

North Yorkshire Council

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

19 September 2023

OUTDOOR LEARNING SERVICE FEES AND CHARGES SEPTEMBER 2024 – MARCH 2025

Report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To gain approval for fees and charges for Outdoor Learning 2023-24 (academic year) to remain in place from September 2024 to March 2025, enabling the resetting of new fees for 2024-25 to mirror the financial year moving away from the academic year.
- 1.2 To gain approval to operate two pilot schemes: (1) discounts and (2) corporate and conference pricing, to generate additional income and guide future strategies.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In line with the Council's financial regulations, approval for fees and charges is a Key Decision. Outdoor Learning produce fees and charges and a calendar of training courses for the following school year.
- 2.2 Schools pass on charges for residential and day visits and associated transport costs to parents and/or carers. Schools vary in their financial support for visits.
- 2.3 Fees and charges for residential and day bookings were increased by 21% in 2023-24. These fees and charges were calculated by factoring in all fixed and variable costs, including predicted inflationary increase to services for the budget year 2023/2024 (CPI), occupancy levels required to meet the business case data modelling and a surplus margin set at 10%.
- 2.4 NYOLS has no agreed fees and charges for corporate and conference bookings. Equally it offers no discounts or last minute price reductions.
- 2.5 North Yorkshire Council's Fees and Charges policy (January 2023)
Ensuring Fees and Charges are robust and up to date:
All fees and charges are to be reviewed on an annual basis. Whilst it is acknowledged that a full review of each fee and charge implemented by the Council is not practicable each financial year, it is considered that as a minimum the **fees and charges already charged by the Council are to be adjusted in line with inflation each year.**
The Fees and Charges Policy therefore has the following objectives:
Objective is to **maximise income.**

Annual reviews should consider the following factors:

- Inflationary pressures, and when a flat rate uplift might not be the most appropriate option due to specific changes to the cost-of-service delivery;
- Service-level budget targets, with the context of council-wide targets and advice from lead Finance Business Partners;
- Cost of administration;
- Scope for new charging areas, this might be entirely new discretionary service to deliver, or existing services that are currently not charged for;
- Demand/volume and sensitivity to price changes;
- Use stakeholder engagement and comparative data, where appropriate, to ensure that

charges do not adversely affect the take up of services or restrict access to services (other than where this is a desirable outcome)

3.0 DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE

Issue 1: To gain approval for fees and charges for Outdoor Learning 2023-24 (academic year) to remain in place from September 2024 to March 2025, enabling the resetting of new fees for 2024-25 to mirror the financial year moving away from the academic year.

- 3.1 Fees and charges are currently determined on an academic year basis, whereas financial forecasting adheres to the financial year. If future fees and charges were set in line with the financial year this would have little impact on clients. However, it would enable easier financial planning and budgeting.
- 3.2 There have been a few schools who have found the increase in fees and charges for 2023-24 prohibitive, demonstrating that last year's fees and charges increase has adversely affected the take up of services in some cases.
- 3.2 Market research indicates that there is competition within easy reach of North Yorkshire schools. A further seven outdoor learning centres offering the opportunity for residential, exist on our doorstep. A comparison of prices for a three-day, two-night residential demonstrates a range from £181 to £275 high season and low season from £117 to £250. NYOLS fees are the highest in both high and low season pricing.

Competitors Residential prices 2023

Residential period 3 day/2 night	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23
Centre*				
NYOLS	£275	£275	£250	£250
Robin Wood	£250	£250	£250	£250
PGL Newby Wiske	£200	£200	£200	£200
Kingswood	£200	£200	£200	£200
Low Mill	£196	£196	£176	£176
Carlton Lodge	£192	£192	£162	£162
Peat Rigg	£181	£181	£161	£117
GWC	£207	£213	£170	£118

- The table above shows a list of local authority and commercial managed centres. Whilst it is recognised that local authority centres deliver high quality learning opportunities, more than commercial centres, this is not always obvious to the consumer as clever marketing is used to appeal to teachers and school leaders.
- 3.3 Inflationary increases, at the time of proposing the previous year's residential fees and charges (2023-24), were applied to all costs. At this time inflationary costs were high, though since then we have seen inflation rates settle below what was used in the charging calculations.
- 3.4 Current fees and charges from September 2023 to March 2024 will cover the full costs of delivering residential in September 2024 to March 2025.

