

CABINET

15 NOVEMBER 2019

CORPORATE FEES AND CHARGES

Report of the Corporate Director – Support Services (CFO)

Recommendation

For Cabinet:

It is recommended that Cabinet

- 1) approves all proposed fees and charges in Appendices 1 to 9 to come into effect on the dates outlined in the report.**

- 2) approve that the town centre car parking charges should remain unchanged for 2020/21**

And recommend that Administration Committee approve:

- 3) the Taxi and Hackney Carriage Licensing fees and charges**

Summary

Fees and Charges for Council services are reviewed on a regular basis. In accordance with the Budget Plan, fees and charges levied by the Council are being reviewed with the intention of increases being introduced, where possible, with effect from January 2020. 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 £114,160 in 2020/2021 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

Strategic Implications

1. This report relates to a range of Corporate Plan objectives and the Council's 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 3.0% for all fees and charges should be implemented, where possible, from January 2020.
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. Councillors 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 3.0%.

Services Managed Directly by Cabinet

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

Appendix	Description
1	Arts and Culture
2	Direct Services
3	Health and Wellbeing
4	Housing and Development
5	Environment
6	Economy
7	Support Services
8	Strategy
9	Local Operations

Arts and Culture (Appendix 1)

8. Arts and Culture staff have reviewed the fees and charges and the proposed increases will be in line with other market providers. All other fees and charges have been amended based on what is considered an acceptable level for our client base. The community theatre hire increases have been kept to a minimum following the operational changes last year which brought charges into line to reflect actual costs of services and support provided. The overall fees and charges for Cultural Services are expected to generate additional yield of £8,950.

Direct Services (Appendix 2)

9. The overall fees increase for Direct Services are expected to generate an additional £55,580. The significant changes for Councillors to note are detailed in the following paragraphs.
10. Garden Waste Service: The Head of Direct Services has reviewed the fees and charges for this service and recommends that the charges are increased. The increase would generate an additional income of £22,050.
11. Trade waste: Increases of individual contract charges do vary across the existing customer base dependent on the value of the contract and the

existing yield which the contract delivers. In total, trade waste charges are expected to provide an additional increased yield of £26,450 which equates to 3%.

12. Vehicle Workshop: The Head of Direct Services has reduced the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Certificate of compliance from £56.00 to £49.00 to encourage the increased use of Council's services. Any shortfall in the yield will be funded from the earmarked reserve.
13. Gardening Scheme: It is proposed that the gardening scheme fees are increased from £268.80 to £278.40 per annum; this will cover the cost of 16 visits per annum per customer.
14. All other proposed fees and charges in Direct Services are in line with the recommended yield increase of 3.0%.

Health and Wellbeing (Appendix 3)

15. The operator of Places Leisure Eastleigh (Places for People) and Council Staff have reviewed the charges for January 2020 onwards. The proposed Council target of an additional 3% yield has been taken into consideration. Other factors such as usage trends, operational costs, recent investments, competitors' pricing policies and the customer's ability to pay have also been taken into account.
16. It is proposed that the annual membership fee is frozen for 2020, due to a 3.4% increase the previous year, combined with market research which shows the price set for 2020 is competitive with other leisure centres in close proximity to Eastleigh. The casual use of the centre has increased by 2.53% this year. The Passport to Leisure scheme gives those families in most need a discount, in order to access the facilities at Places Leisure Eastleigh. Furthermore, the Council will be working closely with Places Leisure Eastleigh to ensure greater outreach and support is provided to residents to encourage inclusive access to leisure provision at Places Leisure Eastleigh.
17. Proposals were presented to the Place Leisure Eastleigh Consultative Group on the 8 October 2019 and proposed charges were approved by this Group.
18. The Head of Health and Wellbeing does not propose to increase the fees and charges at The Hub as these were last increased in May 2019.

Housing and Development (Appendix 4)

19. The overall fees increase for Housing and Development will generate an additional £33,660. One increase to note is the fee for Land Charges Commons Registration where after comparison with other Local Authorities, including Hampshire County Council, the Head of Housing and Development is proposing to increase the fees from £24.64 to £30.00 (22%).

