

Fees & Charges 2020/21

Report of the Finance Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

1. That the fees and charges for 2020/21, 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 Community and Leisure Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to agree changes in fees and charges in relation to services and activities that Places Leisure operate through the Council's leisure management contract.

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 2019/20. Significant increases from 2019/20 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 2020/21.
- 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. Using the Bank of England's forecast as at the beginning of August 2019, services have been advised to use 2% 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.

2 Background

- 2.1 Heads of Service were asked to provide details of the Fees and Charges they wish to levy in 2020/21 for the services they provide.
- 2.2 The attached Annexes show, in Budget Book Format, the level of charges in 2019/20, the proposed charges for 2020/21 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 2020/21.

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 2019/20 levels.

A small increase of 5p for juniors at the running track at Charlton is resulting in an above inflation increase due to the small base cost.

Increasing some charges at the Lights by round amounts (between 50p and £2) has resulted in above inflation increases for technical services, ticket printing and the radio microphone. New charges have been included for the hire of the mirror ball, haze/smoke machine, electric keyboard and rostra.

The new Andover Leisure Centre opened in April 2019 and some charges have changed or been introduced since the Fees and Charges report to Cabinet on 10 October 2018 and are shown in a separate column in Annex 1. Small increases of between 10p and 40p have resulted in above inflation increases for gym concession, junior squash, adult fitness classes, the crèche, aqua fit, the health suite concessions and adult and junior swimming. Swimming lessons (including free casual swimming) are proposed to increase by £1 per month, a 3.77% increase. The initial price for Clip and Climb of £10 was an introductory offer price and is proposed to increase by 20% to £12, which is below the bid price of £12.50.

Small increases of between 5p and £1 at Romsey Rapids for family fun, family swim, swimming lessons, the health suite, adventure golf and the cricket net are resulting in above inflation increases. Prices for swimming are more in line with competition.

Investment in lighting and an improved facility at Knightwood Leisure Centre has resulted in above inflation increases for tennis, the MUGA and netball.

At Charlton Lakeside, some new activities were introduced during the year (pedalo, kayak and canoe hire). Investment in new boats has resulted in above inflation increases for boating charges.

4.3 **Corporate (Annex 2)**

The charges shown in the Corporate section remain unchanged from 2019/20.

4.4 **Environmental Service (Annex 3)**

Most charges made by the Environmental Service are recommended to remain the same as 2019/20 or increase in line with inflation. Some increases, such as for garden waste collection and operative hire are slightly higher than inflation but are small in absolute terms.

4.5 **Property & Asset Management Service (Annex 4)**

The charges in this Service have mainly been frozen at 2019/20 levels or increased in line with inflation.

A car parking review is being undertaken separately and the outcomes will be reported to Cabinet at a later date.

A number of miscellaneous parking and highways charges have been removed for 2020/21 as the functions will either be reverting to or have already reverted to Hampshire County Council.

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

Some of the charges in this Service have been frozen at 2019/20 levels or increased in line with inflation.

Street trading consents have been reviewed and updated to be brought fully in line with the Local Government Association Guidance 'Open for business – LGA guidance on locally set licence fees' (May/June 2017). The changes are shown in Annex 5.

A new charge has been introduced for variation of registration for Ear / skin Piercers and Tattooists.

Hygiene certificates have been reviewed resulting in a reduction of 32.86% in the charge for the issue of a standard health certificate where no visit is required in order to better reflect actual costs. A new charge has been introduced for the issue of a certificate where a visit is required.

The charging structure for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) has been reviewed and a new structure proposed. All existing HMOs should be licensed by now and a new charge is proposed to cover the cost of seeking out and regularising unlicensed HMOs. The 10% discount for members of recognised landlord associations is to be deleted.

Caravan site licences have been reviewed and adjusted with changes between -8.25% and +93.06% in order to better reflect costs.

The charges for photographs have been deleted as they haven't been taken up for a long time.

All pest control charges have been reviewed and it was identified that some services were operating on a below cost basis. As a result the charges have been developed to strike a balance between supporting vulnerable people, attracting commercial work and maintaining service delivery.

Charges for viewing the Food register have been deleted due to data protection concerns.

4.7 Legal & Democratic Service (Annex 6)

The majority of fees in this service are statutorily set and remain the same as for 2019/20.

Charges for scrap metal licences and hackney carriage operator licences have been increased by slightly more than inflation in order to ensure that costs are covered.

4.8 Planning & Building Service (Annex 7)

The majority of planning fees have been frozen at 2019/20 levels.

Building control fees have been increased by approximately 2%. In addition, full plan charges are being increased by approximately a further 6% (8% in total) in order to bring them in line with Building Notices for 2020/21.

4.9 Revenues Service (Annex 8)

The charges shown in the Revenues section remain unchanged from 2019/20.

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 2020/21.

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 2020/21.

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| <u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u> | | | |
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| <u>Confidentiality</u> | | | |
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| 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. | | | |
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| No of Annexes: | 8 | File Ref: | N/A |
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| (Portfolio: Finance) Councillor M Flood | | | |
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| Report to: | Cabinet | Date: | 6 November 2019 |
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