- 3.5 Given the current situation, high prices and increase in fees and charges last year, it is felt that the market will not sustain a further price increase. It is therefore suggested that current fees and charges (which apply to schools) continue through September 2024 to March 2025, to enable costs to align to the budget year. However, it is proposed that courses provided by NYOLS are subject to an inflationary rise of 6.8%, in line with CPI (July 2023).
- 3.6 It is believed that continuing with our fees and charges for school residential will enable the service to retain its current customer base, recruit new customers and compete with its surrounding competitors, all of which will result in increased bookings and customer retention.
- 3.7 A new fees and charges strategy will be brought back to Executive Members, in January 2024, for the period April 2025 to March 2026.

Issue 2: To gain approval to operate two pilot schemes: (1) discounts and (2) corporate and conference pricing, to generate additional income and guide future strategies.

- 3.8 As the service has some potential to increase its residential and day customers, and attract new customers, it is proposed that a discount scheme is piloted and available for the service to use with immediate effect. Discounts and incentives can help attract new customers and help fill vacant spaces in our calendar.
- 3.9 It is proposed that a trial of a 20% discount is offered to new customers and to those customers that have not used the service in the last three years. This discount would also be available for customers making last minute bookings. (Booking up to three months prior to the residential date).
Discounts will not be applied to those months whereby bookings have historically been high and will only be offered during the low and mid-season months: November to February. For example, the 20% discount will result in new schools being charged £200 per head, a price that is comparable with our competitors.
- 3.10 NYOLS has the facilities, resources, and capacity to offer its services to a broad range of customer groups. It is proposed that fees and charges are introduced for corporate groups, enabling them to access the centres for conferences, team days and leadership training. A pricing structure is proposed which is:
- full-cost recovery of the services being offered.
 - generates a surplus.
 - competitive and offers a clear pricing structure which lets our customers know exactly what to expect.
 - Prices have been benchmarked against other similar providers.

Proposed Corporate and Conference fees and charges

Minimum booking of 20

		<i>Price per head</i>
<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Room hire, use of projector, tea/coffee, use of site grounds</i>	<i>£25</i>
<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 1 + Catering (Lunch)</i>	<i>£36</i>
<i>Option 3</i>	<i>Option 1+2 + Activity (3hrs)</i>	<i>£69</i>
<i>Option 4</i>	<i>Outreach / Activity delivered at corporate base (6hrs)</i>	<i>£79</i>

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Alternative options for fees and charges (September 2024 to March 2025)

- 4.1 Option 1: agree with proposal to continue fees and charges into September 2024 to March 2025. Giving the potential for attracting new customers and drawing back customers who have previously found prices prohibitive. It would be reasonable to attract 3 new schools with the offer to retain prices, resulting in a potential income of **£64,500**.
- 4.2 Option 2: increase fees and charges for residential in line with inflationary increase (CPI, 6.8%). If bookings fall in line with this year 2023-24.

	Income from potential Residential bookings 2024-25 (Sept to March)
Option 1	£597,180
Option 2	£637,788
Difference	£40,608

Setting fees at current inflation rates carries the risk of schools and parents determining that any rise is not affordable given the cost-of-living increase through general inflation. Evidence has already indicated that some families / schools are struggling to meet current costs. A fee and charges increase for September 2024-25 would also result in NYOLS prices remaining the highest amongst our competitors.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications of the discount pilot scheme

- 5.1 Residential bookings are made a year in advance, allowing time for parents to raise funds and budget for the cost. If we offer the opportunity for a last-minute booking, at a discounted price, we will incur a reduction in income of £4,300, compared to a booking made in advance.

However, last-minute bookings will only occur if we offer a discount. Therefore the income generated from a discounted residential far out ways the reduction in income of a full priced residential.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Fees and charges will be increased by CPI (6.8%, July 2023) for non-residential individual courses, in line with the Council Constitution and Financial Regulations.
- 6.2 Fees and Charges policy states that the Council objective is to maximise income. Therefore, it is suggested that residential and day fees for the period September 2024 to March 2025 remain as they are in 2023-24.

7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Initial equality impact assessment screening form in Appendix C

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment form in Appendix D

9.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Establishing fees and charges which are achievable for families and schools, within the current financial climate, ensuring all young people of North Yorkshire can access high quality outdoor learning.

9.2 Creating new products and incentives to generate further income.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) To approve fees and charges for Outdoor Learning 2023-24 (academic year) to remain in place from September 2024 to March 2025, enabling the resetting of new fees for 2024-25
- ii) Approve two pilot schemes:(1) discounts and (2) corporate and conference pricing, to generate additional income and guide future strategies.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – FEES AND CHARGES September 2023 – August 2024

Appendix B – Proposed FEES AND CHARGES September 2024 – March 2025

Appendix C - Initial equality impact assessment screening form

Appendix D - Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment form

STUART CARLTON

CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

County Hall

Northallerton

Report Author – Teresa Thorp, Head of Outdoor Learning Service

Presenter of Report – Teresa Thorp, Head of Outdoor Learning Service

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment (Form created August 2021)

The intention of this document is to help the council to gain an initial understanding of the impact of a project or decision on the environment. This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. Dependent on this initial assessment you may need to go on to complete a full Climate Change Impact Assessment. The final document will be published as part of the decision-making process.

