

AGENDA ITEM 6

RURAL ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

30th August 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 process managers are asked to complete a “review of charges form for 18-19” 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 For information Appendix B shows the list of services that are currently provided free of charge, this is due to a number of reasons such as information being provided as a result of Freedom of Information requests, information being accessible via the website or there being limited demand.

3.6 Building Control

- 3.6.1 As previously approved by the REEA Committee, delegated authority has been given to the Head of Regulatory Services to deviate from the standard Building Control fees. In accordance with the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010; certain fees can be assessed on an individual job by job basis based on the level of risk of non-compliance of the Building Regulations.
- 3.6.2 The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulation 2010 requires that building regulation charges relate to the costs of carrying out the building regulations chargeable service.

The CIPFA guidance on the Charges Regulations 2010 states that Local Authorities are to calculate charges to achieve full cost recovery by relating the hourly charge of Local Authority building control officers to the time spent carrying out their *chargeable* building control regulation functions and advice. The Regulations also require the chargeable functions to break even over a reasonable period of time, normally three years. Currently, the chargeable function rolling three year position is a small surplus of £7,882. Therefore it has been recommended that the hourly figure remains at its current level of £73.32.

3.7 **New Charges**

3.7.1 Contained in Appendix A are some new charges to be introduced from 2018/19. The new charges include three within the Environmental Health service. Due to changes in the Environmental Code of Practice, the council is now able to charge to re-visit premises that wish to improve on food hygiene scores. It is soon to become mandatory to display the food hygiene score of a premise, it is therefore anticipated that more re-visit requests will be received. The remaining two new charges are due to a new Public Space Protection Order being adopted, it enables the council to charge the new penalties. It is difficult to predict the impact that the new charges will have on demand of the services.

3.8 **Licensing – Hackney Carriage / Private Hire**

3.8.1 The Head of Regulatory Services will provide a separate report on hackney carriage/private hire fees and charges later in the year once the time analysis has been completed.

3.9 **Car Parks and Bus Station**

3.9.1 The car parking charges are recommended to remain unchanged pending the next strategic review of the Car Park and Bus Station service, which is due to begin 2018-19 for implementation 2019-20.

3.10 **Cattle Market**

3.10.1 The car parking charges at the Cattle Market will be reviewed in line with the Car Park Strategy, as 3.9.1 refers.

3.11 **Control of Pests**

3.11.1 The Control of Pests service to external customers is expected to go forward as a disinvestment in October 2017; therefore no changes have been included for this service.

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.

Contact Officer: Emma Peters

Date: 7th August 2017

Appendices: Appendix A – Review of Fees and Charges
Appendix B – Services provided free of charge

Background Papers: Forms for the Review of Charges
Charging Policy

Reference: X:\Cttee, Council & Sub Cttees\Rural Economic & Environmental Affairs
Committee\2017-18\300817\Review of Charges 2018-19