20. All other fees and charges changes in Housing and Development are in line with the corporate target of 3%.

Environment (Appendix 5)

21. The majority of the charges are for statutory services which customers are at discretion to request. Other fees and charges have generally been increased by 3.0% and it is anticipated that in total the service will generate an income yield in line with the corporate target.
22. Councillors will be aware that the administration of the Taxi and Hackney Carriage Licensing Service transferred to Southampton County Council in 2016. The service is a ring-fenced service and is required to break-even. The proposed Fees and Charges will be presented to the Administration Committee on 3rd February 2020. Eastleigh Borough Council is required to review Disabled Parking Places on an annual basis to ensure any bay which are no longer needed are removed thereby releasing the on road parking space for general use.
23. The review is undertaken by contacting the disabled user for whom the bay was installed, on occasions the renewal letter is not responded to so a reminder is sent, if there is still no answer a member of staff calls on the address, and if no one is at home, a contact slip requesting the occupier gets in touch to confirm either way is left. If there is still no contact the bay is removed. If after this process the original applicant requests the bay is replaced the proposed charge is made for the replacement process.
24. The Environmental Lead Specialist has reviewed all Animal Welfare charges in line with new guidelines issued by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This will enable the costs of delivering the service to be recovered appropriately.
25. Collection of Stray Dogs: There is no proposal to increase fees as the kennelling contract is due to be reviewed in the coming months and therefore the fees will be presented to Cabinet at a later date.

Economy (Appendix 6)

26. The overall fees increases for Economy are expected to generate an additional £3,500 in yield. The Head of Economy and Business is proposing just over a 3% increase on Primary Authority charges and removing the audit fee. The Service will introduce new charges in 2021 in consultation with its Primary Authority Partners.

Support Services (Appendix 7)

27. The Asset Management Service fees are driven by what is deemed to be reasonable in the market. Legal advice is being sought on appropriate

charges for restrictive covenant applications in respect of former council houses and whilst this is awaited staffs have simplified our procedures and have reduced our fee accordingly in respect of such applications. However it is anticipated that the fees overall will achieve the 3.0% increase in yield.

Strategy (Appendix 8)

28. Strategy fees and charges are anticipated to achieve the 3.0% increase in yield although the regulations have changed for elections and the Council can no longer charge for letters confirming register entry.

Local Operations (Appendix 9)

29. The Local Response Team currently undertake the deployment of the Speed Limit Reminders (SLR)\Speed Indicator Device (SID) for the Local Area Committees. The Local Operations and Parking Manager is hoping to start deploying these for the Parish Councils at £75.00 per deployment. It is anticipated that this will generate an additional yield of £1,500 per annum.

Eastleigh Town Centre Car Parking

30. The corporate recommendation from the Local Operations and Parking Manager supported by the Car Parking Working Group is for the car parking fees and charges should remain unchanged for 2020/21 in order to continue to encourage visitors to the town centre.

Risk Assessment

31. There is always a risk that proposed charges will not yield the overall anticipated 3.0% additional income target for the Budget. The impact of changing the fees and charges needs to be balanced against the impact on demand, giving rise to changes in overall yield; this will be monitored closely during the quarterly Corporate Performance and Financial Monitoring processes throughout the year.

Financial Implications

32. The approval of this report meets the objective of the Medium Term Financial Plan and result in additional yield of £114,160 in 2020/2021.

Equality and Diversity Implications

33. 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.

Climate and Environmental Implications

33. The proposals in this report are unlikely to lead to any significant changes to Council or area wide Greenhouse Gas/CO₂, or damage ecology or the environment. Specifically changes to parking and garden waste fee levels are not expected to lead to significant service changes. The report does not include activities that relate to environmental resilience or adaptation to the changing climate

Conclusion

34. The Council undertakes an annual review of all fees and charges. Where possible, the review reflects the Council's Budget requirement to achieve an increase of 3.0% in yield. The above increases will be budgeted to achieve an additional yield of £114,160 in 2020/2021. Where possible, the fees and charges will be increased with effect from January 2020.

SARAH KING

Corporate Director – Support Services (Chief Financial Officer)

Date: 18 October 2019
Contact Officer: Mandy Nellthorpe
Tel No: 02380 688082
e-mail: mandy.nellthorpe@eastleigh.gov.uk
Appendices Attached: 9

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