



Proposal to amend Hire Terms and Cricket Fees for Chestnut Springs, Lydiard Millicent

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Executive Summary

The Council is asked to approve the following:

1. The introduction of a new fee structure for cricket matches as outlined below.
2. The introduction of standard terms and conditions for hire of the recreation field or Jubilee Club House.
3. Continuing discussions with local cricket teams and the local league to identify additional teams or alternative solutions to address the issue for 2023 and beyond.

Background

Lydiard Millicent Parish Council (LMPC) owns and manages the recreation field and Jubilee Club House (JCH) at Chestnut Springs. JCH is hired out on a regular basis to an amateur dramatics group, whilst the field is used by Lydiard Millicent Junior Football Club and three cricket clubs during the cricket season.

A review of current documentation identified that there are no standard terms and conditions for hiring the facilities. In addition, a recent financial review identified that income from the cricket clubs did not even cover direct costs during the 2021 season.

Councillors Allsop, Hill-Wheeler, Selwood and Westwood have been investigating options and talking to the cricket clubs to find a potential solution. This document outlines the findings from the team and proposes a potential way forward. Financial analysis and the draft terms and conditions are provided in separate documents.

2021 Season

Cricket income versus expenditure for the 2021 season was as follows:

Cricket 2021 Season	£	Comments
Income	2,000	Includes all fees for the season
Direct costs	2,065	Costs for maintaining the cricket square
Balance after direct costs	-65	

The 2021 cricket season was particularly affected by adverse weather and the clubs were not able to re-arrange all fixtures, so only 21 out of a possible 33 matches were played. Under the current arrangements, the clubs only pay for the matches that they play, so income was reduced by about a third.

The cost of maintaining the cricket square comprises of labour (which accounts for about 70% of the cost), plus materials such as paint, fertilizer and seed. These costs remain the same regardless of the number of matches played, and will increase for 2022.

Forecast for 2022 Season

Feedback from the existing supplier indicates that costs for maintaining the cricket square in 2022 will increase between 10% and 25%, with a 9.5% increase in the hourly rate charged, and an expected significant rise in the cost of the materials.

There are also new costs for the next season that have been agreed as part of our grounds maintenance contract in response to feedback from the cricket teams. A charge of £600 per year is being introduced to remove the grass cuttings from the outfield during the cricket season, and this needs to be included as a direct cost.

This means that if we continue with the current approach to only charge for matches played, and the weather this season is as bad as last season, we would need to increase the fees by 75% to cover our direct costs.

Proposed approach for fees – 2022 season

The current fee structure for cricket puts all of the risk onto the council, as there may be a significant variation in cricket income, but very little variation in directly-related expenditure.

In order to address this, the proposed approach is to introduce a minimum commitment in terms of the number of games that each team will pay for regardless of the number of matches played. (Note: if a club has multiple teams playing at Lydiard, the number of games can be averaged across the teams). The minimum commitment will be based on a “likely” view of expected games based on previous seasons averages.

The revised fees and minimum commitment will be set at a level to cover direct costs, whilst reducing the risk on the council and minimizing the increase in fees.

In parallel to this, the local cricket league will be asked to identify whether the field can be utilized by other teams so the costs can be spread.

The fee structure should be reviewed in November 2022, to determine how effective it has been and make recommendations for future seasons.

Proposed 2022 Fee Structure

Match Type	Current Fee (£)	% increase	New Fee (£)	Minimum Commitment
Weekend match	100	25%	125	8 matches per team
Midweek match	75	25%	94	6 matches per team

Potential risks

1. Revenue will be significantly reduced if any of the existing teams move to another site or fold, but cost will remain relatively the same.

Alternative options

The following alternatives have been considered and discarded:

1. Withdraw support for cricket at Lydiard Millicent.
This would reduce the risk for the Council, remove the cost of maintaining a cricket square and free the field up for other events during summer season, but doing so this season would put the teams that play here in a very difficult position, as they have to register for the local league within the month and start matches within two months, and would have a negative impact on the Council's reputation. It would also mean that very few locations in the area would be able to support this traditional pastime.
2. Continue with a “pay for what you play” approach.
This approach would mean that either the fees would have to be increased to a level that the teams probably couldn't afford, or the Council would have to bear an unacceptable level of risk.
3. Make clubs pay for the total number of matches booked, regardless of the number of matches played.
This would reduce the risk for the Council, but would introduce a significant risk for

the teams playing, who would have a significant outlay without guaranteed match fees to support them.

4. Move to a plastic cricket square

This approach has been introduced at other locations, and would drastically reduce the cost of maintenance, however it would not be feasible to introduce this for this season. This may be considered for future seasons if the current issue regarding income versus expenditure has not been resolved.

Proposed introduction of standard terms and conditions

A lack of standard terms and conditions puts significant risks on the Council, in relation to potential Health & Safety, safeguarding, legal and financial issues. The attached booking form and associated terms and conditions have been drafted based on examples from other organisations and should be viewed as a step to minimize these risks.

Proposed next steps

1. Approve the new terms and conditions of hire and the fee structure for cricket matches for this season.
2. Send formal notification to the current teams of the new fee structure and related terms and conditions, and ask them to confirm their intention to play at Lydiard Millicent this season in writing.
3. Inform other users of the facilities of the new standard terms and conditions.
4. Continue discussions with the local cricket league regarding the possibility of additional teams playing on the field.
5. Review the terms and conditions in September 2022 and amend if required.
6. Monitor the cricket situation during the season and review the approach in November 2022.