



**Policy Finance and
Development
Committee**

**Tuesday 27th
October 2015**

Matter for Decision

Title:

Fees and Charges 2016/17

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Author:

1 Introduction

1.1 This report outlines the proposed scale of charges for areas covered by this Committee for the financial year 2016/17

2 Recommendations

2.1 That members consider and approve the fees and charges for 2016/17

3 Information

3.1 The Council charges for a number of its services that are provided to the public. All fees and charges are reviewed on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process.

3.2 When setting scales of charges, the following factors are taken into consideration:

- Statutory obligations
- Policies and objectives of the Council
- Inflation and relevant indices
- Local market research and competition (where relevant)
- The impact of price changes on activity level or demand
- Changes in taxation
- Budget position and any associated gap
- The cost of providing the service

3.4 As at July 2015, the Retail Price Index (RPI), which is a measure of inflation stood at 1.0%. This has been used as a guide for Heads of Service when considering the 2016/17 increase.

3.5 Appendix 1 shows the current and next years proposed charges together with any specific explanation of the change to any individual charge. A summary of changes by service area has been provided overleaf.

3.6 Operational Services

Operational Services are the largest area where the Council charges for its services. It is important to ensure that charges for these services reflect the commercial reality of the provision and look to cover the cost of providing the service.

3.7 Cemeteries, Parks and Pavilion Hire

These Charges have been increased by the Retail Price Index figure of 1.0% which was applicable in July 2015.

It is proposed that in addition to the charging system, penalties are introduced for late cancellation of the pavilion facilities. These will be on a sliding scale with cancellation within seven days of the event receiving no refund. Details of this scheme are included in Appendix 1.

3.8 Refuse and Recycling

Charges have been reviewed and remain the same for 2016/17 to encourage people to recycle items. Prices are such that the administrative costs of applying new charges at the current rate of inflation would outweigh any increase in income. These charges will be fully reviewed for 2017/18

3.9 Allotments

This area is being increased by an amount consistent with RPI at July 2015 with the charges applying from 30 September 2016

3.10 Brocks Hill

The Centre completely reviewed its charges for 2014/15 and recent benchmarking has demonstrated that they are set at the high end of similar facilities. As a result no change is recommended this year.

3.11 Leisure Services

The authority contracts out its leisure services to an outside provider. Under the terms of their contract, the provider is able to submit their charges up to 3 months before the start of the financial year. At the time of writing this report, their charges are still awaited. The contractors charges will be submitted to a subsequent meeting of this committee.

3.12 Environmental Health

Wasp nest and pest control charges were fully reviewed and brought into line with other local authorities for 2015/16 when charges for these services were standardised across the whole population. Prices have been left unchanged for 2016/17 as any inflationary incremental increase would be slight and be outweighed by the administrative costs of the increase.

3.13 Housing

The cost of water charges are being frozen for 2016/17 while a review of the charging process takes place in consultation with residents. Members will be notified of the result of this in a further report to this committee.

3.14 Development Control

The Planning and Building Control Sections have reviewed their charges. There is a new charge added for advertising on the digital screens in the town centres. The rest of the charges have remained unchanged as the principal charges are statutorily set.

3.15 Corporate Services

Charges have been increased in line with the Retail Price Index. There is a planned benchmarking exercise to be carried out in the new year, the results of which will be incorporated into the 2017/18 charges.

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Background Papers:-

- Fees and Charges Returns

Implications	
Financial	All financial implications are detailed in the content of this report
Risk	CR1: Decreasing Financial Resources CR9: Economy
Equalities	Fees and charges proposed are across the services which the Council provides; services accessible and available to all.
Legal	Statutory increases in charges are incorporated within the proposals embodied within this report