

TOWN AREA COMMITTEE

18 SEPTEMBER 2017

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR

A CORPORATE REVIEW OF CHARGES 2018-19

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information on the various fees and charges that are made by this committee.
- 1.2 To recommend changes to these charges to operate from 1st April 2018.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the Committee determines the level of charges for 2018-19 for each of the services set out in the attached table to operate from 1st April 2018.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

All charges

- 3.1 As set out in the constitution only new proposed charges or charges that were proposed to be increased above or below inflation are considered by members. As such statutory charges have not been included within the report for consideration by members. Those that are increased in line with inflation are approved by the Corporate Director under delegated authority.
- 3.2 Appendix A shows the proposed charges for services that fall outside delegated authority. The table also summarises the financial objective of the current charging policy, the existing charges, the current level of any subsidy and the reason for the recommended charge.
- 3.3 There is a charging policy included in the MTFIS; this should be used as a guideline when setting fees and charges.
- 3.4 As part of the review budget holders are asked to complete a "review of charges form for 2018-19" for each distinct charging area. The aim of this process is to gather background information to the charges being reviewed. A set of completed forms are held electronically and can be viewed at the meeting.

3.5 Open Spaces

- 3.5.1 The proposed fee increase in relation to casual football pitch bookings is as a result of a benchmarking exercise and will bring the charge in line with the lowest of the benchmarks. It should be noted that due to the Melton Sports Village and other local facilities, it is not expected that there will be much take up of these services but it is proposed to leave the charge in to allow a charge to be made should the need arise.

3.6 Allotments

- 3.6.1 As part of the 2017-18 fees and charges setting process, Members approved a three year fixed fee which is in place until 2019-20.

3.8 Free Services

- 3.8.1 With the exception of the concessions as highlighted in Appendix A, there is only one service which has been put forward by budget holders as provided free of charge. This is detailed in Appendix B where the budget holder has provided an explanation as to why charges have not been introduced.

4.0 POLICY & CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The fees and charges set out in this report are the ones that do not meet the charging policy set in line with corporate and service objectives; these vary according to the service provided. More detailed explanations on each service's corporate implications can be found on the forms available at the meeting.

5.0 FINANCIAL & OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Financial and resource implications have been addressed within paragraph 3. Once approved, these charges will be built into the 2018/19 revenue budget process.
- 5.2 Some services include chargeable and non chargeable elements. In line with the charging policy, the best estimate of under/over recovery of costs is included in Appendix A. Members may wish to review whether it is appropriate for those services receiving a subsidy to continue to do so.
- 5.3 Local Government funding continues to be reviewed and there is great uncertainty surrounding funding in later years although almost certainly will be reduced. This is reflected in the Council's MTFs and places a greater onus on the Council to seek to maximise its income from other sources.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

- 6.1 Local Authorities have certain limited freedoms to charge for discretionary services under the Local Government Act 2003. Where appropriate any other relevant legislation is noted within the Appendix A to this report.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 There are no direct links to community safety arising from this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES

- 8.1 An equalities impact assessment (EIA) has been completed for the charging policy previously agreed by PFA. The EIA has been reviewed in conjunction with the updated charging policy. The main implication arising is the need for service areas to undertake their own EIA for the charges they are responsible for to ensure the appropriate equalities considerations have been taken into account when setting the fees and charges.

9.0 RISKS

- 9.1 A possible risk to the Council is that budgeted revenue income may not be achieved if services are not taken up due to any charges increase. Income budgets are regularly monitored and where a downturn in demand is identified appropriate action is taken.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 10.1 There are no climate change issues directly arising from this report.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 Budget Holders carried out the review with the assistance of the Service Accountant as required with reference to current budget monitoring protocols.

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 All wards are affected.

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Date: 21st August 2017
Appendices: Appendix A – Review of Fees and Charges
Appendix B – Free Services
Background Papers: Forms for the Review of Charges
Charging Policy
Reference: X:\Cttee, Council & Sub Cttees\TAC\2017-18\180917\DG – Review of Charges