

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES 2017/18

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to propose fees and charges for Health & Environmental Services for the 2017/18 financial year.
2. This not a key decision. Under the terms of the Council's Constitution it is a decision for the portfolio holder.

Recommendations

3. That the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder confirms the proposed fees and charges set out in Appendix 1.
4. The fees set for commercial Trade Waste are not publicised due to commercial sensitivity

Reasons for Recommendations

5. 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.
6. Fees charged by competitors for trade waste are not readily available, therefore, by publicising our fees and charges for trade waste we allow an advantage to commercial competitors.

Background

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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 formula has been identified and applied for our Primary Authority and Business Hub activities and will be used across other areas as required. Where the charging for EH&L services permit. A charging policy is currently being developed to bring transparency to the way we will approach chargeable services in the future across all health and Environmental services

Considerations

10. Appendix 1 shows the recommended charges for 2017/18 and includes references to policies relating to the charges. The council's current Medium Term Financial Strategy has assumed an inflationary increase of 1.9%. 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)

11. Layby trader fees have been frozen at 2016/17 levels as the current fees continue to recover the council's costs

Licensing (Section 3)

12. 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.
13. The actual full year costs and income from taxi 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 and no increase in fees is recommended for the coming year, with the exception of vehicle renewals that have been slightly reduced to reflect the success of the resources team in making the process more efficient.
14. 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)

15. The charge for bulky household collections has been frozen at 2015/16 levels. The current level of fees encourages 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.
16. It is proposed to waive the administration charge for provision of additional blue and green bins in order to encourage recycling and reduce repeated reliance on side waste collection. This is anticipated to have some financial impact (low thousands; April 2016 to November 2016 saw 3 additional charges for green (£213) and 3 for blue (£213), although figures may be hidden in mis-coded costs). This will also bring the charge in line with Cambridge City Charges.

Provision of Environmental Information – Research & Reporting (Section 6)

17. The fee for the provision of environmental information, which can involve an element of research to gather a range of data on a number of topics (e.g. potential land contamination, location of landfills, records of pollution incidents etc.), has been frozen at 2016/17 levels as the current fee continues to recover the council's costs without inhibiting access to environmental information. As much information on environmental quality as possible is provided on the council's web site so that it is readily available for residents and any interested parties.

18. Housing Notices

Provision exists under the Housing Act 2004 to charge a discretionary fee for serving improvement notices to house holders who have failed to comply with a request by the Council to improve a specific area of failing i.e a landlord who has been advised in writing to repair a boiler by a certain time but has failed to comply.

Options

19. 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

20. 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.

21.

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

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

Effect on Strategic Aims

23. 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

24. 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.
25. In recognition of these factors some 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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