

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>4 February 2021</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Annual Review of Fees and Charges</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Homira Javadi, Chief Finance Officer</b>
<b>Cabinet member:</b>	<b>Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Cabinet Member Holder for Finance and Assets)</b>
<b>Ward(s):</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	<b>To propose the schedule of Fees and Charges to apply from 1 April 2021.</b>
<b>Decision type:</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>
<b>Officer recommendation(s):</b>	<p><b>(1) To approve the scale of Fees and Charges proposed within Appendix 1 to apply from 1 April 2021.</b></p> <p><b>(2) To implement changes to statutory fees and charges for services shown within Appendix 1 as and when notified by Government.</b></p>
<b>Reasons for recommendations:</b>	<b>The Council's Constitution requires that all fees and charges, including nil charges, be reviewed at least annually and agreed by Cabinet.</b>
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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact upon fees and charges income throughout 2020/21. During lockdown many sources of fees and charges income either stopped completely or were drastically cut to minimal levels. However, compensation for loss of income has partially been recompensed by the Government, and will continue to do so until the end of June 2021. Based on this, and taking into account the vaccination programme, budgets have been set based on a return to normality during 2021/22.
- 1.2 Following a systematic review in light of an Audit Commission report entitled 'Positively Charged' Cabinet approved guiding principles for setting fees and charges. A copy is included in Background Papers.

1.3 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 2021.

## 2 Fees and Charges Proposals to apply from 1 April 2021

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.

2.4 Within Appendix 1 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

2.5 In addition Appendix 1 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	Tourism
Appendix ref	lines 71 to 79
Reason for change	Review of fees and charges to cover increase in costs.
Financial impact	Fees and Charges have increased in line with increased costs but these will have limited impact upon the amount of fee income collected therefore the income budget will remain at £18,000.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Building Control</b>
Appendix ref	lines 210 to 234
Reason for change	The new fees will help to ensure Building Control income remains strong for 2021/22 however due to Covid-19 it is difficult to predict levels of construction activity from April onwards.
Financial impact	Income Budget for 2021/22 to remain at £281,500 due to a potential reduction in volume.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Allotments</b>
Appendix ref	lines 324 to 325
Reason for change	An increase of £3 per plot is proposed in order to maintain value.
Financial impact	The income budget has increased slightly to £1,050.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Cemeteries</b>
Appendix ref	lines 327 to 348
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 2021/22 budget will increase to £145,250. An increase of £4,250.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>
Appendix ref	lines 350 to 403
Reason for change	To maintain recovery of a fair share of the costs of providing services.
Financial impact	The 2021/22 budget will become £55,300 an increase of £1,600.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Waste Collection (excluding Commercial Trade Waste)</b>
Appendix ref	lines 405 to 449
Reason for change	Delegated authority was previously given 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.
Financial impact	The 2021/22 budget will become £598,300 an increase of £151,800. The increase is mainly in respect of Green Waste which has seen an increased take up in the service.

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

### 4.1

<b>Service</b>	<b>Car Parks</b>
Appendix ref	lines 1 to 33
Reason for no change	Cabinet agreed the current pricing tariff in January 2018 to apply from 1 April 2018.  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.
Financial impact	The income budget will remain at £1,002,000

<b>Service</b>	<b>Electric Vehicle Chargers</b>
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 income budget will remain at £4,000.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Lewes House</b>
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.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Arts Development</b>
Appendix ref	lines 59 to 69
Reason for no change	Fees and charges have been reviewed and no increases have been proposed
Financial impact	The income budget will remain at £28,000.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Animal Wardens</b>
Appendix ref	lines 81 to 86 (Excluding line 83)
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.
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<b>Service</b>	<b>Public Health</b>
Appendix ref	lines 102 and 103
Reason for no change	Currently not available or 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.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Private Sector Housing</b>
Appendix ref	lines 130 to 208
Reason for no change	Fees will continue to be set in line with officer costs.
Financial impact	The income budget for Houses in Multiple Occupation has been increased to £5,000 for 2021/22. This is due to an increase in volume. The income budget for Mobile Homes will remain at £1,000.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Recycling - Section 106 Developers' Contributions</b>
Appendix ref	lines 261 to 262
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.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Planning Services</b>
Appendix ref	lines 264 to 307
Reason for no change	Officers judge that the current fees remain at the appropriate levels for the services on offer.
Financial impact	Income budget for 2021/22 will remain at £30,000

