

CABINET

Monday 19th November 2018

CORPORATE FEES AND CHARGES

Report of the Corporate Director – Support Services (CFO)

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet approve all fees and charges in Appendices A to H to come into effect on the dates outlined in the report.

SUMMARY

Fees and Charges for Council services are reviewed on a regular basis. In accordance with the Budget Strategy, fees and charges levied by the Council are being reviewed with the intention of increases being introduced with effect from January 2019 where possible. This report contains the fees and charges for services directly managed by Cabinet. The increases in this report will be budgeted to achieve an additional yield of £185,070 in 2019/20 which is in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Statutory Powers

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972
Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003
Environmental Protection Act 1990

Strategic Implications

1. This report relates to a range of Corporate Plan objectives and the Future Eastleigh principle of operating in a business-like, commercially focussed way. The report reflects the Council's approach to minimise the levels of (compulsory) Council Tax while seeking to cover Council costs from fees and charges from discretionary services. The proposals in many areas promote Health and Wellbeing by setting discounted rates for community or non-commercial groups; they also help Tackle Deprivation by providing discounted rates for individuals experiencing socio-economic deprivation. The report reflects the Council's objective of an Excellent Environment for all in applying the highest possible penalties for environmental offences such as littering, flyposting and graffiti.

Introduction

2. The purpose of this report is to outline proposed changes to corporate fees and charges levied for services by the Council and approved by Cabinet. A minimum increase in yield of 3.5% for all fees and charges should be implemented from January 2019 where possible.
3. Service Managers consider their fees and charges in the context of service development in addition to recognising the Council's policy to generate additional funds by way of maximising the yield from all income sources.
4. There are other fees and charges within the Council's Budget to which an inflationary increase cannot apply. These income streams are mainly grants or related to contracts and therefore cannot be increased to raise further income.

Budget Devolution

5. Members should note that following Cabinet approval in September 2012, the following services are devolved to Local Area Committees and therefore the fees and charges for these areas are now set by those Committees:
 - Car Parking;
 - Cemeteries;
 - Itchen Valley and Lakeside Country Parks;
 - Outdoor sports facilities;
 - Allotments.
6. Local Area Committees have the discretion to set fees for services devolved to their areas subject to compliance with the corporate target to generate an additional minimum yield from fees and charges of 3.5%.

Services Managed Directly by Cabinet

7. There are a number of services that are managed by Cabinet these services are listed below with their respective appendix references.

Appendix	Description
A	Arts and Culture
B	Direct Services
C	Health and Wellbeing
D	Housing and Development
E	Environment
F	Economic Development
G	Property Services
H	Strategy

Arts and Culture (Appendix A)

8. Arts and Culture are recommending new fees for Community Hire. These charges have been reviewed in year and the proposed increases will be in line with other market providers. All other fees and charges have been amended accordingly, based on what is considered an acceptable level for our client base. The overall fees and charges for Cultural Services will generate additional yield of £18,390.

Direct Services (Appendix B)

9. The overall fees increase for Direct Services will generate an additional £90,650 in yield. The significant increases for Members to note are detailed in the paragraphs below.
10. Garden Waste Service: The Direct Services Manager has reviewed the fees and charges for this service and is recommending that the charges are increased. The increase would generate an additional income of £24,070.
11. Trade waste charges: The increased yield across the whole trade waste service will provide a minimum of 3.5%, with anticipated yield of £30,940. However increases of individual contract charges do vary across the existing customer base dependant on the value of the contract and the existing yield which contract delivers.
12. Pest control for business premises: The Direct Services Manager has completed a market testing exercise which will allow the fees to be more aligned to competitors. New fees will generate a yield of £2,450.
13. Additional black waste sacks not contained within the 1100 litre bin have increased fees. The fee reflects a movement to reduce residual waste in the Borough and encourage residents to recycle.
14. All other fees and charges in Direct Services are in line with the recommended 3.5%.