If you have any additional queries, which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Title of proposal	OUTDOOR LEARNING SERVICE CHARGES AND FEES SEPTEMBER 2024 – March 2025
Brief description of proposal	To gain approval of a fees and charges structure for Outdoor Learning for September 2024 to March 2025 To agree amendments to the fees and charges strategy for 2023/2024, to enable discounts for new schools and last-minute bookings. To seek approval for changes to be made to decision timescales, to allow fees and charges to mirror the financial year as opposed to the academic year.
Directorate	Children's and Young Peoples Service
Service area	Outdoor Learning
Lead officer	
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	

The chart below contains the main environmental factors to consider in your initial assessment – choose the appropriate option from the drop-down list for each one.

Remember to think about the following;

- Travel
- Construction
- Data storage
- Use of buildings
- Change of land use
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse

Environmental factor to consider	For the council	For the county	Overall
Greenhouse gas emissions	No effect on emissions	No Effect on emissions	No effect on emissions
Waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste
Water use	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage
Pollution (air, land, water, noise, light)	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution
Resilience to adverse weather/climate events (flooding, drought etc)	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience
Ecological effects (biodiversity, loss of habitat etc)	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology
Heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape

If any of these factors are likely to result in a negative or positive environmental impact then a full climate change impact assessment will be required. It is important that we capture information about both positive and negative impacts to aid the council in calculating its carbon footprint and environmental impact.

Decision (Please tick one option)	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:		Continue to full CCIA:	
Reason for decision				
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)				
Date				

Initial equality impact assessment screening form			
This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.			
Directorate	Children's and Young Peoples Service		
Service area	Outdoor Learning		
Proposal being screened	<p>To gain approval of a fees and charges structure for Outdoor Learning for September 2024 to March 2025</p> <p>To agree amendments to the fees and charges strategy for 2023/2024, to enable discounts for new schools and last-minute bookings.</p> <p>To seek approval for changes to be made to decision timescales, to allow fees and charges to mirror the financial year as opposed to the academic year.</p>		
Officer(s) carrying out screening			
What are you proposing to do?	<p>Maintain current 2023/2024 fees and charges for residential provision in September 2024 to March 2025</p> <p>Increase all other Outdoor Learning service fees and charges by 6.8%, in line with inflation.</p> <p>Agree a discount that can be offered to new customers or returning customers, who have not used the service for the last few years, during low season times (November to February).</p> <p>Bring fee and charges decision making into line with the financial year, as opposed to the academic year.</p>		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	<p>To retain current customer numbers, by offering competitive prices</p> <p>To attract new customers and steer them towards our quieter periods</p> <p>To entice customers back, who have left NYOLS due to increased prices in 2023/2024</p> <p>To ensure price is not a barrier to any young person accessing our service.</p>		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No		
<p>Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC's additional agreed characteristics</p> <p>As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics? Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important? Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to? <p>If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your directorate representative for advice if you are in any doubt.</p>			
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

OFFICIAL

Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Sex		✓	
Race		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓	
Gender reassignment		✓	
Religion or belief		✓	
Pregnancy or maternity		✓	
Marriage or civil partnership		✓	
People in rural areas		✓	
People on a low income		✓	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		✓	
Are from the Armed Forces Community		✓	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (for example, disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (for example, partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	No		
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full EIA:
Reason for decision			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)			
Date			

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

OFFICIAL

OUTDOOR LEARNING SERVICE

Proposed FEES AND CHARGES
September 2024 – March 2025

Residential school and group courses

Prices are per participant, Meals inclusive from lunch on arrival day to lunch on departure day

Season	Low	Mid
Month	September, October and March	November, December, January, and February
One night	£145	£160
Two nights	£250	£275
Three nights	£335	£370
Four nights	£405	£450

