

Executive

7 December 2016

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Customer & Corporate Services

Portfolio of the Executive Member for Finance & Performance

Review of Fees and Charges

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to increase a range of the council's fees and charges with effect from the 1st January 2017.

Recommendations

2. Members are asked to approve option 1 and increase the relevant fees and charges as set out in the attached annexes.

Reason: To enable the council to effectively manage its budget.

Background

3. Across the council a wide range of services operate fees and charges for services provided, some of which attract VAT at the current rate of 20%.

Options and Analysis

4. Option 1 (recommended option) – Agree the fees and charges as set out in the annexes to the report.
5. This report focuses on those fees that were last reviewed 12 months ago in January 2016. Service areas have reviewed their charging policies and various increases are proposed which aim to minimise the impact either on service users or the volume of activity in these areas.

6. The table below summarises each service areas total fees and charges considered for increase from 1st January 2017.

Service Area	£000
Registrars	587
Community Centres	40
Bereavement Services	1,891
Waste Services	280
Parks & Open Spaces	97
Housing Services	45
Planning	318
Total fee income considered for increase from 1st Jan 2017	3,258

7. Additional income of £70k will be generated in 2017/18 from the increase in fees and charges proposed within this report. This is mainly from Bereavement Services (£40k) and Allotments (£17k) if the proposed transfer to a community organisation is not completed.
8. The table below summarises the areas which will be examined further as part of the 2017/18 budget strategy and any proposals will be included in the overall financial strategy if appropriate. Some fees below are set by statutory or regulatory bodies and are therefore only permitted to increase from the 1st April. The remaining service areas are currently reviewing their charging policy, to ensure that any increase will minimise any adverse impact either on service users or the volume of activity in these areas.

Service Area	£000
Environmental Health & Trading Standards	48
Regulatory Services	693
Waste Services (includes Commercial Waste)	1,803
Housing	414
Parking	6,793
Planning	1,454
Public Health	27
Adult Social Care	2,608
Total fee income under consideration for increase from 1st April 2017	13,840

9. In addition to the income above, certain fees, such as planning fees, are set nationally and are increased at the appropriate time in line with national policy and specific details of these will not be included in the budget strategy report.
10. Option 2 – Agree a different increase to that proposed.

Consultation

11. No specific consultation has been carried out for this report. However, the level of all fees and charges is informed by the extensive consultation carried out as part of the development of the budget.

Council Plan

12. Outcomes achieved by the activities covered in this report help to deliver priorities in the Council Plan 2015-19.

Implications

13. The implications are:
 - Financial - the fees and charges increases outlined in the annex to this report will generate additional income of £16k in the remainder of the current financial year with a full year effect of £70k in 2017/18. This assumes there will be the same level of activity across all services.
 - Human Resources - there are no specific human resource implications to this report.
 - Equalities – all council services complete Equalities Impact Assessments to ensure that the charges levied on users are fair and take into account any equalities issues.
 - Legal - the Council has a general power to charge fees to cover the costs of providing discretionary services which are not provided for a commercial purpose. This power cannot be used to make a profit from the provision of a service. Various specific charging powers also exist in relation to individual statutory functions. In relation to allotments these are contained in the Allotments Act 1950 which provides that land let as an allotment shall be let at such rent as a tenant might be reasonably be expected to pay. There is a power to let at a lower rent in

special circumstances. The Cremation Act 1902 provides a power to charge fees for cremations. The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 provides a power to charge such fees as the Authority considers proper in connection with burials, the erection of memorials and adding inscriptions to memorials.

- Crime and Disorder - there are no specific crime and disorder implications to this report.
- Information Technology - there are no information technology implications to this report.
- Property - there are no property implications to this report.
- Other - there are no other implications to this report.

Risk Management

14. There is a risk that the increase in charge could result in users deciding not to use a service. Individual service areas will continue to monitor activity to ensure any loss of income is identified and mitigated by other savings.

Author:	Chief Officer Responsible for the report:		
Jayne Close Principal Accountant Tel (01904) 554175	Ian Floyd, Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Customer & Corporate Services		
	Report Approved	√	Date 28.11.16
Wards Affected: All			
For further information please contact the author of the report			

Background Papers – None

Annexes

Annex 1 – Registrar proposed charges

Annex 2 – Community Centres proposed charges

Annex 3 – Bereavement Services proposed charges

Annex 4 – Waste Services proposed charges

Annex 5 – Parks and Open Spaces proposed charges

Annex 6 – Housing Services proposed charges

Annex 7 – Planning proposed charges