

**REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON 2 MARCH 2010**

**SUBJECT: CHARGING FOR SERVICES**

**BY: CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The committee is invited to consider and approve the Council's charges for services, for the financial year 2010/11, in line with Council Policy.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to committee in terms of Section A (6) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the setting of charges.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the committee considers and approves the proposed revised charges for 2010/11 set out in APPENDICES 1 – 5.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the committee reaffirms the current policy of permitting circus lets only if the circus concerned is a member of the Association of Circus Proprietors.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Corporate Policy for Charging for Council Services was approved by Council on 9th March 2000. The Policy requires an annual review of all charges made by the Council.

**4. THE PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 Details of current charges and proposed charges for next year are attached as APPENDICES 1 to 5 as follows:

<b>Appendix 1</b>	Central Services
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Community Services
<b>Appendix 3</b>	Educational Services
<b>Appendix 4</b>	Development Services
<b>Appendix 5</b>	Direct Services

The Appendices also show details of when specific charges were last changed.

- 4.2 Apart from charges set by statute, the general assumption applied to increases is an inflationary figure of 2% rounded to the nearest practical increase, in line with the Corporate Policy on Charges for Council Services. Central Government measures inflation using the Consumer Price Index which is currently 2.9%. The Retail Price Index currently stands at 2.4% - excluding mortgage interest results in RPIX 3.8%. The Government's target figure used for inflation is 2%.
- 4.2.1 **Central Services (Appendix 1)** - It is generally proposed to increase those charges within the control of the Council by inflation. It is also proposed to introduce a charge for early lease terminations.
- 4.2.2 **Community Services (Appendix 2)** – It is proposed to increase charges by inflation, with the exception of lunch club meals which are the subject of a separate report. Charges subject to financial assessment are dependent on the revised Department of Work and Pensions allowances for 2010/11.
- 4.2.3 **Educational Services (Appendix 3)** – Charges have been reviewed against usage of facilities and charges levied by other authorities as indicated in **APPENDIX 3**.
- 4.2.4 **Development Services (Appendix 4)** - It is generally proposed to increase charges by inflation. It is proposed to set licences charges for Houses in Multiple Occupation to fully recover the costs of staff involved.
- It is also proposed to introduce charges for Public Weighbridge operator certificates, petroleum research and sampling fertilisers and feeding stuff on request by buyer.
- 4.2.5 **Direct Services (Appendix 5)** – It is generally proposed to increase charges by inflation. Exceptions are set out below.
- 4.2.6 **Trade Waste Services** - Local Authorities are obliged to fully recover the costs of providing trade waste services, and the proposed charges have been recalculated to ensure full cost recovery.

- 4.2.7 **Fleet Services** - It is not proposed to increase charges levied by Fleet Services. As the MOT and taxi testing bay still operate a cash collection system any increase is rounded to the nearest pound, when possible. Increasing charges by a whole pound every financial year would be in excess of inflation. Increases have therefore generally been applied every second year.
- 4.2.8 **Car Parks** – Charges were set by Council on 11 February 2010, as part of the Council's Revenue budget for 2010/11. The date of implementation will depend on the supply of updated software for car park machines. There is generally a lead-in time of 2 months, but it may be longer this year, as many authorities may be increasing their charges. The cost of the software is anticipated to be less than £1,000.
- 4.2.9 It is also proposed to introduce a Recycling Centre pass for trades who do not use the Council's trade water service but wish to take recyclates direct to the Council facilities.

## 5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

### (a) **Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**

This Report is consistent with the Corporate Development Plan commitment to Sound Management of Resources.

### (b) **Policy and Legal**

This Report is consistent with the Council's Policy on Charges. There are no legal implications.

### (c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

The Financial Plan anticipates additional income of £60,000 arising from inflationary increases to charges. It is anticipated that the proposed charges will result in this target being met.

### (d) **Consultations**

All Departments have been consulted on and are in agreement with the proposed charges for 2010/11.

**6. CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 Proposed charges are itemised in Appendices 1 to 5 to this Report.

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Ref: LP/VT/738757/724344/737824/726555/727079/737826/738537