

HURSTPIERPOINT VILLAGE CENTRECharity No: 305265 c/o office@hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk 01273 833264

Parish Office, Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, WEST SUSSEX BN6 9UY

Annual Charges Review 2024/25

30 November 2023

1. Background

As part of the budget setting process, the Trustees review their charging schedule each November with agreed changes taking effect from the start of the next financial year (1 April 2024).

This briefing note provides information into the rationale behind the proposed charges for next year. In all cases, the intention is to obtain the correct balance between the Charity achieving a reasonable fee to cover the cost of providing the Village Centre venue, and continuing to provide an affordable venue for users. Benchmarking has been undertaken against other local providers to provide comparative data for Trustees' consideration.

In general, a 6.7% increase has been applied to most fee increases based on the September 2023 Consumer Price Index. Wherever appropriate, calculations have been rounded to the nearest 5 pence to simplify the charging structure for the benefit of both users and those staff members involved in dealing with queries in relation to fees and charges.

The Village Centre fee structure is examined below with proposed charges for consideration, along with recommendations as set out in the paper.

2. Fee Structure

The budgeted income for the Village Centre in 2023/24 is £45,165. Income for the year currently stands at £33,397, however the target is expected to be achieved.

A simplified approach to the pricing structure is applied that uses a single base level fee to be agreed for each room, then a simple factoring for other time slots is applied evenly, as set out below:

- Weekday daytime, Sunday daytime – base level
- Weekday evening, Saturday daytime, Sunday evening – base level plus 25%
- Friday/Saturday evening – base level plus 75%

Future charges reviews only need to consider the base level price for each room, and then factor up accordingly for each session.

Last year it was agreed for regular hirers that the fee structure was based on a single standard fee, and then a 25% discount applied to qualifying hirers. Confirmation of who qualifies for the discount was agreed as follows:

"The discounted rate applies to local groups or clubs who can demonstrate that they are not for profit and are providing a service for community or social engagement, or for hirers booking a minimum of ten sessions at a time."

3. Benchmarking

A benchmarking exercise has been conducted, reviewing the fees charged by providers of other local facilities namely, Ditchling Village Hall, Adastra Hall in Hassocks and Westmeston Parish Hall. Based on an hour for hour

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comparison our fees are a lot less than other halls but it is important to note that the Village Centre cannot be hired by the hour and hire sessions are only sold in five hourly slots from 8am-1pm, 1pm to 6pm and 6pm to 11pm. If a hirer only wants to hire a room for say two hours, they are still required to pay for the five hour session which may make their booking slightly less favourable than other venues available on an hourly rate. On some rare occasions sessions can be shared by hirers. Due to the current demand for the venue, it is not proposed that the Village Centre five hour sessions hiring policy is changed.

Ditchling Village Hall seats approx. 125-150 people (the Village Centre main hall seats a maximum of 200 people) charges £21 per hour on a weekday and £24 per hour on the weekend. **Westmeston Parish Hall** seats up to 80 people and charges £10 per hour on a weekday morning or afternoon, and £20 on a Friday or Saturday night. When these hourly rates are multiplied by 5 the fees become far greater than the Village Centre e.g. Ditchling: £21ph x 5 hours = £105 per "session" compared to £39.30 at the Village Centre, and at Westmeston it would be £10ph x 5 hours = £50 per session.

Adastra Hall in Hassocks charge on a sessional basis, so a more direct comparison is possible. While the size and range of facilities at each venue differs, the comparisons are useful to gauge where our current fees sit within the local market. The Adastra main hall is slightly smaller than the Village Centre main hall size (it seats up to approx. 150 people versus 200 people) and the Green Room aligns with the Conference Room (both up to 30 people). The following table shows that Village Centre is on average far cheaper than Adastra Hall (except for on a Friday evening).

