

PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC SPACE

09 FEBRUARY 2022

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUILDING AND PUBLIC REALM

A.1 Operations and Delivery / Building and Public Realm / Environmental Matters - Proposed Fees and Charges for 2022/23

(Report prepared by Andy White)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek the Portfolio Holder's concurrence to the proposed schedule of fees and charges 2022/23 for Operations and Delivery / Building and Public Realm / Environmental matters: Public Conveniences, Vehicle Inspection and Cemeteries, Crematorium & Memorials

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for 2022/23 for Operations and Delivery / Building and Public Realm / Environmental. They continue to be considered against a number of key principles that form part of the long term financial forecast approach which are summarised later on in this report.
- Any amendments to income budgets that are required to reflect changes to fees and charges will be included in the detailed budget proposals for 2022/23 that will be considered by Cabinet / Full Council next year.
- In respect of Full Council next year, the individual decisions agreeing fees and charges will be collated and presented as part of the overall budget setting process for 2022/23.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Schedule of Fees and Charges 2022/23 for Operations and Delivery / Building and Public Realm / Environmental Matters set out in Appendix A be agreed.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The forecasting and budget setting process, including fees and charges, will have direct implications for the Council's ability to deliver on its objectives and priorities. At its heart, the 10 year approach to the forecast seeks to establish a sound and sustainable budget year on year through maximising income, including income raised from fees and charges, whilst limiting reductions in services provided to residents, businesses and visitors.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

Fees and Charges have been reviewed against the key principles that underpin the long term forecast, which includes the generation of income whilst balancing strategic and external market conditions.

However a key underlying principle is to consider inflationary increases wherever possible to support the Council's overall financial position to balance inflationary pressures against expenditure budgets but recognising the restrictions placed on local authorities in terms of setting fees and charges on a cost recovery basis.

Any changes to income budgets resulting from any changes in the level of fees and charges agreed, will form part of the detailed budget setting process for 2022/23.

It is not proposed to increase fees for public convenience and vehicle inspection activities for the coming financial year. Fee levels were also unchanged in the preceding year. A detailed review of fees and charges for property services will be carried out for the 2023/4 financial year. It is anticipated that review reflecting three years' inflation will create apparently rational round numbers and will contribute to back to business and support of local organisations.

An in line with inflation increase in cremation fees is proposed. It is proposed that additional funding is required in order to fully maintain new cremation equipment when installed later in the year. A 5% increase was considered in order to fully meet costs but limited to 2% on average in order to reflect the challenges faced by service users during the failure of the equipment.

Risk

No risk has been identified in relation to holding public convenience and vehicle inspection fees at their present level. In the wider economy, inflation is at relatively high levels and there is potential that this will be reflected in future fees.

The modest increase in bereavement fees will allow contribution to ongoing maintenance costs.

LEGAL

The arrangements for setting and agreeing a budget and for the setting and collection of council tax are defined in the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The previous legislation defining the arrangements for charging, collecting and pooling of Business Rates was contained within the Local Government Finance Act 1988. These have both been amended as appropriate to reflect the introduction of the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

Trading and the power to charge are set out in the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970 and the Local Government Act 2003 – Section 93 respectively. The latter also requires that charges for discretionary services should be on a cost recovery basis.

Under Para 4.4.1 (8) Part 3.4 of the Council's Constitution, all Assistant Directors, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, Management Team Member and the Assistant Director (Finance & IT), are authorised to decide the level of the annual discretionary fees and charges for their service (including any in-year changes that may be required) for inclusion within the Council's corporate schedule of fees and charges. Following the above consultation, an Officer decision must be published.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder	No implication identified
Equality and Diversity	No implication identified
Health Inequalities	Holding and limitation of fees is likely to be of benefit to members of the community with health issues.
Area or Ward affected	All.

Consultation/Public Engagement	No implication identified
Net zero emissions	Efficient running of cremation equipment will

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

Income from fees and charges form an important element of the budget and the financial sustainability of the Council as set out in the long term forecast.

Similarly to previous years, Departments have been asked to review their fees and charges on an individual basis as changes may need to be made to meet specific aims or strategic objectives or in some cases in response to external factors such as market forces.

The review of fees and charges has been set against the following key principles:

- general inflationary increases where possible or lower where appropriate / justified
- amounts rounded for ease of application, which may result in a slightly above inflation increase.
- on a cost recovery basis as necessary
- reflect statutory requirements.
- increases where market conditions allow
- to meet specific priorities or service delivery aims / objectives

Income budgets included in the detailed estimates will reflect any required changes from the proposed fees and charges set out in this report.

OPERATIONS AND DELIVERY / BUILDING AND PUBLIC REALM / ENVIRONMENTAL - PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2022/23

Set against the current fees and charges for 2021/22, **Appendix A** includes the schedule of fees and charges proposed for 2022/23, which have been developed by applying the key principles highlighted above.

It is not proposed to increase fees for public convenience and vehicle inspection activities for the coming financial year. Fee levels were also unchanged in the preceding year. A detailed review of fees and charges for property services will be carried out for the 2023/4 financial year. It is anticipated that review reflecting three years' inflation will create apparently rational round numbers and will contribute to back to business and support of local organisations.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

Appendix A Detailed fees and charges 2022/23 for Operations and Delivery / Building and Public Realm / Environmental matters,

