

## FEES AND CHARGES 2021/22

<b>Head of Service:</b>	Lee Duffy, Chief Finance Officer
<b>Wards affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</b>	No
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	N/A
<b>Appendices (attached):</b>	Appendix 1 – Committee Fees and Charges 2021/22 Appendix 2 – Car Park Permit Fees 2021/22 Appendix 3 – Pre-app and PPA Fees 2021/22 Appendix 4 - Building Control Fees 2021/22 Appendix 5 – Trade Refuse & Recycling Charges 2021/22 (exempt from publication)

### Summary

This report recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2021.

### Recommendation (s)

#### The Committee is asked to:

- (1) authorise the Chief Finance Officer to vary fees and charges for items generating income under £1,000 per annum and/or for one-off services or items;

#### And, subject to the approval of Council:

- (2) agree the fees and charges for 2021/22 as set out at Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5;
- (3) agree the Development Management Fees as set out in Appendix 3 take effect from 1 February 2021.

## 1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To agree the fees and charges for the Environment and Safe Communities Committee for 2021/22 and agree that the new fees set out in Appendix 3 come into effect from 1 February 2021.

## 2 Background

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- 2.1 The Council will meet to agree the budget, including estimates of income and expenditure, on 16 February 2021. To enable the budget to be finalised, the Policy Committees are asked to recommend fees and charges covering the services for which they are responsible.
- 2.2 The current pandemic and economic climate creates uncertainty and difficulties for budget setting. For consistency the assumptions in the Medium Term Financial Plan have been applied to budget targets, including the annual uplift to fees and charges.
- 2.3 Should income shortfalls occur as a result of Covid-19 in 2021/22, the draft budget includes a £950,000 central provision to mitigate such losses. Furthermore, MHCLG have announced that its Sales, Fees and Charges Income Support Scheme will continue to June 2021. Under this scheme, central government provides Councils with compensation to cover a proportion (circa 71%) of budgeted net income shortfalls caused by Covid-19.
- 2.4 The budget guidelines agreed by Strategy and Resources in September 2020 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 The fees and charges presented in this report are discretionary charges only. For discretionary charges there is scope to generate additional income, to reduce any subsidy of the service or to contribute to an improved budget position.
- 2.6 There are a number of charges set externally that the Council has no 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.
- 2.7 In January 2019, the Committee agreed not to raise car parking fees in April 2019, but implemented a 6% increase in April 2020. The Car Park working group therefore agreed that car parking fees should remain at April 2020 rates, with the assumption that they will be increased by 6% in April 2021. Car Park permit fees have continued to receive an approximate 3% increase each year.
- 2.8 When preparing budget estimates, fees and charges have been reviewed by service managers and any negative impact on demand anticipated by increased charges has been considered.
- 2.9 Members should refer to the revenue budget report on this agenda for an overview of the Committee's budget position.

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- 2.10 In January 2018, to reflect changes to the Council's management structure, the Committee agreed that the Chief Finance Officer should have delegated authority to vary fees and charges for items generating income under £1,000 per annum. The Committee also agreed that this officer be permitted under delegated authority to set charges for one off services or items not included in the fees and charges schedule.

### 3 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 are set out at **Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5** to this report. The main variations in fees and charges for each service area outside the range of an increase between 3% and 5% are set out below:

#### 3.1.1 Car Parks

The Car Park Working group met at the end of November 2020 to discuss car park charges for 2021/22. The proposed increase for permit prices were agreed and are set out in Appendix 2.

The Car Park Working Group did not propose any increases to the daily car park charges for 2021-22. Many of the daily car parking tariffs were amended in April 2020 and set at a level which was expected to remain static for two years. There is therefore no expectation that these would increase for the coming year. The impact of Covid-19 on car park use was also taken into consideration as a reason not to increase the daily charges at the present time.

#### 3.1.2 Refuse Collection

Trade Waste fees are considered commercially sensitive and therefore set out in a separate Appendix 5 which is exempt from publication. Trade Waste fees within annual charge type 3 have seen a higher increase due to a review of these charges highlighting that the cost of providing the service was higher than the fee being charged. The increase brings these fees in line with cost of providing the service.

