

14. CHARGES FOR THE OCCUPATION OF RESERVE LAND BY SPORTS CLUBS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

RR 9225

The Parks Manager reported, requesting the establishment of a hearings panel to consider submissions from sports clubs and community groups on the discussion paper "Charges For Occupation of Reserve Land" circulated for comment in March 1998.

Over 172 discussion documents were sent out to sports clubs, community groups and other interested parties seeking their views, 79 replies being received, 35 of which request speaking rights in support of their submission before a hearings panel.

An analysis of the submissions received shows there is a wide range of views as to how the charging issue should be approached, some clubs believing that the proposals put forward are fair, whilst others believe that peppercorn rentals only should be paid. Numerous reasons were put forward in support of the submissions received, some examples are given below.

- Falling membership because of changing lifestyles.
- All maintenance and upkeep of the facility is paid for by the club.
- Principally a training organisation for young people.
- The club/organisation is principally run by volunteers.
- Provides a much needed community service within the community, etc.

The Committee **decided**:

1. That a hearings panel comprising Councillor Buist (Chairman) and Councillors Sheriff and Baker be set up to consider and hear submissions on the discussion paper and to make recommendations to the Parks and Recreation Committee; such recommendations to form the basis of the proposed Charging Policy for the Occupation of Reserve Land by Sports Clubs and Community Groups.
2. That officers then prepare and submit a draft policy on "Charges for the Occupation of Reserve Land by Sports Clubs and Community Groups" to the Committee for recommendation to the Council for adoption.