

**Decision Session – Executive Member for  
Economic Development & Community  
Engagement**

**9 November 2017**

Report of Andrew Docherty, Assistant Director (Legal & Governance)

**Mansion House Pricing Structure Post Restoration**

**Summary**

1. This report sets out proposals for a new pricing structure for the Mansion House which is planned to re-open early December 2017. It seeks the Executive Member's approval to a charging structure which covers admission/entrance costs, educational fees and private hire arrangements.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that the pricing structure be approved as set out in this report, subject to annual review, in relation to entrance charges, educational activities and private hires.

Reason: The proposed structure is designed to provide a sustainable income generation while also providing community access to the Mansion House

**Background**

3. The Mansion House is due to re-open in early December after the most comprehensive restoration since the house was built in 1725. The restoration project ("Opening Doors") has been made possible by grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and a capital contribution from the Council.

4. The pricing structure must be fair, reasonable, flexible and competitive and set at a level sufficient to cover ongoing staffing and utilities costs as well as contributing towards income targets. The Mansion House Curator will review the structure every year, to fit in with CYC's budget setting process.
5. In order to attract and maintain an audience that will generate enough income to achieve long-term financial sustainability, community engagement must be balanced with more profitable activities, without detracting from the essential character of the Mansion House as a site of historic importance and a centre of civic life.

### **Project Ethos**

6. The purpose of *Opening Doors* project is to:
  - Increase and enhance public access and community involvement in the Mansion House
  - Develop lifelong learning opportunities for both adults and children
  - Deliver an improved interpretation of the history of the building
  - Improve the conservation of the house and its collections
  - Reduce the carbon footprint of the building
  - Achieve long term financial sustainability
  - Establish the role of the Mansion House in the continuing cultural evolution of the city of York.
  - Maintain a civic presence in the building.

### **Consultation**

7. Comparison market analysis has been undertaken on similar sized attractions within York, whilst bearing in mind that no attraction is directly comparable with the Mansion House in terms of size, history, and continuity of use or location. The information gathered provided an informed foundation for the suggested charges contained in this report.

### **Proposed charges**

8. The Executive Member is asked to consider the following proposed charges for entrance admissions, educational usage and private hires.

## Entrance Fee Admission Charges

9. The Mansion House will be open to the public from Wednesday to Sunday each week, between the hours of 10:30 and 17:00. The house will closed for a period of 4 weeks each year for cleaning and maintenance, re-opening in time for the Residents First festival in late January.
10. The residents' entrance fee will provide a 50% discount on full costs across all categories. A residents' full year admission ticket to the Mansion House will be available; this will cover normal admission entry to the Mansion House during opening hours. Upon payment, proof of residency will be required; residents will then receive an annual card which will have to be presented at the Mansion House along with proof of identity to gain entry. Special events will be chargeable at a discounted rate.

	Adult	Child	Family	Concession	Residents
<b>Mansion House</b>	£6.50	£3.50	£17.00 2 adults and Up to 2 children free (under 16)	£5.00	-50%
<b>Mansion House residents annual ticket</b>	£9.00	Free With paying adult	£15.00 2 adults and Up to 2 children free (under 16)	£8.00	

## Education activities charges

11. Educational activities will take place mainly on Mondays and Tuesdays, when the house is closed to the public, although they may occasionally need to be accommodated at other times. Visitors will be able to book private tours of the building and specific aspects of its collections for groups of 10 or more.

	1 hour	Out of hours	Specialist Tours
Group Guided tours	£6.00	£10.00	£15.00
	1 hour workshop	1.5 Hours	2 Hours
School groups, up to 30 children	£60	£70.00	£80.00
	1 hour lecture	Day School	6 Week Course
Adult education	£6.00 pp	£30.00 pp	£60.00pp

## Private hires

12. The Mansion House will continue to be available for private hire, for events such as evening receptions, cocktail parties, dinners, weddings, family occasions and meetings or conferences.
13. As well as the income they provide, such events, particularly where the hirer is a business from outside York, can provide opportunities for the Lord Mayor to promote the city and the Mansion House. The Mansion House has the potential to provide a perfect backdrop for a whole host of film and television work, the

promotion of which is under way. The Mansion House is also a prime location to host potential cinema evenings.

14. The Mansion House is in the process of procuring one caterer to provide all the catering needs for the Mansion House. The caterer will also be expected to promote the Mansion House as a key city location for events which will enhance income generation from venue hire and a % charge levied on the caterer to cover Mansion House utilities fees.

