

## **Fees & Charges 2019/20**

Report of the Finance Portfolio Holder

### **Recommended:**

- 1. That the fees and charges for 2019/20, as set out in the annexes to the report, be approved.**
- 2. That the change to the discount for the purchase of 100 season tickets in a single transaction for Shepherds Spring Lane and Chantry Centre car parks only, as set out in paragraph 4.5, be approved for 2018/19 with immediate effect.**
- 3. That the fees and charges for licences under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulation 2018, as set out in paragraph 4.6, be approved for 2018/19 with immediate effect.**
- 4. That Heads of Service be authorised to increase relevant fees and charges in line with statutory levels should they change following this report.**
- 5. That the Head of Estates and Economic Development in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder be given delegated authority to agree any required incentivised parking schemes, as set out in paragraph 4.5.**

### **SUMMARY:**

- Fees and charges are set annually for the forthcoming Financial Year and are presented for approval.
- Most charges are to be increased in line with inflation or kept at the same level as 2018/19. Significant increases from 2018/19 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 2019/20.**
- 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 showed year-on-year increases of 2.5% for July. Services have been advised to use this figure as a guide for increasing charges in line with inflation.
- 1.5 Heads of Service have also been asked to consider the impact of increases to fees and charges on their customers before recommending any increases for next year.
- 1.6 Charges for new activities to be introduced by Places for People (e.g. Clip and Climb) will be presented to Cabinet in a separate report for consideration.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 Heads of Service were asked to provide details of the Fees and Charges they wish to levy in 2019/20 for the services they provide.
- 2.2 The attached Annexes show, in Budget Book Format, the level of charges in 2018/19, the proposed charges for 2019/20 and the percentage change between the two.
- 2.3 In the majority of cases, fees and charges have been kept the same or raised in line with inflation.

## **3 Consultations/Communications**

- 3.1 Heads of Service and Managers have been asked to provide details of the charges they wish to make in 2019/20.

## **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 increased in line with inflation or remain frozen at 2018/19 levels.

Charges for pitch hire at a new sports ground at Abbotswood have been introduced.

Some charges at the Lights (e.g. Screen hire) remained frozen in 2018/19 so an increase greater than inflation is proposed in 2019/20.

Small increases of between 10p and 20p at Andover Leisure Centre for Junior Swim, Swimming lessons, the crèche and adult gym are resulting in above inflation increases due to the small base cost.

Similarly increases of between 10p and 50p at Romsey Rapids for Family Fun, Family swim, Just swim lengths, health suite, junior mini golf and the cricket net are resulting in above inflation increases. This also reflects the newly refurbished facility that will be available.

Membership fees at Andover Leisure Centre remained low in 2018/19 due to the current development works. The prices reflected in this report for both Andover Leisure Centre and Romsey Rapids show big increases (up to 35.75% and 7.14% respectively) but are based on the agreed Places for People tender prices and take into account the newly refurbished facilities.

Charges at the Sports Academy for the outdoor court and floodlights have been decreased in response to guidance from England Netball.

#### **4.3 Corporate (Annex 2)**

The charges shown in the Corporate section remain unchanged from 2018/19.

#### **4.4 Environmental Service (Annex 3)**

Most charges made by the Environmental Service are recommended to remain the same as 2018/19 or increase in line with inflation. Some increases, such as for bulky waste are slightly higher than inflation but are small in absolute terms.

The charges for garden waste collection are an exception. It is proposed to increase the initial annual subscription by 5.38% and additional annual subscriptions by 5.41% in order to more accurately reflect the cost of providing this service.

An increase of 12.90% has been applied to the purchase of black wheeled bins and 3.45% to the purchase of 1100 litre wheeled bins, whilst leaving the charge for brown and green bins for recycling static for another year.

The Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) have been revised to reflect changes in legislation, particularly as a result of the Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (England) Regulations 2017, that came into force on 1st April 2018, imposing minimum charges from 1 April 2019.

