

REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
TO:	COUNCIL
DATE:	19th December 2024

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Fees & Charges

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The purpose of this report is to request that Council approve the proposed Fees & Charges for 2025/26.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council approve:

- (1) The Fees & Charges as set out in the attached report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To ensure the Council charges appropriately for the services it provides.
- (2) To contribute towards the sustainability of the Councils MTFP.

ISSUE

- 1.1 Fees & Charges are an important source of income, providing finance to assist in achieving the Councils corporate priorities.
- 1.2 The Council reviews and approves its fees and charges on an annual basis, with the resulting income being incorporated into the approved budget each year.
- 1.3 Services seek to maximise income wherever possible unless the introduction of a charge is legislatively prohibited or would be contra to specific corporate priorities and service objectives.
- 1.4 It's important that where possible Fees are set to ensure that income raised covers the full cost of that services provision, including all expenditure incurred directly and indirectly.

Overview

- 2.1 Service Managers have reviewed the Fees and Charges within their area taking into account the rate of inflation, market pressure and benchmarking where appropriate.
- 2.2 Based on these factors the general assumption is to recommend increasing most charges by 2.2%.
- 2.3 A summary is included at appendix A, with the detailed report attached at appendix B. Areas where significant changes are proposed are:

- Bulky Waste – Overview and Scrutiny Committee have recommended the introduction of stepped charging, with a 50% discretionary reduction for persons in receipt of means tested benefits:

Number of Items	Minimum Charge
1 - 4	£13.50 (outside scope for VAT)
5 - 8	£27.00 (outside scope for VAT)
9 - 12	£40.50 (outside scope for VAT)

- Waste Containers - Overview and Scrutiny Committee have recommended the introduction of the following charges, with a 50% discretionary reduction for persons in receipt of means tested benefits:

Charge for delivery of all replacement wheeled bins.	£25 (outside scope for VAT)
Purchase of a grey (non-recycling) bin	£20 plus VAT = £24

- Pest Control – Budget Working Group have recommended the following charges (full details are included in appendix B):

Domestic

Service	Charge (inc VAT)	Notes
Rats & Mice for up to 3 visits	£120	50% discount for persons in receipt of means tested benefits
Wasps	£58	
Cockroaches	£148	Per treatment
Insects	£82	Per Visit
Bed bugs - minimum 3 visits	£198 – 2 bed property £306 – 3 bed property £399 – 4 bed property £549 – 5 bed property	50% discount for persons in receipt of means tested benefits
Fleas	£95	50% discount for persons in receipt of means tested benefits
Squirrels	£126	Per treatment

- 2.4 Fees & Charges still under review:

- Planning – awaiting the outcome of the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework
- Taxi Licencing – Rolling 3 year review underway
- Building Control – Rolling 3 year review underway

The above fees will be reported Council in February.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None

Financial: The Council's External Auditors highlighted sustainability of the Council as a significant weakness in their Annual Audit Report. Therefore, the Council has to consider all options to generate additional income to help support the financial viability of the Council going forward. Income derived from charging will be used to offset costs of providing the service being charged for, including all support service costs.

Legal: None

Risk Management: None

Health and Safety: None

Sustainability: N/A

Community Safety: N/A

Equality and Diversity: The above report suggests offering discounts to individuals on means tested benefits.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Summary of proposed increases

Appendix B – Fees & Charges Report

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS: N/A