Day school and group courses

Duration	Cost
Full day	£390*
Half day	£250*
Outreach	£390" plus transport costs

- Per group of 12 young people
- “ Per group of 15 young people

Consultancy

Full day consultancy	£390
Half day consultancy	£195

Educational Visits Annual Service Level Agreement

Price per school/educational establishment

Advisory Service	£120 + £1.30 per NOR
Evolve Plus	£220

Non-residential individual participant courses 6.8% to be added to these prices

Prices are per participant

Adventure course – Full day	£85
Adventure course – Half day	£45
Beach School Leader	£145
Camping Leader Assessment	£105
Climbing Wall Instructor Assessment	£85
Climbing Wall Instructor Training	£165
DofE Expedition – 2 days	£165
DofE Expedition – 3 days	£250
Educational Visits Co-ordinator	£120
Educational Visits Co-ordinator Revalidation	£60
Evolve for EVCs and Administrators	£40
Evolve for Visit Leaders	£40
First Aid for Visit Leaders	£85
Forest Schools Leader L3 Assessment	£150
Forest Schools Leader L3 Training	£245
Forest Schools Leader (NYCC)	£150
Foundation Safety & Rescue	£85
Hill and Moorland Leader Assessment	£250
Hill and Moorland Leader Training	£250
Hill Skills	£100

Lowland Leader Assessment	£165
Lowland Leader Training	£165
Making the most of Evolve Plus	£40
Management of Visit Emergencies	£50
Midas	£105
Mountain Bike Leader Fundamentals	£165
Mountain Bike Leader L2 Assessment	£85
Mountain Bike Leader L2 Training	£165
Mountain Leader Assessment	£245
Mountain Leader Training	£295
Mountain Skills	£100
National Curriculum Outdoors	£105
National Water Safety Management	£210
Outdoor First Aid	£160
Rock Climbing Instructor Assessment	£165
Rock Climbing Instructor Training	£250
Risk Assessment for Educational Visits	£10
RoSPA PPE User Checks	£105
Visit Leader (Theory)	£40

OUTDOOR LEARNING SERVICE

Proposed FEES AND CHARGES
September 2024 – March 2025

Residential school and group courses

Prices are per participant, Meals inclusive from lunch on arrival day to lunch on departure day

Season	Low	Mid
Term	September, October and March	November, December, January, and February
One night	£145	£160
Two nights	£250	£275
Three nights	£335	£370
Four nights	£405	£450

Accommodation	Per night	£35
Catering	Per day	£25
Sole use of a centre – self-catering		£2,895

Non-residential individual participant courses

Prices are per participant

Adventure course – Full day	£85
Adventure course – Half day	£45
Beach School Leader	£145
Camping Leader Assessment	£105
Climbing Wall Instructor Assessment	£85
Climbing Wall Instructor Training	£165
DofE Expedition – 2 days	£165
DofE Expedition – 3 days	£250
Educational Visits Co-ordinator	£120
Educational Visits Co-ordinator Revalidation	£60
Evolve for EVCs and Administrators	£40
Evolve for Visit Leaders	£40
First Aid for Visit Leaders	£85
Forest Schools Leader L3 Assessment	£150
Forest Schools Leader L3 Training	£245
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Foundation Safety & Rescue	£85
Hill and Moorland Leader Assessment	£250
Hill and Moorland Leader Training	£250
Hill Skills	£100

Lowland Leader Assessment	£165
Lowland Leader Training	£165
Making the most of Evolve Plus	£40
Management of Visit Emergencies	£50
Midas	£105
Mountain Bike Leader Fundamentals	£165
Mountain Bike Leader L2 Assessment	£85
Mountain Bike Leader L2 Training	£165
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Mountain Leader Training	£295
Mountain Skills	£100
National Curriculum Outdoors	£105
National Water Safety Management	£210
Outdoor First Aid	£160
Rock Climbing Instructor Assessment	£165
Rock Climbing Instructor Training	£250
Risk Assessment for Educational Visits	£10
RoSPA PPE User Checks	£105
Visit Leader (Theory)	£40

Non-residential school or group courses or consultancy

Prices per group of 12 or per consultancy event

Full day consultancy	£390
Half day consultancy	£195

School or group day provision	£390
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Educational Visits Annual Service Level Agreement

Price per school/educational establishment

Advisory Service	£120 + £1.30 per NOR
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Evolve Plus	£220
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22/23	Low	Mid	High
1	£120.00	£133.00	£140.00
2	£206.00	£229.00	£241.00
3	£277.00	£308.00	£324.00
4	£336.00	£373.00	£392.00

20%	Low	Mid	High
1	£145.00	£160.00	£170.00
2	£250.00	£275.00	£290.00
3	£335.00	£370.00	£390.00
4	£405.00	£450.00	£475.00

Increase	Low	Mid	High
1	£25.00	£27.00	£30.00
2	£44.00	£46.00	£49.00
3	£58.00	£62.00	£66.00
4	£69.00	£77.00	£83.00