

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Overview

The Mobile Homes Act 2013 (MHA 2013) was introduced in order to provide greater protection to occupiers of residential caravans and mobile homes. It received royal assent on 26th March 2013 with some parts implemented on 26th May 2013. The MHA 2013 will introduce some important changes to park home site licensing on 1st April 2014 due to its amendments to Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (the Amended Act). These changes include the ability for Local Authorities to charge site owners a fee for applying for a site licence, for changes to conditions of site licences, transfers of existing licences and for annual fees.

In order to be able to charge these fees the Council needs to publish them within a Fees Policy. North Dorset District Council Park Homes Fees Policy has therefore been formulated so that these fees can be incorporated within the Council's 2014/15 Fees and Charges Schedule. Publication of this Fees Policy by 1st April 2014 will enable fee recovery by the Council at the earliest possible point in time and enable Site Owners to recover these costs should they opt to increase pitch fees at the next pitch fee review date.

1.2 Fees

The fees associated with applying initially for a new site licence, for transfers of existing licences, changes to licence conditions, and for annual fees are to be set initially as follows:

Initial Application Licence Fee = £260

Transfer of Licence = £35

Change of Licence Conditions = £95 (At the request of the site owner/manager)

Annual Fee = £9.50 per pitch

Deposit of site rules = £40

Sites that are for holiday use only or are only allowed having units stationed on them at certain times of the year are exempt from licensing fees, however the Amended Act enables Local Authorities to fix different fees or to determine that no fee is required to be paid in certain cases or descriptions of case.

subsequent years rather than including within the base annual fee. This would ensure that residents would not be adversely affected by the cost of re-inspections resulting from poor management, as site owners would only be able to take into account the base fee when recovering the cost of annual fees through pitch fees.

The average officer hourly rate was applied to the total time taken for the processes and other costs such as printing, postage and mileage were added. These templates were then used to create formulas that could be used in the calculation of the various fees.

The fee for processing a new application for a site licence was calculated by using the relevant formula to determine what the total cost would be of processing new applications, along with the time it would take an officer to conduct a site inspection.

Initial Licence Fee = £260.

The fee for the transfer of an existing licence was calculated by using the relevant formula to determine the cost of processing such applications. As the cost is not dependant on the number of pitches a single figure per application was obtainable.

Transfer of licence = £35

Change of licence conditions was calculated using the relevant formula for calculating the cost of processing the application, any consultation required, and the cost of a site visit to see how the changes would impact the site.

Change of Licence Conditions = £95

Annual fees are calculated by determining the total cost of the administration of each licence. The annual fee also includes a site inspection, and the cost for the register. A pitch inspection cost has been inserted due to the different amounts of time an inspection will take depending on the size of the site.

Annual Fee = £9.50 per pitch

When requiring a licence holder to pay an annual fee the Council will inform them of the matters to which they have had regard to in fixing the fee for the year in question, in particular the extent to which they have had regard to deficits or surpluses in the account for the annual fee for previous years. In determining the deficits or surpluses in the account any costs relating to the monitoring of conditions on sites, including informal