

Environment and Safe Communities  
Committee  
29 January 2019

**FEES AND CHARGES 2019/20**

<b>Head of Service/Contact:</b>	Lee Duffy, Chief Finance Officer
<b>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</b>	No
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	N/A
<b>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</b>	<b>Annex 1</b> - Committee Fees & Charges 2019/20 <b>Annex 2</b> - Car Park Fees & Charges agreed on 23 October 2018 <b>Annex 3</b> - Trade Refuse & Recycling Charges 2019/20 (exempt from publication)
<b>Other available papers (not attached):</b>	Estimates Report 2019/20 Budget Report 2019/20 Report and Minutes of Environment & Safe Communities Committee 23 October 2018 (Car Park Fees & Charges 2019/20)

**Report summary**

This report recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2019.

**Recommendation (s)**

That subject to the approval of Council, the Committee:

- (1) **Agrees the fees and charges for 2019/20 as set out at Annex 1 and Annex 3;**
- (2) **Notes the parking fees and charges agreed by this Committee on 23 October 2018 as set out in Annex 2.**

**1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy**

- 1.1 As set out in the revenue estimates report on this agenda.

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## 2 Background

- 2.1 The Council will meet to agree the budget, including estimates of income and expenditure, on 19 February 2019. To enable the budget to be finalised, the Policy Committees are being asked to recommend fees and charges covering the services for which they are responsible.
- 2.2 The fees and charges presented in this report are discretionary charges only. For discretionary charges there is scope to generate additional income, to reduce the subsidy of the service or to contribute to an improved budget position.
- 2.3 There are a number of charges that are set externally of which the Council has no control or power to alter. This restricts the Council's ability to raise additional income and therefore the fees and charges set by statute are not presented to this Committee for approval.
- 2.4 The budget guidelines agreed by Strategy and Resources included an overall increase in revenue from discretionary fees and charges of 3%. The guidelines also anticipate that additional income may be generated to contribute to the required savings target.
- 2.5 When preparing estimates, fees and charges have been reviewed by service managers and any negative impact on demand anticipated by increased charges has been considered.
- 2.6 Members should refer to the estimates report on this agenda for an overview of the Committee's budget position.
- 2.7 In January 2018 the Committee confirmed that the Chief Finance Officer should have delegated authority to vary fees and charges for items generating income under £1,000 per annum and be permitted to set charges for one off services or items not included in the fees and charges schedule under delegated authority.

## 3 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 are set out at **Annex 1** to this report. The main variations in fees and charges for each service area outside the range of an increase between 3% to 5% are set out below:

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## 3.1.1 Car Parks

A separate report was submitted to Environment Committee on 23 October 2018, seeking agreement for car park permit increases and a freeze of car park fees for 2019/20. The Committee agreed in principle the fees that were set out in the report. The car park fees and charges in this report remain unchanged, and **Annexe 2** details those charges which the Committee agreed to change in October 2018.

## 3.1.2 Refuse Collection

**Garden Waste:** Income from garden waste has historically derived from a combination of subscription payments and recycling credits paid by Surrey County Council (SCC), previously at £23.05 per tonne for 2017/18. SCC advised that from 2018/19 it will start to remove garden waste recycling credits over three years as a cost-saving measure. The proposed 2019/20 garden waste fees therefore reflect a 3% inflationary element plus the forecast effect of SCC's cost-saving action in 2019/20.

## 3.1.3 Development & Building Control

**Pre-application and Planning Performance Agreements:** these fees have been reviewed in light of the requirement to deliver a significant increase in the amount of housing units within the borough each year and also the increased capacity, stability and ability of the Planning Team to provide more time and a higher quality level of service and advice than previously. Fees were benchmarked against the 10 other Surrey Local Authorities and 6 London Boroughs.

