

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 5 December 2018

Title: Annual Review of Fees and Charges

Report of: Chief Finance Officer

Cabinet member: Councillor Bill Giles (Portfolio holder for Finance)

Ward(s): All

Purpose of report: To propose the schedule of Fees and Charges to apply from 1 April 2019.

Decision type: Key Decision

Officer recommendation(s): (1) To approve the scale of Fees and Charges proposed within Appendix 2 to apply from 1 April 2019.

(2) To delegate authority to the Director of Service Delivery in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Waste and Recycling to vary commercial trade waste charges upwards or downwards by up to 10% in order to respond to developing market conditions.

(3) To implement changes to statutory fees and charges for services shown within Appendix 2 as and when notified by Government.

Reasons for recommendations: The Council's Constitution requires that all fees and charges, including nil charges, be reviewed at least annually and agreed by Cabinet.

Contact Officer(s): Name: Pauline Adams
Post title: Head of Finance
E-mail: Pauline.Adams@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk
Telephone number: 01323 415979

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Following a systematic review in light of an Audit Commission report entitled 'Positively Charged' Cabinet approved guiding principles, as set out on Appendix 1, for setting fees and charges.
- 1.2 The guiding principle and the recommended actions arising from the systematic review of services have been applied in reviewing and proposing a scale of fees and charges to apply from 1 April 2019.

2 Fees and Charges Proposals to apply from 1 April 2019

- 2.1 Fees and Charges are reviewed by Cabinet at least once each year, principally during the winter prior to the next financial year. This enables Cabinet's decision to be incorporated in the coming budget cycle. Cabinet is not restricted to an annual review; it can conduct further reviews at any time in the year with implementation of decisions from any point in the year
- 2.2 As in previous years all of the fees and charges are covered, so far as is practicable, within a single report. In this way Cabinet is able to consider all of the fees and charges which apply to the Council's services as an overall package. There is only one exception to this and that is licensing fees which are excluded from this report because they are set by the Licensing Committee.
- 2.3 Cabinet will be aware that fees and charges applicable at the Council-owned indoor leisure facilities and at Newhaven Fort are set by Wave Leisure under the terms of the management agreements it has with the Council
- 2.5 Within Appendix 2 to this report there are some significant services, with significant income estimates, where the Council has discretion to set the level of fees and charges. These are summarised below between those services where changes are proposed and those services where no changes are proposed
- 2.6 In addition Appendix 2 includes those services where fees are statutory and where any changes can only be made by Government.

3. Services where changes to fees and charges are proposed.

3.1

Service	Rodent and Pest Control
Appendix ref	lines 74 to 105
Reason for change	The council has withdrawn from offering chargeable rodent and pest control services but continues to provide a free domestic service for the treatment of rats.
Financial impact	No income will be generated in 2019/20 leading to a budget reduction of £9,500.

Service	Section 106 Recycling Developers' Contributions
Appendix ref	Lines 187 to 188
Reason for change	To maintain recovery of a fair share of the costs of providing services.
Financial impact	No income budget for is set for this service because of the uncertainty around volumes and timing as well as the relatively low levels of income generated.

Service	Street Naming and Numbering
Appendix ref	lines 257 to 267
Reason for change	A comparative review against our near-neighbour authorities suggests that one increase should be made to the current fees so that they remain appropriate for the services on offer.
Financial impact	The 2018/19 budget of £7,500 can become £9,000 for 2019/20 because of an increase in usage.

Service	Allotments
Appendix ref	lines 269 to 270
Reason for change	An increase of £2 per plot is proposed in order to maintain value.
Financial impact	No change to the income budget of £1,000.

Service	Cemeteries
Appendix ref	lines 272 to 293
Reason for change	The Council's policy is to maintain its charges within the upper quartile of local authority burial charges. The proposed increases are intended to maintain the Council's position.
Financial impact	The 2018/19 budget of £130,000 will become £140,000 for 2019/20 – an increase of £5,000 to take account of changes in usage and an increase of £5,000 to reflect the impact of the proposed increase in fees and charges.

Service	Parks and Open Spaces
Appendix ref	lines 295 to 348
Reason for change	To maintain recovery of a fair share of the costs of providing services.
Financial impact	Officers forecast an increase of £1,500 from the impact of the proposed increases in fees and charges but propose leaving the income budget at £50,000 to allow for any variations in usage.

