

Briefing Paper to accompany the Fees and Charges Register

1 Summary

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to consider and approve the changes to charges detailed within the Council's fees and charges register. From 2018/19 the fees and charges register will now be maintained and updated for submission as part of the budget setting process on an annual basis, with the new fees agreed as a whole rather than on an individual basis.
- 1.2** The fees and charges register, contains details of all items for which a charge is made. It is important that these fees are reviewed at least annually as part of the budget setting process and reviewed during the year, in line with the Councils income policy. This will ensure existing targets are being met and to explore any further income potential to maximise the Councils resources.
- 1.3** Improving income management and service cost recovery has a key role to play in enabling the Council to achieve its financial and wider strategic objectives. The Income and Cost Improvement Board has representatives from all Service Areas, coming together on a monthly basis to discuss ways in which the Authority can generate income and cost improvement proposals to enable delivery of the income targets within the budget plan.
- 1.4** The general principle of applying an inflationary target across all income budgets has not been applied at budget setting in recent years, services have in general applied this approach to their individual budgets but have used the increased budget this provides to meet unfunded service pressures. The Income and Cost Improvement Board have reviewed this and now recommends that for 2018/19 this should be the means of meeting the £400k additional income target already included in the FRM.
- 1.5** The impact of different percentage increases have been modelled against the budgeted income targets to which an inflationary uplift could be applied, ensuring those governed by legislative requirements were not detrimentally affected. The result determined that a 3% increase on all appropriate income targets would be required to achieve the additional £400k target.
- 1.6** The fees and charges register has been reviewed, and where appropriate and agreed with Services, a minimum increase to charges of 3% has been applied, to enable the increased target to be realised.

2 Additions, removal and reduction of fees and charges are noted below along with items which have been increased significantly above the 3% threshold:

2.1 The following new charges should be noted:

2.2 Registrations – In line with many registration authorities in Wales, we propose decommissioning our current ceremony rooms and offering a register office ceremony in our registration offices currently licenced for civil ceremonies (e.g. couple, registrars and two witnesses only). We will then be able to charge a higher fee for ceremonies in these decommissioned ceremony rooms, which are able to accommodate larger numbers of people.

2.3 Food Hygiene and Health and Safety:

Safety Certificates for Sports Grounds – regulations empower the Local Authority to determine the fee to be paid commensurate with the work actually undertaken. A fee has been calculated based on the average amount of time spent on the process.

Primary Authority Arrangements for food hygiene – Primary Authority is a means for businesses to receive assured and tailored advice through a single point of contact. These forms of arrangements enable businesses to invest with confidence in products, practices and procedures, knowing that the resources they devote to compliance are well spent. The charges that will be applied to this service will be based on the hourly rates of officers as provided by finance and the number of hours and subsequent costs will be agreed with the businesses in advance of the delivery of the service.

3 Additional elements to existing fees:

3.1 Cleaning – Internal Sites Cleaner Supervisor - To introduce efficiencies for County Buildings and the property service, caretaking hours/duties have been reduced in some buildings and back filled with a cleaning supervisor role. These changes have occurred on the retirement of caretaking staff so have not involved a business case / management of change process.

3.2 Registrations:–

- Marriage/Civil Partnership at Licensed Premises and other Ceremonies Fee - Friday
- Attending a marriage at the register office – Saturday

4 The following removal of a charge should be noted:

4.2 Admissions to museums – withdraw the £1 fee across Powys (Y Gaer, Radnorshire Museum and Powysland Museum) and collect income through donations instead. This is based on Museum studies which show that a donation box rather than a fixed admission fee generate more income.

This is reflected in the actual donations compared with the admission fees received over the last 2 years. The current 2017/18 budget for donations and admissions is £2,380, actual received to date is £2,931; donations £2,629 and admissions £302.

4.2 Hire of Youth Centres – the fees and charges within Youth Services relates to hire of facilities. However, it has been agreed that from 31st March 2018, the Youth Service will no longer hold a portfolio of buildings, and therefore these fees and charges will cease to exist.

5 The following areas have increases significantly in excess of 3%:

5.1 Other Licences – Skin and Ear Piercing – due to the more complex nature of the trade, more officer time is required in considering and processing the applications. Therefore it is proposed to increase the fee by approximately 50%.