Following the benchmarking, pre-application fees have been rationalised and one residential and one commercial band has been split in two, along with the removal of just a note and no meeting option for minor and major applications and the removal of meetings for householder and small retail applications. In addition, all fees have been increased to bring them more in line with the London Authorities on the borough's boundary and also to reflect the service level and officer time that EEBC can now provide.

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**Self-Build & Custom Housebuilding Register:** the Self Build Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 requires that all Local Planning Authorities keep a register of individuals who are looking to acquire serviced plots of land within the authority's area for their own self-build. Epsom and Ewell has been running the register for nearly 3 years. Since the end of 2017 all Local Planning Authorities are required to also submit an annual return of the number of individuals or groups on their registers to MHCLG (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government). Preparing this return has a resource implication that corresponds to the administrative work involved.

As a consequence many Local Planning authorities have introduced a charge to cover this resource cost and it is recommended that the Borough Council do likewise. Having examined fees charged by neighbouring authorities it is recommended that the fee to enter onto our register be set at £30.00 (per household) and a further £15.00 annual fee be charged to remain on the register. No income budget has been set as current numbers are not significant.

### 3.1.4 Licensing & Environmental Health

Licensing Fees have been reviewed with most being increased by 3 to 5%. It is proposed that there is no increase for private hire and Hackney Carriage licensing fees this year as the trade has been significantly impacted due to factors such as the Plan E Highways Improvement works. It is anticipated that the budget will be attained due to expected additional school run driver income, but increasing the fees again may well lose income/business.

Acupuncture, ear-piercing and electrolysis and tattooing licensing fees have increased in excess of 3-5% to more accurately reflect the cost of administration and inspection of the licensing regimes.

## 4 Financial and Manpower Implications

4.1 The impact of the proposed fees and charges for services in 2018/19 is set out below.

	Increase in Income Budget Target (3%) £'000	Total Increase or (Decrease) due to changes to Tariffs £'000	Variations resulting from changes to volumes	Variation between Target and total change £'000
Car Parks	115	8	0	(107)
Refuse Collection	34	59	97	122

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Markets	3	3	0	0
Development & Building Control	11	15	16	20
Cemetery	14	7	7	0
Licensing & Environmental Health	6	6	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>35</b>

4.1 The charges proposed will generate an additional estimated income of £218k. This has been taken into account in the budget to be presented to the Council next month.

4.2 The change of charges and volumes have resulted in the Environment and Safe Committee being £35,000 favourable to the targeted budgeted income from fees and charges for 2019/20. This is mainly attributable to increased income budgets within Refuse Collection, the largest of which is for Trade Waste which is undergoing service transformation with the launch of Business Bins. Development Management is also contributing to the favourable variance with an increased budget for Planning Performance Agreements to be launched in the new year. These are partially offset by the adverse variance in car parks following the decision by the Committee in October 2018 to hold car park fees at 2018/19 rates for 2019/20.

4.3 The revised level of income has been included in the medium term financial strategy to help towards a balanced budget over its 4 years life. A detailed breakdown of the 2019/20 budget can be found in the budget report included on this agenda.

4.4 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** all financial implications are included within this report.

## 5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

5.1 There are no specific issues arising from this report but the Council's resources will need to be applied to ensure that it fulfils its statutory obligations and delivers its policy on equalities.

5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** as above

## 6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## 7 Partnerships

7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

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**8 Risk Assessment**

- 8.1 Income from services remains at risk due to the state of the economy. Charges have been set taking into account market conditions.
- 8.2 The continued delivery of Council services is dependent upon income generation, creating a risk to service delivery if charges are not set at levels that make a significant contribution to the Council's finances.

**9 Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 9.1 This report proposes new fees and charges for services with effect from 1 April 2019.
- 9.2 The impact of changes in fees and charges has been estimated and incorporated in the Committee's budget estimates 2019/20. If lower charges are agreed the Committee will be required to identify cost savings to enable the Council to meet its overall budget target.

**Ward(s) affected:** (All Wards);