

## POLICY, FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

26 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 MTFs; this should be used as a guideline when setting fees and charges.
- 3.4 As part of the review process managers 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.

##### Legal Services

- 3.5 The main source of income for Legal Services relates to fees for section 106 agreements where work is undertaken on behalf of others and the costs are recharged based on a set hourly rate which includes a proportion of overheads. Any work undertaken and associated income will be recharged to Melton accordingly as part of the delegated service but as the provision of Legal Services has been delegated to Harborough District Council any review of rates is undertaken by them. However, officers from both authorities work closely together to ensure the charge reflects the current working arrangements and is recovering costs as well as being in line with other local authorities of which Harborough are currently undertaking a benchmarking exercise to inform the 2018/19 fee setting process.

#### **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: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2017

Appendices: Appendix A – Review of Fees and Charges

Background Papers: Forms for the Review of Charges  
Charging Policy

Reference: X:\Cttee, Council & Sub Cttees\Policy Finance & Administration  
Committee\2017-18\260917