Charges for MOT Tests have remained constant for 6 years. Increases of between 5.26% and 12.50% are recommended for 2019/20 which will ensure the charges remain competitive whilst being below the standard recommended MOT charge.

#### **4.5 Estates & Economic Development Service (Annex 4)**

The charges in this Service have mainly been frozen at 2018/19 levels or increased in line with inflation.

An exception is for the evening hire of rooms at the Rendezvous, Upper Guildhall, Crosfield Hall and Beech Hurst which are recommended to be increased by up to 27.14%. The charges have been reviewed and it was noted that in some cases the afternoon charge for 5 hours was the same as the evening charge for 6 hours, so the increases are recommended to remove this discrepancy.

The discount on the purchase of 100 season tickets in a single transaction for Shepherds Spring lane and the Chantry Centre car parks is recommended to be increased to 33% from 25% with effect from the date of this report. All other parking charges are recommended to be frozen.

On occasion, for example Christmas, there may be a requirement to offer an incentivised parking scheme. It is recommended that the Head of Estates and Economic Development in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder be given delegated authority to agree any such schemes.

#### **4.6 Housing & Environmental Health Service (Annex 5)**

The majority of charges in this Service have been frozen at 2018/19 levels or increased in line with inflation with the following exceptions.

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 comes into effect on 1 October 2018. The regulations introduce modified types of animal licence with the effect that some of the existing animal welfare legislation, relating to riding schools, pet shops and animal boarding establishments, will be superseded. The changes are detailed in Annex 5 and are recommended to be introduced with effect from the date of this report. This is because:

- The new regulations replace many of the existing animal licence types
- The new licences require an application to be made this autumn and any delay in determining the level of fees will delay the process for operators as payment is made in advance of each application
- There is no equivalent licence for the 'keeping and training of animals for exhibition' so the Council would have no authority to charge such operators

The collection fee for dog control is proposed to increase by 57.14% to £55 in order to more accurately reflect the cost of providing this service.

The charges under Motor Salvage Operators are to be removed as this is a function that is no longer carried out.

#### **4.7 Legal & Democratic Service (Annex 6)**

The majority of fees in this service are statutorily set and remain the same as for 2018/19.

The overall search fee in local land charges has been raised by 15.98% to take account of increased charges from Hampshire County Council for highways enquiries. The CON290 charges have been bundled together.

The charge for Data subject access requests has been removed as this is no longer chargeable under the General Data Protection Regulations.

Within hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences, the charge for a replacement plate has been increased by 62.50% as the current charge does not cover costs.

A new £25 charge is being introduced for changes to vehicle registration such as when a vehicle proprietor puts on a personalised number plate.

Two columns have been removed from the statutory charges under the Gambling Act (Existing Operator new application and Non-fast track advance application) as they are no longer relevant.

#### **4.8 Planning & Building Service (Annex 7)**

Pre-application fees were amended with effect from 1 August 2018 in line with changes to planning application fees. No further changes to pre-application fees are proposed for 2019/20.

Building control fees have been increased by 2.5%. In addition, full plan charges are being increased by a further 5% (7.5% in total) in order to bring them in line with Building Notices by 2020/21.

#### **4.9 Revenues Service (Annex 8)**

Charges applied to Council Tax and Business Rates accounts in respect of action taken by the Council through the Magistrates' Courts may only be made to recover actual costs incurred.

The Court charges the Council a fixed sum for each summons that the Council raises. That charge was £3 when the 2018/19 budget was set but has now been reduced to 50p. The £2.50 reduction is therefore recommended to be passed on to the customer.

A review of all the costs incurred by the Council (including the charge from the Court) and the anticipated number of summonses that will be issued in 2019/20 has been undertaken and resulted in a recommended reduction of £4 in the cost of issuing a summons to the Magistrates' Court.

### **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 2019/20.
- 6.2 Any additional income to be generated by increases to fees and charges is reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy presented to Cabinet elsewhere on this agenda.

## 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 2019/20.

<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
(Portfolio: Finance) Councillor Giddings			
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