

Proposal for new work item pursuant to Scrutiny Panel agenda Item 9(a):

**Castle Park bandstand – efficacy of hiring charges**

Scrutiny Panel is asked to review whether the current scheme of charging for use of the Castle Park Bandstand is in the public interest and whether such charges are consistent with the Council's wider social and recreational policies.

The Bandstand was commissioned by Colchester Borough Council and erected in 1894 shortly after Castle Park was opened for the enjoyment the public of the Borough. It is one of the original features of the park, specifically designed to allow free concerts by full military bands from Colchester Garrison, although in recent times it has hosted a much wider range of musical entertainment. It is considered to be of special architectural and historic interest in a national context. It is of sufficient special interest to be listed at Grade II.

Several "Have your Say" speakers at a recent Council Meeting questioned the current policy of charging for its use when most of the prospective performers are charities or small unincorporated groups that cannot afford the prevailing fees, thus hastening the decline of the bandstand as a living feature of a vibrant Castle Park.

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