

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Customer 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 2014.

Background

2. 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%. Where necessary the charges in the attached annexes have been rounded to prevent problems with small change.

Options and Analysis

3. Option 1 (recommended option) – Agree the fees and charges as set out in the annexes to the report.
4. This report focuses on those fees that were last reviewed 12 months ago in January 2013 and proposes an increase of approximately 5%, in line with the previous years increase, subject to minor variations due to roundings.
5. The table below summarises each service areas total fees and charges recommended for increase from 1st January 2014.

Service Area	£000
Registrars	518
Community Centres	33
Bereavement Services	1,616
Waste Services	211
Libraries, Information & Archives	405
Parks & Open Spaces	76
Housing Services	45
Planning	305
Guildhall and Mansion House	45

Total fee income recommended for increase from 1st Jan 2014	3,254
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6. Additional income of £154k will be generated in 2014/15 from the increase in fees and charges proposed within this report. This is mainly from Bereavement Services (£85k) and Registrars (£25k).
7. The table below summarises the areas which will be examined further as part of the 2014/16 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 avoid an adverse impact either on service users or the volume of activity in these areas.

Service Area	£000
Environmental Health & Trading Standards	70
Regulatory Services	667
Pest Control	82
Waste Services (includes Commercial Waste)	1,782
Sport & Leisure	1,888
Housing	441
Parking	7,382
City Centre & Markets	703
Planning	150
Integrated Young People's Service	14
Adult Social Care	3,263
Total fee income under consideration for increase from 1st April 2014	16,442

8. 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.
9. Option 2 – Agree a different increase to that proposed.

Consultation

10. 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

11. This report demonstrates effective management of the councils resources

Implications

12. The implications are:

- Financial - the fees and charges increases outlined in the annex to this report will generate additional income of £39k in the remainder of the current financial year with a full year effect of £154k in 2014/15. 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

13. 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.

Recommendations

14. 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.

Contact Details

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	Report Approved	√	Date 22 November 2013
Specialist Implications Officer(s) None			
Wards Affected: All			√
For further information please contact the authors of the report			

Background Papers – None

Annexes

Proposed Fees and Charges - Registrars, Community Centres, Bereavement, Waste, Libraries and Archives, Parks and Open Spaces, Housing Services, Planning, Mansion House, Guildhall