#### 3.1.3 Building Control

Building control fees have historically been agreed under delegated decision and set out in a separate template. The proposal is to increase current fees by 3% for approval by this Committee, and these fees are set out in a separate Appendix 4.

#### 3.1.4 Development Control

Pre-application and Planning Performance Agreement fees were not increased for 2020/21 due to a review having taken place the year before. The current Interim Head of Planning has undertaken a further review, factoring in fees being charged in bordering boroughs, and an assessment of officer time involved in providing these services.

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The resulting proposed charges are detailed in Appendix 3 and are recommended to be implemented ahead of the new financial year, in order that the service can ensure full recovery of the cost of officer time in providing these services. The proposal therefore is that these new charges come into effect on 1 February 2021.

In addition to reviewing the level of fees, an amended fee structure has been introduced based on the developments being considered. Also, for the largest of developments, a price on application method is proposed, as the variety of development mean the resources required to undertake the work can vary substantially.

In order to determine a price for these services, an officer hourly rate schedule has been produced and the proposed charge will be determined by assessing the estimated officer time required, multiplying by the hourly rate and adding 20% on-costs to the sum. This figure will then be rounded to the nearest £100.

### **3.1.5 Environmental Health**

In October 2020, the external Pest Control contract expired. The rates set 4 years previously had been very competitive and consequently were no longer sustainable. The contract had been due to be retendered earlier in 2020, but due to the Covid pandemic diverting officer resources, this exercise was unable to proceed. Consequently the existing contract was extended for 12 months but a new fee structure was agreed, as the previous fees were not viable for the supplier.

Pest Control fees are delegated to the Chair of Environment and Safe Communities Committee, who agreed the new fees which came into effect in October 2020. These fees have therefore remained at this new level for the 2021/22 year, but the new rate is expected to achieve the budgeted increase in income.

## **4 Risk Assessment**

Legal or other duties

### **4.1 Impact Assessment**

4.1.1 Increased fees and charges could have a negative effect on take up for some service areas. Managers have been asked to apply realistic increases to avoid this.

4.1.2 The return of customers to facilities re-opening following closure during the pandemic may be gradual. This could result in reduced revenue from fees and charges initially, although mitigations for this are outlined at paragraph 2.3.

### **4.2 Crime & Disorder**

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4.2.1 None for the purposes of this report.

### 4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 None for the purposes of this report.

### 4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

### 4.5 Other

4.5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## 5 Financial Implications

5.1 The impact of the proposed fees and charges for services in 2021/22 is set out below:

	<b>Increase in income budget target</b>	<b>Total increase or (decrease) due to changes to tariffs</b>	<b>Variations resulting from changes to volumes</b>	<b>Variation between target and total change</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Car Parks	123	6	115	(2)
Refuse Collection	39	44	(17)	(12)
Markets	3	0	(4)	(7)
Building Control	9	9	0	0
Development Control	4	44	0	40
Cemetery	14	14	20	20
Licensing & Environmental Health	7	15	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>47</b>

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- 5.1 The charges proposed will generate an additional estimated income of £246k. This has been taken into account in the budget to be presented to the Council next month.
- 5.2 Overall, the effect of increased charges, combined with the anticipated change in volumes is that Environment & Safe Communities Committee income budgets are higher than the targeted budgeted income from fees and charges for 2021/22 by £47k.
- 5.3 The revised level of income has been included in the medium term financial strategy to contribute towards a balanced budget over the next four years. A detailed breakdown of the 2021/22 budget can be found in the budget report included on this agenda.
- 5.4 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** all financial implications are included within this report.

### 6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none for the purposes of this report.

### 7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: Effective Council.
- 7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** none for the purposes of this report.
- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** none for the purposes of this report.
- 7.5 **Partnerships:** none for the purposes of this report.

### 8 Background papers

- 8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

#### **Previous reports:**

- Budget Targets Report October 2020.

#### **Other papers:**

- Revenue Budget 2021/22 report – on this agenda.