

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

25/02/2025

Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, from David Caiden, Chair, Eastbury Residents Association

ERA has been advised by your Leisure Services Manager that we will be charged a full Fun Fare licence fee for our Summer Fair this year which amounts to £775.83. In previous years the charge has been about £220. This is clearly a huge increase and we wonder if there has been some error? We put some relevant points below.

1. The rides are children's rides. They comprise bouncy castles and three or four young children's rides only (e.g. teacup ride, chair plane, roundabout and tiny cars track). Primary school summer fairs have similar rides. We believe children's rides should not attract a full Fun Fair charge and indeed the "children only" issue had previously been given as the reason for a reduced charge. So, it seems precedent is not being applied.
2. We have checked what charges were levied for the similar Rickmansworth Winter Fair and were informed this was about £270. We do understand there is a difference between a fair on a paved surface and on grass and that a higher damage deposit may apply. It does seem odd though that the base charge should vary so much.
3. We do not believe that the operator is making any significant profit from the rides (he maintains his charges barely cover his costs) and the fee charged would need to be paid by ERA not the rides operator.

The ERA Summer Fair is our main annual community event. It is very popular with local families and is supported by our local councillors from the Batchworth Community Council (which is our main funder). We do therefore hope you are able to reconsider this proposed 253% increase to the customary charge.

Will the Council reconsider its decision to charge £775.83 for the Eastbury Summer Fair?

Response:

The Hire of Grounds fees and charges have been agreed through Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council and have been published on the Three Rivers District Council website. The charge for a charity / not for profit / school fete is £220.83 (ex. VAT) and the charge for a Funfair is £775.83 (ex. VAT). The Eastbury Residents Association have been advised that including fairground rides, regardless of the number or size, results in the agreed hire charge of £775.83. The price difference relates to the amount of damage rides cause the ground – both through installation and during the period they are in place. In previous applications from the Eastbury Residents Association (ERA), there has been ambiguity over what exactly was being provided on the site as part of the fair. Should the ERA wish to exclude funfair rides, then the hire of grounds charge would revert back to the £220.83 fee. These fees are applied to all groups and organisations wishing to hire grounds that are managed and maintained by Three Rivers District Council in a fair and consistent manner

Question to the lead member for general public services, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Michael Charnock, Decorscene, Rickmansworth

why are the business permits for the new West Rickmansworth parking scheme so expensive as they should be free or at least a minimum charge of £50 and no more additional parking warden patrols are even taking place currently.

Response:

The cost of business permits takes into account a number of service costs including the parking enforcement and permit service provision. It also reflects the cost of parking in a space long term if a long term tariff was applied. Our parking enforcement service provider, Hertsmere Borough Council, have confirmed they visit the Rickmansworth West locality up to 4 times a week. Times visited and time spent there varies with Civil Enforcement Officers sometimes spending most of the day in the vicinity.

Whilst no individual parking scheme is costed and balanced, the expenditure and income arising from a scheme is used to balance the Parking Account; this balances the income we receive from parking against the costs of maintaining parking and undertaking parking enforcement. The parking account is currently in deficit

Question to the lead member for Leisure, Cllr Chris Lloyd, from Rachel Clarke:

Council Meeting Question. Plaque for Barbara Owen MBE

We would very much like to request a plaque in memory of Barbara Owen MBE who ran the Rickmansworth Society for many years, amongst other community work.

She was a very special person who was very well known locally and a huge contributor to local groups for many years.

This has been in discussion with TRDC for over a year now.

We would like the plaque to feature on the brick pillar in the Rose Garden, next to the gate leading to the Community Garden.

Please see the mock up below.

This would be paid for by the funds left over when the Rickmansworth Society was dissolved.

Please could we obtain permission for this to go ahead.

Response:

Thank you for your request regarding the placement of a plaque in memory of Barbara Owen MBE. The Council acknowledges Barbara's significant contributions to the local community and understands the motivation behind this request.

The initial application included a request for two benches in the Community Orchard and a memorial plaque on the exterior of Basing House. However, the request for an exterior plaque was rejected due to Basing House's Grade II listed status. As an alternative, the Council suggested placing a plaque inside Basing House.

The applicant was advised to submit a request for memorial benches via the Council's application form on its website. While we understand the desire to provide handmade benches, the Council must ensure compliance with health and safety standards and robust manufacturing requirements. Therefore, the Council sources benches from a supplier with the necessary guarantees and validation.

Recently, the Council was also asked to consider a plaque within the Rose Garden and Community Orchard. This proposal is not acceptable to the Council, particularly as suitable alternative options have been provided to the applicant.

