into the lawfulness of charging for instrumental music provision is awaited.
- Charges for Easter schools were increased by inflation in 2019 but feedback from Head Teachers suggest this had little effect on uptake.
- No other significant impacts have been identified.

#### **DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES FOR CHARGING**

4. The majority of charges for Education services are set to recover part costs in recognition of the links to local and national policy priorities/legislation.

#### **SERVICES REVIEWED & PROPOSED CHARGES FOR 2020/2021**

5. The services reviewed and recommendations for 2020/21 are summarised in the tables below. Further information on each service area is available for scrutiny on request.

6. Where relevant, inflationary uplifts have been applied using the corporately agreed inflation figures of 2.7% for 2019/20 and 2.6% for 2020/21.

7. A summary of the department's concessions and discounts is also available for scrutiny on request.

8. In the table below, the following codes are used to denote the Charging Classification and Policy for 2020/2021 in respect of each service area:

Classification:

- i. To accord with policy/strategy
- ii. Market based charge
- iii. Statutory charge

Charging Policy:

- a) Charge to recover full cost
- b) Charge to recover part cost
- c) Charge to make contribution to service revenue
- d) Charges which are nationally prescribed
- e) Charges to recover marginal cost

Service	Current Charge 2019/2020	Proposed Charge 2020/2021	Charge Classification 2020/21	Charging Policy 2020/21	Recommendation
1. Catering Service - School Meals	Primary - £2.00 Secondary - £2.20	Primary - £2.10 Secondary - £2.30	(i) To accord with policy / strategy	(b) Charge to recover part cost	To increase charges by 5% in line with approved budget savings package 2018-2021
2. Wraparound Care	£2.25 per hour	£2.25 per hour	(i) To accord with policy / strategy	(b) Charge to recover part cost	To retain charges at current levels
3. Instrumental Music Service	£300 per year which equates to an hourly rate of £20; Membership of choral groups : £75; Singing Games and Rhymes (P2 & P3) : £130 per year	£300 per year which equates to an hourly rate of £20 Membership of choral groups : £75 Singing Games and Rhymes (P2 & P3) : £130 per year	(i) To accord with policy / strategy	(b) Charge to recover part cost	To retain charges at current levels
4. Provision for Pupils with Additional Support Needs outwith the authority	Carlibar Communications Centre £16,360 per full time place; Secondary Language & Communication Unit £20,485 per full time place; Isobel Mair School £30,476 per full time place; Isobel Mair Family Centre £18,482 per full time place Carlibar PSADU £11,061 per full time place	Revised charge to be set for 2020/2021 following consideration of 2019/2020 outturn.	(i) To accord with policy / strategy	(a) Charge to recover full cost	Revised charge to be set for 2020/2021 following consideration of 2019/2020 outturn.
5. School Transport – Privilege Place	£2.10 per day, £1.05 per single journey (plus admin fee of £2 per month)	£2.10 per day, £1.05 per single journey (plus admin fee of £2 per month)	(i) To accord with policy / strategy	(a) Charge to make a contribution to service revenue	To retain charges at current level.
6. Easter Schools	£62 per week or £13.50 per day with full concession for pupils who would qualify under the benefits system for free school meals.	£68 per week or £15 per day with full concession for pupils who would qualify under the benefits system for free school meals.	(i) To accord with policy / strategy	(a) Charge to recover full cost	To increase charges by 10%.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

9. As has been highlighted in previous years there is the tension between maximising income and discouraging demand. With this in mind and taking into account the points made in paragraph 3 the recommendation is that the inflationary uplift should not be applied to all services.

The key implications for the services noted in this report are forecast as follows.

### **Catering Services - School Meals**

10. Since the last price increase in August 2016, the school meals service has continued to perform well with increased income being generated which has reduced the level of savings required from other areas of the department/devolved school budgets. However, given the scale of savings required over the period 2018-2021 an increase of 5% from 2020/21 has already been approved. When implemented, this increase will bring the cost of primary meals more in line with the current benchmarking average of £2.15 per meal whereas secondary meal prices would be above the average of £2.26.

11. A number of significant changes in school food regulations will come into force during 2020 which will impact on school meal uptake and therefore the level of income generated by the service. These changes focus on reducing sugar, increasing fibre and reducing the consumption of red and processed meat. Similar to other local authorities, a phased approach to implementing these changes has been put in place with early evidence suggesting that, for example, the removal ham sandwiches from primary school menus, has impacted negatively on uptake rates. Officers will continue to monitor uptake closely, adapting menus to offer compliant substitutes for those items no longer allowable from 2020 and the wider impact of these changes will be considered as part of the normal budget setting process for 2020/21.

### **Wraparound Care**

12. As already noted, legislative changes in early years from August 2020 will impact on both the capacity of establishments to offer wraparound provision and also parent/carer demand for the facility to purchase regular additional hours given the expansion of free provision. In light of this and the positive impact the lower hourly rate has had to date, it is recommended to maintain the status quo for 2020/21. The introduction of a facility to purchase wraparound hours an ad-hoc basis via the online ParentPay system, subject to availability, will be promoted in a bid to maximise the income going forward.

### **Instrumental Music Service**

13. As noted above, East Renfrewshire remains amongst the most expensive of local authorities who do charge for this service. Taking this into account, coupled with the significant drop in uptake over recent years and the ongoing judicial review a further increase is not recommended at this stage. Full concessions will still apply to children and young people who would qualify under the benefits system for free school meals and no charge will be applied to secondary pupils who are studying music as an SQA course. The discount for siblings will also continue. In addition, following the recent instrumental music service review, action will be taken to increase the level of participation of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Easter Schools

14. Given the charging policy for this service is to recover full costs, an above inflationary uplift is recommended to take account of the recent pay settlement for staff. The proposed charge continues to compare favourably with private tuition which typically costs £25-£30 per hour. Following the doubling of charges in April 2018, uptake did not appear to be significantly affected with pupils and families still reporting that they value the service highly and that the classes offered make a significant difference in preparing for SQA examinations. Pupils eligible for free school meals will continue to receive full concessions.

## FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY

15. The impact of the proposed fees and charges on levels of use, and levels of income has been taken into account in the preparation of revenue budgets for 2020/21 and where appropriate are included.

## RELATIONSHIP TO THE CORPORATE OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

16. The charges proposed for the service areas reviewed for 2020/21 impact upon the following commitments of the Corporate Statement – Your Council, Your Future

- **All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure childhood and succeed**
- **East Renfrewshire residents are healthy and active and have the skills for learning, life and work**

## CONSULTATION

17. Consultation has been undertaken with various stakeholders in a number of service areas, for example:

- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 details the requirement for local authorities to consult on early learning and childcare every 2 years. The department's most recent consultation with parents took place in July 2017 helping to also inform our Implementation Plan for the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to 1140 hours by 2020.
- In terms of school meals, consultation with users takes place regularly to inform menu planning, marketing and service delivery.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

18. The Cabinet is asked to approve the following recommendations:

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- Service Area 6 – Easter Schools  
To increase charges by 10%

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November 2019

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