<b>Service</b>	<b>Street Naming and Numbering</b>
Appendix ref	lines 309 to 322

Reason for no change	Fees and Charges have been reviewed so that they remain appropriate for the services on offer.
Financial impact	The 2021/22 budget will remain at £12,500

<b>Service</b>	<b>Council Tax and Business Rates Summons income</b>
Appendix ref	lines 451 to 454
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	Income budget for 2021/22 will remain at £210,000

<b>Service</b>	<b>Legal Services</b>
Appendix ref	lines 456 to 469
Reason for no change	Maintains recovery of costs and positioning with other local authorities.
Financial impact	Supports the viability of the shared legal service.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Estate Surveyor Services</b>
Appendix ref	lines 471 to 478
Reason for no change	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 income budget will remain at £15,000.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Land Charges</b>
Appendix ref	Lines 480 to 486
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 £125,000.

## 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

<b>Service</b>	<b>Animal Wardens</b>
Appendix ref	line 82
Financial impact	No budget for 2021/22 is proposed because of the very low levels of income generated from this service

<b>Service</b>	<b>Port Health</b>
Appendix ref	lines 88 to 99
Financial impact	Income budget for 2021/22 will remain at £2,000.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Public Health</b>
Appendix ref	lines 101 to 128 (excluding lines 102 and 103)
Financial impact	The income budget will remain at £4,000.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Development Control</b>
Appendix ref	lines 236 to 253
Financial impact	Income budget for 2021/22 will remain at £429,000

<b>Service</b>	<b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</b>
Appendix ref	lines 255 to 259
Financial impact	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.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Register of Electors</b>
Appendix ref	lines 488 to 503
Financial impact	The income budget will increase to £1,500 due to an increase in volume.

## 6 Financial appraisal

6.1 The effect of the proposed increases in fees and charges, which also takes into account variations in demand, is set out at service level below:

Financial impact of:

	2020/21 income estimate £	change in usage £	change in fees £	2021/22 income forecast £
Car Parking	1,002,000	0	0	1,002,000
Electric Vehicle Charges	4,000	0	0	4,000
Lewes House	10,000	0	0	10,000
Arts Development	28,000	0	0	28,000
Tourism	18,000	0	0	18,000
Private Sector Housing	1,000	4,000	0	5,000
Mobile Homes	1,000	0	0	1,000
Building Control	281,500	0	0	281,500
Planning Services	30,000	0	0	30,000
Street Naming and Numbering	12,500	0	0	12,500
Allotments	1,000	0	50	1,050
Cemeteries	141,000	0	4,250	145,250
Parks and Open Spaces	53,700	0	1,600	55,300
Waste Collection	446,500	151,800	0	598,300
Council Tax and Business Rates	210,000	0	0	210,000
Legal Services	24,100	0	0	24,100
Estate Surveyor Services	15,000	0	0	15,000
Land Charges	125,000	0	0	125,000
Register of Electors	1,000	500	0	1,500
<b>Discretionary fees – set by LDC</b>	<b>2,405,300</b>	<b>156,300</b>	<b>5,900</b>	<b>2,567,500</b>
Port Health	2,000	0	0	2,000
Public Health	2,000	0	0	2,000
Development Control	429,000	0	0	429,000
<b>Statutory fees – set by Government</b>	<b>433,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>433,000</b>
<b>6.2 Total income estimates</b>	<b>2,838,300</b>	<b>156,300</b>	<b>5,900</b>	<b>3,000,500</b>

6.3 If Cabinet chooses to amend the proposed charges the impact will be reflected in the final budget report to be presented to Cabinet on 4 February 2021.

The increase in income from usage together with the increase in income from fees will add an additional £162,200 to the income estimates for 2021/22.

## 7 Legal implications

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

## 8 Risk management implications

8.1 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.



## **9 Equality analysis**

- 9.1 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.

## **10 Appendices**

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges proposals 2021/22

## **11 Background papers**

- 11.1 The background papers used in compiling this report were as follows:
- 11.2 [Guiding principles for setting fees and charges](#)
- 11.3 Equalities and Fairness Impact Assessment.