

REPORT OF Strategic Manager (Resources)

To: Community and Resources Committee

Subject: Miscellaneous Fees & Charges

Date: 20th January 2020

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 2020.

2. REPORT

This Council receives circa £6.1m per annum from fees and charges for services (note 3 of Financial Statements). 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;

- Inflation
- To recover costs
- To influence behaviour
- The ability to pay
- What the market will bear
- Whether or not to compete with the private sector

Fees may be set and or, based on more than one criterion.

Although shown within the Fees and Charges booklet, Car Parking and North Devon Joint Crematorium and Harbour charges are not considered within this report as they are set separately by different approval arrangements.

The Statutory/Discretionary column sets out whether the charges are set by Statute (S), or are at our discretion (D). Some discretionary charges can only represent a reclamation 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).

A summary of significant changes are below

There are few significant changes proposed for 20/21 most fees have been only adjusted for inflation and reviews of officer time and related cost recovery, including factoring in pay awards.

Licensing

The introduction of several new licence charges established as allowed under legislation.



Animal Activity Licences reviewed for costs as some were set too low last year.

Environmental Health & Public Protection Charges

20/21 Control of stray dogs fees have been reviewed for officer time and are now split out to identify the individual components rather than shown as a lump sum per night. The 19/20 fee has been split out for comparative purposes and consistency.

Northam Burrows

Introduction of a fee for supplying Duplicate/Replacement season tickets in line with other car parks.

Housing

Hostel Service charges have been reviewed for electric to room and laundry facility costs.

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 2020/21 budget.

Human Resources Implications

There are no specific human resources implications.

Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

There are no specific sustainability/biodiversity 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 – 20/12/2019

Councillor Hodson –

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 2020.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations:	Date of Consultation – 20/12/2019 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.

