

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Environmental Services Portfolio Holder  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director Health & Environmental Services

12 December 2014

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### **PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES 2015/16**

#### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to propose fees and charges for Health & Environmental Services for the 2015/16 financial year.
2. This not a key decision. Under the terms of the Council's Constitution it is a decision for the portfolio holder. It was first published in the July 2014 Forward Plan.

#### **Recommendations**

3. That the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder confirms the proposed fees and charges set out in Appendix 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. Confirming the proposed fees and charges will contribute to the efficient and cost effective delivery of a range of council services that impact directly on people's safety and health.

#### **Background**

5. Fees and charges for functions and services undertaken by Health & Environmental Services are reviewed at least annually and recommendations made for the next financial year. These are both statutory and therefore fixed, or discretionary, where there is an opportunity for variation.
6. In deciding on any variation the portfolio holder has previously had regard to a number of factors including council policy, council Aims and Objectives, economic factors e.g. inflation, neighbouring authority charges, market conditions and the need to recover costs.
7. For the purposes of cost recovery, actual costs incurred have been used wherever possible. Elsewhere, estimates have been used based on a combination of hourly rates, time spent etc. Although it has not been possible at this time to identify actual unit costs across all relevant service areas, a programme of cost recovery identification is underway, which will be used in future wherever possible.

## **Considerations**

8. Appendix 1 shows the recommended charges for 2015/16 and includes references to policies relating to the charges. The council's current Medium Term Financial Strategy has assumed an inflationary increase of 2.0%. All discretionary fees have therefore been increased by this amount, rounded up to the nearest whole pound, where appropriate, except in the following areas:

### Street and Layby Traders (Section 2)

9. Layby trader fees have been frozen at 2014/15 levels as the current fees continue to recover the council's costs

### Licensing (Section 3)

10. Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the fees charged should be set so as to be sufficient to cover in whole or part, the reasonable cost of administration or other costs in connection with the service.
11. The actual full year costs and income from fees are being monitored over a rolling two-year cycle, as previously agreed, in order to ensure they accurately reflect the cost of administering the service. The fees have been adjusted accordingly.
12. During 2014 new legislation was introduced in the form of Mobile Homes Act 2013 permitting fees to be set. These fees have now been assessed to reflect the cost of administering the service and will be reviewed annually using the same format as Taxi Licensing
13. A higher percentage increase has been applied to Animal licenses as they have shown a small deficit over recent years and the aim is to cover the cost of the service by the fees charged.

### Bulky Household Collection Charges (Section 4)

14. The charge for bulky household collections has been frozen at 2014/15 levels. The current level of fees has successfully reduced demand for this service thereby encouraging re-use and recycling, but still provides access to disposal services for those residents who are unable to access the household waste and recycling centres at Milton and Thriplow e.g. those without access to suitable transport.

### Trade Refuse Charges (Sections 8 & 9)

15. 2014/15 saw a small net increase in the number of customers on the previous year allowing for a number of customers closing due to the current economic environment. The landfill tax has reached the top of the automatic escalator, currently £80/per tonne, and at the time of writing this report it is expected that the tax will simply be indexed to an estimated £82.50 per tonne. The County Council has maintained the MTB processing cost resulting in an overall disposal charge for 2015/16 of £95 per tonne. The trade service continues to be offered at zero V.A.T. which provides an advantage against our private sector competitors.

16. The cost per lift of 240 litre Eurocontainers has been increased from £4.15 to £6.00 to better reflect the current market rate and cost recovery.

### Options

17. The Portfolio Holder has the option to:
- (a) Accept the charges detailed in Appendix 1
  - (b) Reject the charges detailed in Appendix 1
  - (c) Amend the discretionary fees and charges detailed in Appendix 1. There is no ability to amend statutory fees

### Implications

18. The fees and charges for the next financial year set out in Appendix 1 will produce an income to the council that will contribute to the efficient and cost effective delivery of a range of council services that impact directly on people's safety and health.

19. Financial	The recommendation will result in a like for like increase in income
Legal	None identified at this time
Staffing	None identified at this time
Risk Management	Regular performance and financial monitoring of services
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this time
Equality Impact Assessment completed	Yes Partial EQIA completed. No adverse impacts identified
Climate Change	None identified at this time

### Consultations

20. A number of adjoining Local Authorities have been consulted for comparative and consistency purposes.

### Effect on Strategic Aims

21. Confirming the proposed fees and charges will contribute to the efficient and cost effective delivery of a range of council services that impact directly on people's safety and health, so contributing to the achievement of the council's Strategic Aims.

### Conclusions / Summary

22. In setting the proposed level of discretionary fees and charges a number of factors have been taken into account, including council policy, council Aims and Objectives, economic factors e.g. inflation, neighbouring authority charges, market conditions and the need to recover costs.

23. In recognition of these factors the many of the discretionary fees and charges have been subject to a below inflation increase. A small number of charges have however been either frozen or increased by a greater amount in response to market conditions and additional cost pressures.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

None

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