	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Private hires</b>	<b>Weddings</b>	<b>Filming</b>	<b>Special event</b>
Full use of the all the main rooms	<b>Half day</b> 4 hours	<b>£490</b>	<b>£800 –</b> charges vary	<b>£800</b> Per 8 hours	<b>£ dependant on event</b>
Specified rooms <i>Dining room/stateroom</i>	<b>Full day</b> 8 Hours	<b>£950</b>	dependant on room used		
	<b>Half day</b> 4 hours	<b>£300</b>			
	<b>Full day</b> 8 Hours	<b>£525</b>			

## Analysis

15. In-depth analysis has been carried out not only by making comparisons with similar sized venues, but also by gathering additional information from a wide variety of sources. Tourism Intelligence reports from Visit York on visitor numbers to York are of particular relevance, as they chart monthly changes. Similar reports on Business Tourism have been useful to build a strong picture of York’s attraction for delegates.
16. Other external bodies’ research has been used to inform the proposals presented, such as the Art Council Cultural Education Profile for York.

## Comparable Visitor Attraction Entrance Charges

17.

Venue	Adult	Child	Family *	Concession	York Residents**
Fairfax House	£7.50	£3.00	£17.50	£6.00	20% discount
Barley Hall	£6.00	£3.00	£17.50	£4.50	20% discount
Merchant Adventurers' Hall	£6.00	Free with paying adult	£15.00	n/a	50% discount
York Army Museum	£5.00	£2.50	£12.00	£4.00	n/a
Treasurers House	£7.70	£3.85	£19.25	n/a	n/a
<b>Residents discounts-annual passes</b>					
Knaresborough castle	£12.70	£6.70	£20.00	£9.70	
YMT	£11.00	Up to 4 free with adult card		Up to 50% discount	
Sewerby hall Note these are open to any person not just residents of East Yorkshire	£23.00	£12.50	£63.00 2 adults and 2 children	N/A	
Rotunda Museum	£3.00	N/a	Under 18 free	N/A	

## Comparable Educational Activities Charges

18.

Venue	Adult Education	School groups	Guided tours
Fairfax House	No accessible information on website	No accessible information on website	No accessible information on website
Barley Hall	No accessible information on website	£3.50 pp	No accessible information on website
Merchant Adventurers' Hall	No accessible information on website	£2.50pp	£8.50pp
YMT-Yorkshire museum	£5.50pp	£4.00pp	£5.50pp
Treasurers House	No accessible information on website	£3.10pp	£6.20pp

## Comparable Private Hire Charges

19.

Venue	Private hires	Weddings	Filming	Notes
Fairfax House	No accessible information on website	No accessible information on website	No accessible information on website	Up to 28 guests
Barley Hall	£350-£400	£550-£750	No accessible information on website	Up to 50 guests, additional charge for subsequent hours
Merchant Adventurers' Hall	£950- £1100	£1400- £1650	No accessible information on website	Up to 180 guests
York Army Museum	No accessible	No accessible	No accessible	Up to 20 people

	information on website	information on website	information on website	
<b>NCEM</b>	£200-£500	N/A	N/A	Up to 180
<b>Treasurers House</b>	No accessible information on website	No accessible information on website	No accessible information on website	

## Options

20. The Executive Member has the following options;

- I. To approve the propose charges set out above
- II. To propose alternative charges or arrangements subject to these being market tested and reviewed for viability

## Council Plan

- 21. A prosperous city for all** - A well funded and maintained building will enhance the overall cityscape and provide a impressive venue for the Lord Mayoralty to host city occasions, enabling the Mansion House to play it's part in the Council's ambition to support York as a 'prosperous city for all'. Residents will be able to access the Mansion Houses unique heritage through a range of special events, educational and learning activities, as well as increased opening arrangements for general visits to the house
- 22. A focus on frontline services** – Residents will have access to a range of educational activities from Pre School through to adult education provision.
- 23. A council that listens to residents** -.the Mansion House will provide community access not only to its heritage but also as a venue that the community will be able to access. Physical access has now been improved with the provision of a disabled access to the basement and kitchen areas.



## **Implications**

24. There are no direct specific implications associated with recommendations in this report, other than the potential consequences to or impact upon income generation should the Council fail to set appropriate charges for admission to and use of the building. Equally, in setting these charges, the Council needs to have due regard to what is locally considered reasonable when compared to other 'visitor attractions'. Officers consider the proposed charges to be both reasonable and appropriate taking into account the local market and what is sustainable for the building at this time.
  
25. In proposing these charges, careful consideration has been given to set charges which take into account the cost of resources (staffing, materials, etc) and the building running costs(heating, lighting etc), whilst respecting affordability for visitors.

## **Risk Management**

26. There are no specific risks associated with the recommendations in this report, other than the potential for putting in place charges which either fail to cover costs or conversely which prove too high when compared with other local attractions. The research undertaken and outlined in this report should ensure that the proposed charges are both viable and sustainable until such time as the Mansion House Curator reviews the arrangements as part of the Council's budget setting process.

## Contact Details

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Title**

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**Report**  **Date** 31 October 2017  
**Approved**

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** List information for all

Implication ie Financial  
Name  
Title  
Tel No.

Implication ie Legal  
Name  
Title  
Tel No.

**Wards Affected:** List wards or tick box to indicate all

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

## Annexes

None

## List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund