



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Scale of Charges 2013/14
Date:	19 February 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to consider the annual review of prices for hire/rental charges at the Belfast Waterfront, Ulster Hall and Community Centres and to agree an implementation with effect from 1 April 2013. The pricing policy details the hire charges relating to all areas of Belfast Waterfront and the Ulster Hall, including the Main Auditorium, Studio, meeting rooms, exhibition areas including Concourse, Gallery Levels 1 and 2, Bar Levels 1 and 2, the Ulster Hall Grand Hall, Group Space and small meeting rooms.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p><u>Belfast Waterfront/Ulster Hall</u></p> <p>The current pricing schedule, applicable from 1 April 2012–31 March 2013, was agreed by the Development Committee in February 2012. The proposed price changes for 2013/2014 take account of the difficult trading environment we are currently operating in as well as the planned development at the Waterfront. The adjustments listed in the pricing policy recommendations for the incoming financial year should keep BW/UH's prices competitive with comparable venues throughout the UK.</p>
2.2	<p>Members should note that there was no increase in room hire fees in 2012/2013 and that prices have remained static since 2010.</p> <p>Our key recommendations are set out below:</p>
2.3	<p><u>Conference and Business Sales (CBS) Belfast Waterfront Pricing</u></p> <p>It is recommended that charges for all spaces except front of house areas in the venue remain the same and therefore attracted a zero increase for 2013/2014. The charges for the Bar and Gallery areas and Arc should however be adjusted as listed in appendix 1 in order to ensure that these spaces remain competitive against city hotels and other local venues. The price adjustments detailed also</p>

	take account of the potential loss of the Studio space as a result of the construction and build works required for the new extension.
2.4	<p><u>Belfast Waterfront Entertainment and Miscellaneous Events Pricing</u> It is recommended that room hire for the Auditorium, Studio and Mezzanine dressing rooms remain the same as 2012/2013 rates. However, it is recommended that the charges for the Bar, Gallery and Arc spaces are adjusted, in line with business hire pricing.</p>
2.5	<p><u>Ulster Hall Pricing</u> Client feedback would suggest that the Grand Hall is an expensive option for commercial promoters therefore it is proposed that the entertainment hire rate for the Grand Hall be held at the 2012/2013 rates. It is also recommended that the Grand Hall rates across all remaining pricing categories (B-D) also receive a zero increase. See appendix 2 for Ulster Hall pricing.</p>
2.6	It is however recommended that the Group and meeting room hire fees are increased in order to recoup a greater share of the operational costs associated in facilitating events in these areas.
2.7	Members will see that the seating removal and return fee is also held at the 2012/2013 rate.
2.8	All the new charges recommended for 2013/2014 are attached as Appendices 1-2.
2.9	<p><u>Community Centres</u> Prices have remained the same from 2010/2011. It is recommended that this policy continues for another year and that no price increases should be applied for 2013/2014.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u> The recommendations above have all been factored into the Departmental Revenue Estimates for 2013/14, as approved by Committee in January 2013.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Human Resources</u> There are no additional human resource requirements in relation to implementation of the proposed Pricing Policy.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality implications in agreeing the 2013/2014 Departmental Scale of Charges.

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report and approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The new Pricing Policy at the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall for 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014; 2) No increase in Community Centre fees; 3) An effective date of 1 April 2013 for all areas.

6	Decision Tracking
There is no decision tracking attached to this report.	

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - Entertainment and Miscellaneous Events Venue Hire Appendix 2 - Ulster Hall Venue Pricing	