

Report of the Director of Customer & Business Support Services

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 2016.

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 2015. 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 recommended for increase from 1st January 2016.

Service Area	£000
Registrars	587
Community Centres	40
Bereavement Services	1,860
Waste Services	280
Parks & Open Spaces	93
Housing Services	45
Planning	308
Total fee income recommended for increase from 1st Jan 2016	3,213

- 7 Additional income of £103k will be generated in 2016/17 from the increase in fees and charges proposed within this report. This is mainly from Bereavement Services (£46k) and Housing (£20k).
- 8 The table below summarises the areas which will be examined further as part of the 2016/17 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	649
Waste Services (includes Commercial Waste)	1,803
Housing	414
Parking	6,741
Planning	1,424
Public Health	20
Adult Social Care	2,608
Total fee income under consideration for increase from 1st April 2016	13,707

- 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 £26k in the remainder of the current financial year with a full year effect of £103k in 2016/17. 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. Various specific charging powers also exist in relation to individual statutory functions.
 - 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:	Executive Member & Chief Officer Responsible for the report:		
Jayne Close Principal Accountant Tel (01904) 551635	Councillor Chris Steward, Executive Leader, Finance & Performance Ian Floyd, Director of Customer and Business Support Services		
	Report Approved	√	Date 3/12/15
Wards Affected: All			
For further information please contact the author of the report			

Background Papers – None

Annexes

Proposed Fees and Charges - Registrars, Community Centres, Bereavement Services, Waste Services, Parks and Open Spaces, Housing Services and Planning