

Briefing: Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee, 13th February 2019

Title: Discounts on retail sales across the Visitor Services Team

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1. Introduction

Currently the Visitor Services Manager has delegated authority to set prices for the sale of retail items from both the Swanage Information Centre and Beach Garden 'Tea on the Green' Kiosk. For the Swanage Information Centre these prices are altered from time to time as suppliers increase their charges or we wish to sell older products more quickly. In the case of the Tea on the Green the prices are set at the beginning of each season and will generally remain fixed until the close of business at end September.

All hire charges for beach huts and sports activities and equipment are agreed by Council as part of the fees and charges process in January each year.

The auditor has confirmed that officer delegated powers to set prices can include the authority to provide discounts, although it is good practice to ensure that the Council is aware of the type of discounts being offered each year.

2. Discounts

For 2019 the following discounts are to be offered:

- 50% discount for all staff and Town Councillors on hot drinks and bottled water procured from the Tea on the Green (this has been in place for some time)
- 20p discount on all hot drinks when a customer supplies their own cup/mug or container
- 20p discount for Tennis Club and Bowls Club members

3. Vouchers

During the year a number of vouchers are provided for competitions for free putting and ice creams at the 'Tea on the Green'. A similar voucher is provided for free beach hut use. These act as useful promotional tools for both ourselves and the charity or community group which is running the competition. Generally, the beach hut vouchers are used in raffles.

4. Free beach hut use

Beach huts are provided free of charge to local charity and community groups on request for out of peak season use. Each request is reviewed on an individual basis and confirmed in writing and recorded by the Visitor Services Manager. We also provide a free Carnival beach hut for the 'Beach Hut Competition'. For 2019, the winner was unable to come for Carnival so we have provided her with one in early July. Swanage Town Council staff can also utilise a beach hut for free outside the summer peak season, although they can not book one in advance.

5. Free tennis and putting

Over the last two years free tennis and putting has been offered on the first day of the season in April. This has worked very well to promote all the activities at Beach Gardens.

Additionally, the Tennis Club have also offered a summer free tennis open day after receiving approval from the Visitor Services Manager. This helps to bring new members into the club.

6. Recommendation

That the above discounts are noted and that the Visitor Services Manager's delegated authority to set and reduce the price of retail items be approved.