

**Community Facilities Management and Rental Policy  
(Principles approved and Adopted by Town Council 14 April 2015)**

**Objective**

To provide Ilminster Town Council with a policy that will ensure the administration of its community facilities and/or land holdings is efficient, evenhanded and effective.

**Policy Statement**

The Community Facilities Management and Rental Policy will enable the Council to:

- Ensure the best possible use is made of any community facility under their control.
- Make a charge for any community facility should they so wish.
- Allows the Council, should they so wish, to recognise the benefits to the community of services and activities organised by community groups by subsidizing such groups.
- Adhere to the By Laws in relation to the Town Council's open spaces/recreational spaces.
- Ensure that clubs and organisations abide by the Council's Equalities Policy *and any other policy that might be appropriate – Health and safety?*

**Exclusions**

Commercial or for-profit organisations such as funfairs, circuses, or carnivals are not eligible for any rental subsidy.

This policy excludes Council Facilities that are covered by normal commercial leasing/licensing arrangements – if applicable.

**Principles**

The following principles should be applied to the management of any community facility that the council might hold now or in the future:

- The Council must be seen to receive adequate return for a building or land which they lease or licence to an outside organisation or club.
- Local clubs and/or charitable organisations using Council facilities or land should be asked to pay a fair rent based on the market value
- Whatever process is put in place must not be so complicated that it increases the work of the Council Staff to an unacceptable level (too difficult to administer).
- The management structure should ensure an evenhanded approach when negotiating with community-based groups.

- When a club or organisation holds a long-term lease on a community facility then *they will be expected to maintain the facility.*
- All clubs or organisations using Town Council facilities will be expected to follow the Town Council's non-discriminatory practices and policies.
- The method by which a facility is managed will be open and accountable.
- All financial matters will be documented, transparent and meet all legal requirements.

### **Management Models**

It is important that facilities are used to their maximum potential and a number of management models including Council management, community management, licenses and leases will be used.

#### ***Licensing and Leasing***

*This dependent on content in licence/lease agreed*

#### ***Renewal of Agreements***

*This dependent on content in licence/lease agreed*

### **Maintenance, and Improvements**

The formal lease/licence agreement between the Council and community organisation will document fully where the responsibilities lie with regard to maintenance and improvement

### **Outgoings**

The club or organisation will be responsible for:

Rates; telephone; commercial waste; sewage; cleaning charges; insurance; charges for electricity, gas, water used on the premises.

### **Setting the Rental Value**

The Council will expect to charge rent at market value although in some cases a rebate/subsidy may apply.

A market value is obtained for the building using the District Valuation Services. The market value would then be used to ascertain the Market rent payable. The valuation is based upon the terms and conditions of the agreement between the landlord and the responsibilities each party has taken up.

The rent would reflect these responsibilities and could also take into account any financial contribution paid by the organization towards construction, maintenance, refurbishment etc. of the property together with any responsibilities the organisation/club might wish to take on. These responsibilities could be in the form of:

- Maintenance of the building inside and/or outside
- Cutting of the grass pitches

**How a rental subsidy/discount would be calculated**

Any discount/subsidy must be quantifiable. For example, should the Cricket Club/Football Club take on the responsibility of cutting their grass pitches the finance officer will be able to calculate the savings in time and money to the Town Council and this would be deducted from the rent. (*This Town Council already has in place a volunteer scheme which allows a volunteer, as long as he/she has been trained by the Warden, to use Council equipment*)

**Disagreement on the valuation**

Should either party be unsatisfied with the rent to be charged or any subsidy, a panel will be set up to review the decision. Panel to consist of two Council officers, chairs of the Resource Committee and Open Spaces Committee and an independent third party (perhaps a District Officer). The role of the panel will be to insure that the process has been carried out in a fair and appropriate manner

**Accessibility**

The Town Council will wish to ensure that facilities under their control/management are undated to ensure that such facilities remain physically accessible to the community as a whole.

***Provision of Information***

*To follow*