Adastra Hall, Hassocks Current Charges 2023/2024	Village Centre Current Charges 2023/2024	% age Difference
Main Hall: Weekday morning or afternoon session - £78.00 Weekday evening session – £78.00 Saturday evening session - £165.00	Main Hall: Weekday morning or afternoon session - £39.30 Weekday evening session – £49.10 Saturday evening session - £114.65	-49.6% -37% -30.5%
Green Room: Weekday morning session - £40.00 Weekday evening - £40.00 Friday evening - £40.00	Conference Room: Weekday morning session - £26.20 Weekday evening - £32.75 Friday evening - £45.85	-34.5% -18% +16%

4. Proposed Fee Increases

The following proposed fees are proposed for 2024/5:

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MAIN HALL	Current Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/25	Proposed Affiliate Fee 2024/25
Base Fee (Plus 6.7%) Sunday-Friday Daytime (AM&PM)	£39.30	42.00	33.60
New Base Fee Plus 25% Sunday to Thursday Evenings & Saturday Daytime (AM& PM)	£49.10	52.40	42.00
New Base Fee Plus 75% Friday Evenings	£68.80	73.40	58.80
Main Hall & Conference Room on Saturday Nights (See Note 1)	£114.65	123.00	98.50

Note 1 - The anomaly with the Main Hall is the existing requirement that if you hire it on a Saturday evening, the hire fee includes the use of the Conference Room (which is therefore unavailable to hire on its own on a Saturday evening). The proposed fee for the Saturday evening is based on the charging principles of combining the Friday night fees for the main hall of £68.80 and the conference room fee of £45.85 = £114.55.

CONFERENCE ROOM	Current Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/25	Proposed Affiliate Fee 2024/25
Base Fee (Plus 6.7%) Sunday-Friday Daytime (AM&PM)	£26.20	28.00	22.40
New Base Fee Plus 25% Sunday to Thursday Evenings & Saturday Daytime (AM& PM)	£32.75	35.00	28.00
New Base Fee Plus 75% Friday Evenings (Saturday N/A)	£45.85	49.00	39.20

CLUB SUITE	Current Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/25	Proposed Affiliate Fee 2024/25
Base Fee (Plus 6.7%) Sunday-Friday Daytime (AM&PM)	£30.60	32.65	26.10
New Base Fee Plus 25% Sunday to Thursday Evenings & Saturday Daytime (AM& PM)	£38.25	40.80	32.65
New Base Fee Plus 75% Friday and Saturday Evenings	£53.55	57.15	45.70

RECOMMENDATION 1 – To agree the base level charges of £42.00 for the Main Hall, £28 for the Conference Room and £32.65 for the Club Suite.

There are other fees applied to the hire of the Village Centre, and these are outlined below:

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VILLAGE CENTRE ADDITIONAL FEES	Current Fee 2023/24	Proposed 2024/25
Deposit (normal hire)	£50.00	50.00
Deposit (party hire)	£200.00	200.00
Locking up charge (Friday/Saturday evenings)	£35.00	35.00
Crockery/Cutlery hire	£10.00	10.00
Cupboard hire – annual (used by 4 groups)	21.00	22.40
Shed hire – monthly (The Sanctuary)	£8.40	9.00
Storage – Hurstpierpoint Gym Club (annual)	£372	397.00
Storage – Hurst Pre-School (annual)	£304	324.00
Office Rent – Hurst Pre-School (termly)	£1050	1120.00
Main Hall Fixed Wired PA System	£20	£21.35

RECOMMENDATION 2 – To agree the increase in the additional fees for the Cupboard Hire, Shed Hire, Storage, Office Rent and PA System.

5. Village Centre Management Re-charge

The Parish Council staff undertake work for the Village Centre and a cross charging arrangement is in place. This is based on 11 hours per week (5 for bookings, 3 for management and 3 for maintenance) at the average hourly total cost of staff members. In most cases a 6.7% increase has been applied to fees and charges to take effect from 1 April 2024, however the 2024/25 hourly rate has been increased by 7% as it is based on employee costs. The proposed increase would result in a total cross charge for the year (assuming no change in the 11 hours per week) of £25.62 (average hourly cost) x 11 hours per week x 52 weeks = £14,655.

VILLAGE CENTRE	Current Fee 2023/24	Proposed 2024/25
Staff cross charging hourly rate	£23.94	£25.62

RECOMMENDATION 3 – To agree an increase in the annual staff cross-charging fee to £14,655 with effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of 7%.

6. Recommendation

The Village Centre fee structure is broken down into several categories, and each category has been examined above with proposed charges listed for consideration by the Trustees.

RECOMMENDATION: That Trustees AGREE:

- i. the base level charges of £42 for Main Hall, £32.65 for the Club Suite, £28 for the Conference Room set out under Recommendation 1 above;
- ii. the additional fee increases as set out under Recommendation 2 above; and
- iii. the annual staff cross-charging fee of £14,655 for 2024/25 under Recommendation 3.