

FEES AND CHARGES 2021/22

Summary: This report recommends the fees and charges for 2021/22 that will come into effect from April 2021.

Options considered: Alternatives for the individual service fees and charges now being proposed will have been considered as part of the process in arriving at the fees presented within the report.

Conclusions: The fees and charges as recommended will be used to inform the income budgets for the 2021/22 budget. Approval for the fees ahead of presenting the detailed budgets allows for implementation of changes where applicable and also informs the 2021/22 budgets.

Recommendations: **That Cabinet agree and recommend to Full Council:**
a) The fees and charges from 1 April 2021 as included in Appendix A.
b) That Delegated Authority be given to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and relevant Heads of Service, to agree those fees and charges not included within Appendix A as required as outlined within the report

Reasons for Recommendations: To approve the fees and charges as set out in the report that will be used to inform the 2021/22 budget process.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Current fees and charges

Cabinet Member(s) Ward(s) affected: All
Eric Seward

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1. Introduction

1.1 The setting of the fees and charges for the next financial year forms part of the annual budget setting process. The reason for presenting them for approval ahead of the detailed budget report provides a lead in time where applicable to allow implementation of the revised charges from 1 April 2021 and also to ensure that income budgets can be updated accordingly and reflected in the budget for 2021/22 and future projections.

2. Fees and Charges 2021/22

- 2.1 Fees and charges proposals for 2021/22 have been circulated to the relevant budget managers so that income budgets can be updated as part of the budget process. Appendix A to this report provides the detail of the proposed charges for 2021/22 from 1 April 2021, these have been discussed and agreed with the relevant portfolio holders.
- 2.2 Approval to these charges in advance of the approval of the budget for the 2021/22 financial year enables Officers to make preparations for the new financial year and also enables more accurate projections for income to be factored into the budget for 2021/22 which will be presented to Members in February 2021. Any further work in this area will be reported in the budget reports in February 2021.
- 2.3 The usual inflationary increase has not been applied to most charges due to inflation having been close to zero during recent months. The exceptions to this are for those fees and charges which are set by central government, for example planning and premises licence fees. Also a number of the Council's fees are calculated on a cost recovery basis and will be excluded for example Land Charges, Building Control and the majority of our locally set licence fees. In addition Council facilities operated by an external contractor will also be excluded as the Council has no discretion on the setting of these fees.
- 2.4 Some fees are not published as part of this process such as those relating to trade waste collection and garden bin fees. This is due to the fact that some of our costs are not known this early in the year and in order to ensure that the services operate in a financially effective manner, the setting of the associated fees is done separately under delegated powers once we are more certain of future costs.
- 2.5 As part of the Council's financial planning processes, and in an effort to address the pressures on future year's budgets, the finance team will be working with service managers next year in the run up to the 2022/23 budget setting process to undertake a more fundamental review of fees and charges. This will involve more detailed work to ensure that we fully understand our cost base so that we can ensure our charges are covering this as a minimum. Some charges are set by statute and so will be out of scope for this review. This work was originally scheduled to be undertaken in preparation for the 2021/22 budget, but due to the impact of COVID 19 on services and demand levels, the review has been postponed by 12 months.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The report makes recommendations for the fees and charges that will come into effect from 1 April 2021. These will inform the service income budgets that will be included within the detailed 2021/22 budget when it is presented for recommendation and approval in February 2021.

4. Financial Implications and Risks

- 4.1 For demand led services there is a risk that income will not be received as budgeted. When producing income budgets assumptions will be made around the level of income to be achieved from services, these will be based on service managers best estimates with assistance from Finance.

5. **Sustainability** – none as a direct impact.

6. **Equality and Diversity** – none as a direct impact.
7. **Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations** - none as a direct impact.