5.2 Burial Fees – to enable the service to move towards full cost recovery, following the increase in charges for grave digging, a 10% increase in fees is required.

5.3 Libraries – following a thorough service review the following increases are proposed:

- Reservations 50% to 67%
- Replacement tickets 100%
- Sale of withdrawn books – Adult fiction and Non-fiction 25%
- Colour printouts 14%

5.4 Registrations – to assist in full cost recovery and following benchmarking with neighbouring authorities the following increases are proposed:

To attend premises licensed for civil marriages and civil partnerships and Marriage/Civil Partnership and other Ceremonies Fee:

- Monday to Thursday 19%
- Saturday 21%
- Sunday/Bank Holidays 34%

6 The following fees and charges are proposed to reduce from 1st April 2018:

6.1 Other Licences - Taxis

Private Hire/Hackney Carriage drivers new application/renewal (-5)% and Driver Licence (-8)%

The taxi fees have been consulted on and approved by the appropriate committee. The fees were calculated using a detailed toolkit, devised and used across the Welsh Local Authority Licensing Services based on actual resource used and therefore open to fluctuation as consumption of resources from the previous year impacts on the calculation process. Income from fees with a reduction in price should be offset by those that have seen an increase.

Service Area	Service Charge Category	2018-19 Inflationary Increase %	Comments
REGULATORY SERVICES	Other Licences:		
	Gambling	0%	set by statute
	Animals	3%	recommended increase
	Taxi	-8% to 3%	approved by Licensing Committee in October 2017 - further information contained within the report
	Petroleum	0%	set by Health and Safety Executive
	Explosives	0%	set by Health and Safety Executive
	Miscellaneous	0% to 50%	0% Scrap metal - renewable every 3 years using All Wales Toolkit 0% Mobile Homes - renewable every 5 years using All Wales toolkit Skin and ear piercing 50% further details noted in report
	Water Sampling	4% to 5%	uplifted by recommended 3% and then rounded to nearest £10
	Weights and Measures	3.5%	Fees increased inline with Cymru Group, of which Powys is a member, based on Septembers inflation plus ½%. This has been adopted by a large majority of Local Authorities in Wales
	Food and H&S	3%	recommended increase. Two new fees introduced
	Licensed Premises	0%	set by statute
	Building Control	3%	recommended increase
	Planning	0%	set by Welsh Government
	Burial fees	10%	increase to assist with full cost recovery
Dog & Pest Control	4%	uplifted by 3% and then rounded to nearest £10	
FINANCE	Council Tax and NNDR - Summons and Liability Order	0%	as per Legislation maximum costs that can be charged in Wales is £70.00 (any combination)
LEISURE AND RECREATION	Catering	0%	Depending on the outturn for 2017/18 the School meal fee may increase by 5p to 10p in September 2018
	Cleaning	1% to 2%	To enable the service to remain commercially viable, comparisons have been done with other public sector cleaning services and the private sector already operational in Powys. One additional element to existing fees has been introduced.
	Libraries	14% to 100%	Service has increased fees where possible and in line with market prices and other local authorities
	Museums	0%	Service would like fees to stay as they are so that they remain viable
	Archives	0%	Service would like fees to stay as they are so that they remain viable. Fees increased significantly in 2017/18
	Youth Services	-100%	Youth Service will no longer hold a portfolio of buildings to hire out
HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND RECYCLING	Car Parks	0%	part of Service strategy
	Waste Collection	0%	part of Service strategy
	LAPAAAN	3%	recommended increase
HOUSING	Private Sector Housing	0%	based on Welsh Government guidelines, maximum charge already implemented
LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC	Registrations	2% to 34%	Our fees for attending civil ceremonies and licensing of approved premises have not been raised for a number of years, the proposed percentage increases should assist in full cost recovery and bring us in line with neighbouring authorities. Two new fees and two additional elements to existing fees have been introduced
	Land Charges	0%	based on benchmarking with other Local Authorities, Powys is already one of the most expensive
SCHOOLS	Schools	3% to 9%	Rent on School houses has been uplifted by the recommended increase of 3%. Home to School Transport pre and post 16 has been increased by 7% and 9% respectively, to more closely reflect the actual cost of provision.
SOCIAL CARE	Social Care	0%	part of Service strategy and Welsh Government guidelines
BUSINESS SERVICES	Careline	3%	recommended increase