

Fees and Charges 2023/24

Report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

- 1. That the fees and charges for 2023/24, as set out in the Annexes to the report, be approved.**
- 2. That Heads of Service be authorised to increase relevant fees and charges in line with statutory levels should they change following this report.**
- 3. That the Head of Community and Leisure in consultation with the Head of Finance and Revenues and the Community, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to amend the Spotlight membership fee at the Lights as discussed in paragraph 4.2 of the report.**

SUMMARY:

- Fees and charges are set annually for the forthcoming financial year and are presented for approval.
- Significant increases from 2022/23 are explained in the body of the report.

1 Introduction

- 1.1** Fees and charges are reported annually to Councillors as part of the budget process. This report provides information on proposed fees and charges for 2023/24.
- 1.2** By reporting fees and charges separately, as an individual component of the budget process, Councillors can provide direction on the level of charges across the Council.
- 1.3** Proposed increases to existing charges and charges for new services are attached in the annexes to this report for approval.
- 1.4** The main inflation index is the Consumer Prices' Index. This is currently (October 2022) running at 11.1%. In previous years, services have been advised to use the Bank of England's CPI forecast for the third quarter of the following year as a guide for increasing charges in line with inflation. The third quarter forecast for 2023 as at the beginning of November 2022 is 7.9%. As this is so high, no inflationary guide has been given this year.
- 1.5** At the Budget Panel meeting on 21 September 2022, Members indicated that as far as possible, charges within the control of the Council should not be increased unless increases in associated costs absolutely required it.

Increases in sports and social activities and car parking should be kept to a minimum in order to encourage social and economic recovery post-Covid.

2 Background

- 2.1 Heads of Service were asked to provide details of the fees and charges they wish to levy in 2023/24 for the services they provide.
- 2.2 The attached Annexes show, in Budget Book format, the level of charges in 2022/23, the proposed charges for 2023/24 and the percentage change between the two.

3 Consultations/Communications

- 3.1 Heads of Service and managers have been asked to provide details of the charges they wish to make in 2023/24.

4 Fees & Charges – changes by Service

- 4.1 The following paragraphs give explanations of any charges that are recommended to be increased by more than inflation or where the basis for charging for an item has changed.
- 4.2 Community & Leisure (Annex 1)

Charges across the Service have largely been frozen at 2022/23 levels.

For sporting activities, the majority of charges have been frozen, with a few exceptions. These are:

- A charge for training for under 18's at the sports pitches has been added at 50% of the adult rate as more under 18's are now training. This is a 50% reduction as previously this was charged at the full adult rate.
- Charges for floodlights at each site are recommended to be increased by between 2.84% (20p) for the temporary floodlights and 13.48% (95p) for the permanent ones due to the increases in utility charges.
- At Charlton Sports Centre, cricket is no longer available, so these charges are to be deleted.
- At Ganger Farm, charges are to be introduced for Pay and Play for informal kickabouts when the artificial pitch is not booked out at £5 for adults and £2.50 for under 18's. A charge of £2.50 for a padlock for the storage cage is also recommended.
- The charges for the use of the artificial pitch at Ganger Farm have been reviewed and are recommended to be increased by between £1 and £2 whilst remaining competitive within the local area.

At the Lights, all charges have been frozen for the last two years due to the impact of Covid. All charges have been reviewed and small increases of up to 2.56% made on room hire charges due to increasing costs. Other changes to charges at the Lights are largely for commercial hire:

- An additional arena hire charge of £250 if the Lights are to act as Event Manager.
- A new corkage charge if hirer brings own alcohol at £5 per bottle.
- A new technical services charge of £100 for professional shows if an additional technician is required.
- Charges to be introduced for the use of the lapel microphone (£30) and wired microphone (£20) and an increase from £19 to £30 for the use of the radio microphone.
- An increase of £3 for the use of the grand piano due to the increase in costs of a piano tuner.
- Wedding reception venue hire is to be deleted as the Lights is unable to accommodate these due to the busy professional programme.

The Head of Community and Leisure is reviewing the scope of the Spotlight membership to establish whether it can incorporate wider benefits to users across the local community. It may be necessary to increase the charge if additional benefits can be delivered, but this cannot be confirmed yet. Therefore, it is recommended that the Head of Community and Leisure, in consultation with the Head of Finance & Revenues and the Community, Leisure and Tourism portfolio holder, be authorised to approve this change.

Andover Sports Academy are proposing to increase most of their charges for the all weather pitch and room hire by approximately 10% with increases of 13.21% - 18.61% for floodlights. The centre has charged historically low prices for the hire of the all weather pitch and floodlighting and this will bring the charges closer (but still below) comparable local facilities in a difficult market. Charges for tennis are to be deleted as this is no longer available.

4.3 Corporate (Annex 2)

The charges shown in the Corporate section remain unchanged from 2022/23.

4.4 Environmental Service (Annex 3)

The majority of charges are to be increased by approximately 5% - 6% to reflect the increased cost of staff and fuel.

Bulky waste charges are to be increased by 7.94% - 8.11% due to the low volume and level of resource required.

The charge for a black bin is to increase by £2.50 (6.67%). This charge covers the cost to the Council of purchasing the bin which has increased by 25% and the cost of delivery.

Charges for shopping trolley returns and MoT Tests remain frozen.

4.5 Finance & Revenues Service (Annex 4)

The charges shown in the Finance & Revenues section remain unchanged from 2022/23.

4.6 Housing & Environmental Health Service (Annex 5)

The majority of charges have been increased by 4% - 5% to reflect the increase in staff costs.

The charge for combined home boarding and day care for dogs is to be deleted as this is covered by other charges.

An additional charge is to be made for houses in multiple occupation licence applications for houses with more than 5 rooms at £25 per additional room.

Contaminated land registry charges are to be deleted.

4.7 Legal & Democratic Service (Annex 6)

The majority of fees in this service are statutorily set and remain the same as for 2022/23.

Some land charges fees have been increased primarily to allow for an increase in fees paid to Hampshire County Council.

Scrap metal dealer licenses are proposed to increase by 6.67% and 10.2% in order to ensure that costs are fully recovered.

For Hackney carriages & private hire vehicles, the following increases are proposed to ensure that costs are fully recovered:

- Replacement plate to increase by £4 (30.77%).
- New driver licenses & renewal driver licenses are to increase by between 8.33% and 10.34%.

4.8 Planning & Building Service (Annex 7)

Planning fees have been frozen at 2022/23 levels.

Building control fees were increased by 10% on 1st November 2022. A further increase of 4% is proposed to cover associated costs.

4.9 Property & Asset Management Service (Annex 8)

Car parking charges remain frozen at 2020/21 levels.

Room bookings and hall hire charges have increased by approximately 5%, and the high street and the time ring charges have increased by approximately 2%. This is to reflect the increase in costs.

All other charges remain frozen.

5 Risk Management

- 5.1 An evaluation of the risks associated with the matters in this report indicates that further risk assessment is not needed because the changes / issues covered do not represent significant risks.

6 Resource Implications

- 6.1 The impact of the proposals will be considered when preparing Service estimates for 2023/24.

7 Equality Issues

- 7.1 An EQIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's EQIA methodology and no potential for unlawful discrimination has been identified, therefore a full EQIA has not been carried out.

8 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 8.1 Heads of Service have considered the services currently available to the public and the Fees and Charges applicable to them.
- 8.2 Based on recommendations from Heads of Service, this report seeks approval of the rates of fees and charges for 2023/24.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	8	File Ref:	N/A
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	7 December 2022