Service	Waste Collection (excluding Commercial Trade Waste)
Appendix ref	lines 350 to 399
Reason for change	To maintain recovery of a fair share of the costs of providing services.
Financial impact	The income budget for 2018/19 was substantially increased because of the growth in the green waste service and can be increased by another £150,000 into 2019/20 as the service is rolled out across the district. Cabinet should note that there will be additional expenditure associated with delivering the increased

	<p>level of business.</p> <p>Demand for other waste collection services has declined leading to a forecast income reduction of £19,000 of which £5,000 will be recovered from the proposed fee changes.</p> <p>In overall terms the total income budget will increase from £310,500 in 2018/19 up to £446,500 in 2019/20.</p>
--	---

Service	Legal Services
Appendix ref	lines 406 to 418
Reason for change	Maintains recovery of costs and positioning with other local authorities.
Financial impact	Supports the viability of the shared legal service.

Service	Estate Surveyor Services
Appendix ref	lines 420 to 427
Reason for change	Officers are proposing the introduction of these new charges to reflect the commercial nature of the estates business. These charges are complimentary to those already charged by Legal Services and are similar in nature to those which commercial lessees might expect to pay in the private sector.
Financial impact	The new charges are estimated to generate £15,000 in 2019/20 dependent upon take-up.

4. Services where no changes to fee and charges are proposed

4.1

Service	Car Parks
Appendix ref	lines 1 to 33
Reason for no change	<p>Cabinet agreed the current pricing tariff in January 2018 to apply from 1 April 2018, the first increase since 1 April 2013.</p> <p>This was consistent with the principle established by Cabinet that future increases would be based on inflation and implemented only when accumulated inflation increased fees to easily collectable amounts.</p>
Financial impact	The increased income budget for 2018/19 of £1,002,500 is being achieved so no change is proposed for 2019/20.

Service	Electric Vehicle Chargers
Appendix ref	lines 35 to 37
Reason for no change	Usage of this service continues to grow and officers believe that leaving the current pricing structure in place for another year will encourage further growth.
Financial impact	The current income budget is small but current usage suggests that it can be doubled from £2,000 up to £4,000.

Service	Lewes House
Appendix ref	lines 39 to 57
Reason for no change	The offer of rooms and garden for events like wedding receptions is operating in a competitive environment. Officers judge that the current level of fees remains at the right level to maintain a share of that market.
Financial impact	The income budget will remain at £10,000.

Service	Arts Development
Appendix ref	lines 59 to 64
Reason for no change	The popularity of art wave has seen income grow and as a consequence officers propose no change to the existing fees.
Financial impact	The current income budget of £13,000 can be increased up to £20,000 but Cabinet should note that there will be a proportionate increase in expenditure.

Service	Tourism
Appendix ref	lines 66 to 72
Reason for no change	The printed version of the Stay Lewes Coast and Country visitor guide produced this year is unlikely to be updated next year and so income, and expenditure, will fall. Officers believe that the current charges remain appropriate to continue into next year.
Financial impact	The income budget for 2019/20 will drop to £3,000 from this year's £9,000

Service	Animal Wardens
----------------	-----------------------

Appendix ref	lines 107 to 112 excluding line 108
Reason for no change	Very limited activity to justify change.
Financial impact	No income budget is set for this service because of the uncertainty around volumes and the very low levels of income generated.

Service	Public Health
Appendix ref	lines 127 and 128
Reason for no change	Limited activity to justify change.
Financial impact	No income budget is set for this discretionary service because of the uncertainty around volumes and the very low levels of income generated.

Service	Private Sector Housing
Appendix ref	lines 155 to 157
Reason for no change	Fees will continue to be set in line with officer costs.
Financial impact	The current income budget is small but current usage suggests that it can be doubled from £1,000 up to £2,000

Service	Building Control
Appendix ref	lines 159 to 182
Reason for no change	Building control operates in a competitive environment and officers judge that the current fees remain at the appropriate level for the services on offer.
Financial impact	An adjustment to the income budget is required because actual levels of income have fallen short of budget over the past two years and this trend looks set to continue. Consequently the income budget will reduce from £325,000 for 2018/19 down to £285,000 for 2019/20.

Service	Recycling - Section 106 Developers' Contributions
----------------	--

Appendix ref	lines 209 to 210
Reason for no change	A charge is made solely to maintain recovery of a fair share of the costs of providing the service.
Financial impact	No income budget is set because of the uncertainty around volumes and timing as well as the relatively low levels of income generated.

Service	Planning Services
Appendix ref	lines 212 to 255
Reason for no change	Officers judge that the current fees remain at the appropriate levels for the services on offer.
Financial impact	An adjustment to the income budget is required because actual levels of income have fallen short of budget over the past two years and this trend looks set to continue. Consequently the income budget will reduce from £40,000 for 2018/19 down to £30,000 for 2019/20.