Health and Wellbeing (Appendix C)

15. Health and Wellbeing: It is recommended to retain the fees for Houses in Multiple occupations at the same rate, however activity has increased significantly which will generate an additional yield of £37,040.

Housing and Development (Appendix D)

16. The overall fees increase for Housing and Development will generate an additional £33,530. Two increases to note are:
 - proposed increase in pre-application meeting charges for large minor and change of use applications from £100 to £150 for additional meetings held;
 - Land charges official searches have increase to reflect increase in cost of Hampshire County Council charges. This will generate a yield of £7,420.

All other fees and charges in Housing and Development are in line with the recommended 3.5%.

Environment (Appendix E)

17. The majority of the Environment charges are for statutory Services. Other fees and charges have generally been increased by the 3.5% and it is anticipated that in total the service will generate an income yield in line with the corporate target.
18. Collection of Stray dogs: A new fee for introducing an administration charge for Kennelling has been recommended. This will enable the cost of providing the service to be recovered.
19. Members will be aware that the administration of the Taxi & Hackney Carriage Licensing Service transferred to Southampton County Council. The service is a ring-fenced service and is required to break-even. A review of the Fees and Charges will take place in 2019/20.
20. A new fee is proposed for road closures for public events and related second applications. A new category of offer for charities and community organisations is recommended to enable the booking of a whole series of events for the year.
21. Disabled Bay Applications: The Council receives a considerable number of requests with a high dropout rate as applicants are not eligible for various reasons. The introduction of a charge would help to compensate for the time spent dealing with applications and assessing their eligibility. If the applicant is eligible the charge would not be made in order to encourage considered applications thus reducing abortive costs.
22. The Environmental Lead Specialist has reviewed all Animal Welfare charges in line with new DEFRA guidelines. This has enabled costs of delivering the service to be recovered appropriately.
23. Street Naming and Numbering is introducing a new set of charges. These fees are currently charged by other local authorities in Hampshire but previously Eastleigh has not charged. These charges are the same as those charged in neighbouring councils.

Economic Development (Appendix F)

24. The overall fees increase for Economy will generate an additional £5,460 in yield. Significant changes are detailed in the paragraphs below.
25. Food Safety/ Health & Safety fees have increased on average by 4.5%, generating a yield of £1,960. There are, however, additional fee-paying services that other Local Authorities provide to their partners and one of these is an introductory audit which EBC now proposes to offer for a one-off fee of £250. It is anticipated this new fee will generate a yield of £1,000.

26. Food Premises: A new charge for a food premise rescore is proposed. This is a charge levied by many other local authorities and our proposed charge of £150 is in line with other local authorities. It is in the interests of food establishments to obtain a maximum “score on the door” of 5 since their livelihood depends upon custom. Most premises that receive any score below a 4 will ask for a rescore and the Council estimates that this will generate a yield of £2,500.

Property Services (Appendix G)

27. The Property Services fees are driven by that which is deemed to be reasonable in the market. It is anticipated that the fees will achieve the 3.5% increase in yield.

Strategy (Appendix H)

28. Strategy fees and charges are anticipated to achieve the 3.5% increase in yield.

Risk Management

29. There is always a risk that proposed charges will not yield the overall anticipated 3.5% additional income target for the Budget. The impact of simply increasing the fees and charges needs to be balanced against the impact on demand and this will be monitored closely during the quarterly Corporate Financial Monitoring processes throughout the year.

Equality and Diversity Implications

30. Any service equality and diversity implications will have been considered by functional leads as part of their Service Planning processes. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with this report which simply presents a summary of Cabinet controlled fees and charges for the Council.

Conclusion

31. The Council undertakes an annual review of all fees and charges. Where possible the review reflects the Budget requirement to achieve a 3.5% increase in yield. The above increases will be budgeted to achieve an additional yield of £185,070 in 2019/20. Where possible fees and charges have been increased with effect from January 2019.

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Report No:

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Appendices: 8

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – SECTION 100D

The following is a list of documents which disclose facts or matters on which this report or an important part of it is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. This list does not include any published works or documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information:

None.