

Community and Wellbeing Committee
17 January 2023

FEES AND CHARGES 2023/24

Head of Service:	Brendan Bradley, Head of Finance
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Committee Fees and Charges 2023/24

Summary

This report recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2023.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked, subject to the approval of Council, to:

- (1) agree the fees and charges for 2023/24 as set out at Appendix 1**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To agree the fees and charges for the Committee and Wellbeing Committee for 2023/24.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council will meet to agree the budget, including estimates of income and expenditure, on 14 February 2023. 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 In July 2022 Strategy and Resources Committee agreed an updated Medium Term Financial Plan which included an overall increase in revenue from fees and charges of 6% to fees and charges for 2023/24.

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- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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 present to this Committee for approval.
- 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, 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 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1.1 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.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

- 3.2.1 None for the purposes of this report.

3.3 Safeguarding

- 3.3.1 None for the purposes of this report.

3.4 Dependencies

- 3.4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

3.5 Other

- 3.5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4 Proposals

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- 4.1 The proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 are set out at Appendix 1 to this report. The main variations in fees and charges for each service area outside the range of an increase between 6% to 10% are set out below:

4.1.1 Playhouse

No increase to membership fees are proposed, as the Theatre Manager considers that current fees reflect the benefits of the current membership scheme.

4.1.2 Bourne Hall

To encourage day hires/long term/corporate bookings, reductions in the charges for Mon-Sun 8am-3pm hires and some day rates are proposed. Currently rooms are not being utilised during these hours. Some new rates have been proposed for peak time hires. If current regular Sunday book is lost the hire rate will revert to Saturday rates.

Charges for advance bookings for subsequent years are not generally included in the annual schedules. It is proposed that these be charges at the current year cost plus approximately 6% per annum, representing the inflationary increases incorporated in the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Discounted rates will be increased to a minimum of 10% to cover costs of utilities. There is a new returnable deposit of £250 proposed for events of over 50 people.

4.1.3 Community & Wellbeing Centre

Charges for Extra Support Day Care sessions have not been increased, in order to remain competitive, whilst encouraging take up of the service.

Charges for piano tuning have increased to remain in line with what the Council is charged by the company who provides this service.

4.1.4 Community Services

No increase is proposed to Community Alarm monthly standard charges as current charges represent market rates and officers consider that an increase in price per unit could potentially have an adverse effect on customer volumes.

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4.1.5 Disabled Facility Grant Fees

The Council has a statutory duty to operate a Disabled Facilities Grant Scheme, funded by Central Government. Over recent years this role has become more complex, with a broader remit than previously, involving multi agency working and a wide variety of assistance required by clients. To reflect the officer time and general administration costs incurred as a result of this work, it was agreed in 2018/19 that the Council should charge fees to the fund. These fees are charged on a cost recovery basis and for 2023/24 the charges proposed are as follows:

Mandatory Grants: These are provided to enable adaptations to allow residents access to essential facilities within and around the home.

Minimum fee charge	£450	e.g. level access showers / stair lifts
Works up to £30k	10%	
Works in excess of £30k Fees capped at maximum works the Policy permits the Council to fund	7.5%	e.g. ground floor extensions to provide downstairs wet room/bathroom facilities
Aborted works: Pre-tender stage	£450	Works may be aborted where an applicant's level of need has changed significantly since receipt of the original Occupational Therapist's report, or where the applicant has passed away.
Post-tender stage depending on grant value Limited at £45k (or higher as Policy determines)	10%/7.5% of 70% of works	

Discretionary Grants (funded through DFG allocation)

e.g. Installation of galvanised (outdoor) handrails or measures to address thermal discomfort, e.g., replacement windows and heating.

Minimum fee charge	£300
All works	10%
Aborted works: Pre-tender stage Post tender stage	£300 10% of 70% of cost of works

Handyperson Grants

e.g., small odd jobs such as garden clearance and bathroom grab rails.
No fee applied.

5 Financial Implications

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- 5.1 The impact of the proposed fees and charges for services in 2023/24 is set out below.
- 5.2 The table sets out the original additional income target as per the Medium Term Finance Strategy in the first column.
- 5.3 The second column presents additional income anticipated from the changes to tariffs proposed in the appendix to this report, on the assumption that current utilisation levels continue.
- 5.4 The third column shows changes to income budgets for fees and charges that are not related to changes to tariffs. Examples will be changes to customer numbers or where a new fee or charge has been introduced.
- 5.5 The last column sets out the difference between the budget target increase and the final income budget, which incorporates changes to both tariffs and volumes.

Service	Target increase in income budget (6%) £'000	Total increase /(decrease) due to changes to tariffs £'000	Variations due to changes to volumes £'000	Variation between target and total change £'000
Wellbeing Centre	9	5	4	0
Community Services	24	0	12	-12
Playhouse	26	20	6	0
Bourne Hall	15	15	0	0
TOTAL	74	40	22	-12

- 5.6 The charges proposed will generate an additional estimated income of £40k. However, increases in volumes are expected to increase income by £22k, meaning that Community & Wellbeing income budgets are lower than the targeted budgeted income from fees and charges for 2023/24 by £12k
- 5.7 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** All financial implications are included within the report.

6 Legal Implications

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6.1 **Legal Officer's comments:** There are no direct legal implications 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:**
No specific implications.

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**
No specific implications.

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 2022

Other papers:

- Budget Book 2023/24