Service	Council Tax and Business Rates Summons income
Appendix ref	lines 401 to 404
Reason for no change	Because both this Council and Wealden Council use the same court the policy has been to keep our fees in line. Therefore no changes are proposed at this time.
Financial impact	An adjustment to the income budget is required because volume changes have seen actual income exceed budget over the past two years and this trend looks set to continue. Consequently the income budget will increase from £180,000 for 2018/19 up to £210,000 for 2019/20.

Service	Land Charges
Appendix ref	Lines 429 to 435
Reason for no change	A review of the current levels of fees and the current volume of activity suggests that charges remain appropriate to recover costs as permitted by Government regulation.
Financial impact	The income budget will remain at £140,000.

5. Services where statutory fees and charges apply

- 5.1 The current level of fees and charges will continue to apply until such time as the Council is notified by Government of changes. Such

changes will be implemented in accordance with the relevant statutory notices

5.2

Service	Animal Wardens
Appendix ref	line 108
Financial impact	No budget for 2019/20 is proposed because of the very low levels of income generated from this service

Service	Port Health
Appendix ref	lines 114 to 124
Financial impact	No budget for 2019/20 is proposed because of the very low levels of income generated from this service

Service	Public Health
Appendix ref	lines 126 to 153 excluding lines 127 and 128
Financial impact	The income budget will remain at £4,000.

Service	Development Control
Appendix ref	lines 184 to 201
Financial impact	An upward adjustment to the income budget is required because actual levels of income have exceeded budget over the past two years and this trend looks set to continue. Consequently the income budget will increase from £400,000 for 2018/19 up to £440,000 for 2019/20.

Service	Register of Electors
Appendix ref	lines 437 to 443
Financial impact	The income budget will remain at £1,000.

Service	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
Appendix ref	lines 203 to 207
	The Charging Schedule implemented on 1 December 2015 under The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 remains appropriate and provides the baseline for the levy. CIL regulations require that fees are uplifted annually in line with the change in a national price index. This change is applied each year once the index data becomes available.

6. Charges for the provision of professional services and advice

6.1 The Appendix sets out some specific charges for services offered by planning officers for the pre-application service, by the shared legal service for professional services and, if Cabinet agrees the new charges, by the estate surveyors. These represent the majority of professional services for which a charge is made.

6.2 However, requests are also received from customers for professional advice on other matters where, for example, this sits outside the scope of advice that is a normal part of the delivery of services or where it is for information that is not provided free of charge. Rather than seeking to list each and every eventuality where this may be the case, in principle charges are set to recover the full cost of officer time, related overheads and any disbursements.

7 Commercial Waste

7.1 The current fees for the collection and disposal of commercial trade waste were approved by Cabinet on 6 January 2014.

7.2 This year's review shows that the current charges remain competitive. They need to be so if the Council is to retain its market share. As a consequence no change in the current charges is proposed. However, given the very competitive nature of this business, and the desire to grow the business, it is recommended that the Director of Service Delivery be given delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Waste and Recycling, to vary charges upwards or downwards by up to 10% in order to respond to developing market conditions.

8 Outcome expected and performance management

8.1 The overall net effect from these proposals is to forecast a year on year increase in income of £25,000. This together with an increase in usage of £152,000 produced a total of £177,000. .

8.2 The level of income achieved will be monitored throughout the year, and variances will be reported to Cabinet quarterly.

9 Corporate plan and council policies

9.1 The proposals contained within this report have been prepared in line with the guiding principles set out in the Council's approved Financial Procedure Rules.

10 Financial appraisal

10.1 The forecast medium term financial plan strategy was that income would be up by 3% and that this would contribute an extra £79,000 towards the council's savings target towards the Council's savings target for 2019/20. The proposals in this report exceed that target by £98,000.

10.2 If Cabinet chooses to amend the proposed changes the impact will be reflected in the final budget report to be presented to Cabinet in February.

11 Legal implications

11.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

12 Risk management implications

12.1 The recommendations of this report are not significant in terms of risk. However, there is a possibility that forecast income for demand led services may be adversely affected by economic factors outside of the council's control

13 Equality analysis

13.1 An Equalities and Fairness Impact Assessment has been undertaken and made available to the equality checking group. The assessment indicates that the proposed changes to fees and charges set out in this report are unlikely to have any significant impact on equalities and fairness. All changes are in line with the Guiding Principles for setting fees and charges previously agreed by Cabinet. .

11 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Guiding Principles of setting fees and charges
- Appendix 2 – Fees and Charges proposals 2019/20

12 Background papers

The background papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

- Equalities and Fairness Impact Assessment.