

REPORT OF Strategic Manager (Resources)

To: Community and Resources Committee

Subject: Miscellaneous Fees & Charges

Date: 14 January 2019

Reference:

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To review the level of miscellaneous fees and charges.

1. INTRODUCTION

Fees and charges contribute towards the cost of providing services. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) assumes that charges will rise across income budgets where appropriate. The amount of income raised will affect the level of expenditure savings required to deliver a balanced budget. Managers have reviewed the current charges and suggested charges from 1 April 2019.

2. REPORT

This Council receives circa £4.5m per annum from fees and charges for services. Some fees are prescribed by statute but others can be set at the discretion of the Council, (although there may be limitations imposed on the level of some fees charged). The income received reduces the cost of services to be met from council tax. The level of fee set should be based on criteria such as;

- To recover costs
- To influence behaviour
- The ability to pay
- What the market will bear
- To compete with the private sector

Fees may be set based on more than one criterion.

Car Parking fees are the subject of a separate report, which was reviewed by the Community and Resources Committee on 26th November 2018.

Attached at Appendix 1 is a list of the current and proposed fees. All charges which are in our control have been reviewed and charge increases applied where appropriate, apart from North Devon Joint Crematorium (these are set separately by the Joint Committee scheduled for the 15th February 2019).

As requested, there is an additional column which states whether the charges are set by Statute (S), or are at our discretion (D). Some of the charges which are set by ourselves can only represent a reclaim of costs (For example Street Naming and Numbering), or the service as a whole cannot be making a profit (For example Land Charges), additionally some charges are discretionary up to a statutory maximum, where this maximum has been reached this is indicated by (M) where this maximum has not been reached it is indicated by (N).



A summary of significant changes are below

Cemeteries

Torrige residents receive a 50% discount on a range of Interment and Burial Fee's. Previously fee's were displayed at the Torrige Residents rate with and explanatory note that non-residents would pay a 100% surcharge, however this resulted in the situation where non-residents received higher than realised bills at a difficult time. Fee's have therefore been re-stated to show the full fee, with an explanatory note that Torrige Residents will receive a 50% discount on this fee

Exclusive Rights of Burial for under 16s are now free, in line with interment fee's

Licensing

Under current legislation, the Council is unable to issue casino licenses – Therefore these have been removed.

In order to comply with The Animal Welfare Regulations 2018, introduced on the 1st of October, the structure and level of fees have changed. Fee's are now separated into a separate Application and Grant Fee's (for the sake of consistency, this approach has been adopted in other areas).

Application fees are payable at the time of making an application, and are not refundable if the application is subsequently refused. Grant fees do not have to be paid until a license is ready to be issued. The transfer of licenses is no longer allowed.

Environmental Health & Public Protection Charges

New fees for Fly Tipping, Littering and Littering from a Vehicle where approved at C&R in November 2018

Sampling and Analysis of Private Water Supplies fees have been revised following reassessment of officer time and customer up-take.

Housing

There has been a simplification of the Notices Fee structure.

Waste Management Services

The annual collection fee for Green Waste will remain the same to encourage take up.



3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

Some fees are set by statute or have limitations on how they can be determined and this has been reflected in the proposed fees and charges.

Financial Implications

The additional income raised from any increase in fees and charges counts towards the savings required to balance the 2019/20 budget.

Human Resources Implications

There are no specific human resources implications.

Sustainability Implications

There are no specific sustainability implications.

Equality/Diversity

Some fees and charges have concessionary rates. The committee should consider the impact that the charges may have.

Risk Management

In proposing fees and charges regard has been had to the impact of the fee level.

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

Fees and charges are set within current policies.

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

There are no GDPR implications regarding the publication of the Fee's and Charges. The relevant providers will be responsible for ensuring that supplies of goods and services are made in compliance with GDPR.

Ward Member and Leader Member Views

Date of Consultation – 17/12/2018

Councillor Hurley –

The annual setting of fees and charges is a key component of the Councils budget setting process. Care is taken to ensure charges are only increased in line with either statutory control and/or with regard to the criteria listed in Section 2. I am happy that where changes have taken place they appear fair and justified and I support this report.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The MTFs assumes that there will be an increase in income from fees and charges. Managers have considered the impact on their services in proposing fees and charges for the next financial year.



5. RECOMMENDATION

That the committee consider and agree charges for services to be effective from 1 April 2019.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations:	Date of Consultation – 17/12/2018 Officers Consulted: - Head of Paid Service Strategic Manager (Resources) Senior Solicitor Senior and Operational Managers for the relevant service
Contact Officer:	Gwydion Batten – Accountancy Assistant
Background Papers:	Fees and charges information held in the Accountancy Section at Riverbank House.

