

Agenda Item

REPORT OF Section 151 Officer

To: Community and Resources Committee

Subject: Miscellaneous Fees & Charges

Date: 30th January 2023

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 2023.

2. REPORT

This Council receives circa £7.2m per annum from fees and charges for services. The income received from Fees & Charges 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.

Some fees are not subject to approval, as they are prescribed by statute (e.g. Planning Applications), but others can be set at the discretion of the Council (e.g. Beach Huts).

Some discretionary charges can only represent a reclamation of costs (e.g. Street Naming and Numbering), or the service as a whole cannot be making a profit (e.g. Land Charges), additionally some charges, such as certain licenses and Fixed Penalty Notices are discretionary but may have a statutory minimum and maximum level.

Included within the appendix are discretionary fee's which require approval for 2023/24. The full summarised Fees and Charges, including statutory charges and those subject to separate approval arrangements are available at www.torridge.gov.uk/article/20057/Fees-Charges

Brief notes have been included on each page outlining the main drivers behind any changes (or lack thereof). Unsurprisingly, Inflationary pressures have been a significant factor, with CPI hitting 11.1% in October 22 compared with 4.2% at the same period last year.



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 2023/24 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 paid 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 Fees 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 – 18/01/2023

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 2023.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations:	Date of Consultation – 17/01/2023 Officers Consulted: - Chief Executive Section 151 Officer Senior Solicitor Head of Communities and Place Senior and Operational Managers for the relevant service
Contact Officer:	Gwydion Batten – Senior Collection Fund Accountant.
Background Papers:	Fees and charges information held in the Accountancy Section at Riverbank House.

