

# Cabinet

24 February 2016



<b>Title</b>	Fees and Charges Report 2016/17		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a Key Decision		
<b>Report Author</b>	Adrian Flynn		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Tim Evans	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Value for money Council		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Accountability		
<b>Recommendations</b>	Cabinet is asked to consider and approve the charges as set out in Appendix A.		

## 1. Key issues

- 1.1 In the current challenging economic climate the council has to perform a balancing act between trying to maximise the additional income that can be generated through fees and charges, but at the same time be careful in setting fee levels which are sustainable and will not adversely impact on its overall income levels. It also needs to be mindful of the impact on residents and the local business community.
- 1.2 The extra Income calculated to be generated for 2016/17 from increasing fees and charges in some service areas is £207k.
- 1.3 The total potential income therefore from rents, fees and charges and grant income excluding housing benefit grant income to be incorporated into the 2016/17 budget will be approximately £9.981m.
- 1.4 More than a third of the Council's total income excluding housing benefit grant income is generated through fees and charges, rents and grants and is therefore of key importance in balancing the budget.

## 2. Options analysis and proposal

- 2.1 The detailed schedule of proposed fees and charges to be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 is shown in the 2016/17 fees and charges document.
- 2.2 As part of the 2014/15 and 2015/16 budget setting process Heads of service adopted a cautious approach to raising the level of fees and a number of fees were reduced in response to the downturn in economic climate which had produced lower levels of income than previously budgeted. These areas

have been reassessed as part of the 2016/17 budget process in order to determine whether the change could now be reversed in light of actual incomes received.

- 2.3 All fees and charges were reviewed in 2015/16 by Heads of service to ensure that they are covering our costs and they have been assessed as to the reasonability of the fee being set.
- 2.4 For 2016/17 in common with previous years Heads of service have been asked to revisit the overall budgeted income estimates, compare them with other authorities' charges and then base them upon the income seen in 2015/16 to date in order to reassess the likely full year income position.
- 2.5 In respect of the economic climate all areas are being monitored through the 2015/16 budget monitoring process to see how the income is holding up against budgets. Management team receive a monthly report on the major income area's highlighting the current position against the previous year position.
- 2.6 Currently Building Control and Garden Waste bin income are all indicating that they will achieve more than originally budgeted and any increase seen as on-going will be incorporated into the base budget.
- 2.7 Car parking income is one of the largest income generation areas for the council and a small increase is planned for 2016/17 which will generate extra income of £127k after a number of years where the fees remained unchanged to encourage economic development in our town centres. A separate report will be written by the Sustainability and Leisure Manager regarding the proposed changes to car parking fees and charges.
- 2.8 The proposed fees and charges submitted here for the next financial year have in the majority of cases not been up rated by 5% which was part of the financial strategy agreed by Executive in November 2006, but have been amended to reflect the maximum level it is perceived that the market can currently stand. In some cases this has resulted in, no increase to the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17.
- 2.9 It should be noted that in exceptional circumstances discounted pricing may be considered where an activity supports a strategic priority of the council to the benefit of a particular community group.
- 2.10 The Authority is continuing to look at Services and ensuring that all areas make appropriate charges for all services provided in order to ensure that those users of the service are charged for it so that the rest of the Council Tax payers are not subsidising them.

### **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 As in the body of the report.

### **4. Other considerations**

- 4.1 There are none.

### **5. Timetable for implementation**

5.1 The fees and charges proposed are to be implemented from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

**Background papers:**

**Appendices: A**