

This Report will be made public on 7 November 2016

Folkestone

Hythe & Romney Marsh
Shepway District Council



C/16/76

Report Number

To:	Cabinet
Date:	16 November 2016
Status:	Key Decision
Head of Service:	Pat Main, Interim Head of Finance
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Carey – Finance

SUBJECT: FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18

SUMMARY:

The Council's Fees and Charges Policy was approved by Cabinet on 8 September 2010 (Report C/10/24). The Policy has remained predominantly the same although a small number of minor changes have been approved.

This report focuses on the proposed fees and charges for 2017/18. These will contribute towards meeting the council's budget objectives and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. To receive and note report C/16/76**
- 2. To note the Fees and Charges Policy, as detailed at Appendix 1**
- 3. To approve the 2017/18 fees and charges including a number of new charges, which are set at the discretion of the council, for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, as outlined at Appendix 2, the car parking charges at Appendix 3, the statutory charges subject to discretionary charges at Appendix 4 and to note the statutory charges at Appendix 5.**

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Fees and Charges Policy has established agreed strategies for individual statutory and discretionary services. This includes the recovery of the cost of the service. No changes have been applied to the Fees and Charges Policy for 2017/18.
- 1.2 The proposal for 2017/18, see Appendix 1, is to apply no inflationary increase, in line with the current economic state and forecasts of inflation. In some instances charges are rounded up to the nearest 10p or £1. Variations from this tend to be as a result of service areas reviewing their costs to ensure that full cost recovery is maintained in accordance with the approved Policy.
- 1.3 The proposed discretionary fees and charges for 2017/18 are included in Appendices 2, 3 and 4. Statutory charges are shown in Appendix 5.

2.0 NEW CHARGES

Waste and Recycling

- 2.1 It is proposed that a charge of £5 is introduced for cancelled visits, including collection of bulk waste, if one working day's notice of cancellation is not given.

Statutory Fixed Penalty Notice:

- 2.2 Small Fly-tipping incidents - Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016
- Full penalty charge £300
 - Maximum penalty on conviction £2,000.

Parking Services

- 2.3 It is proposed to introduce a charge for the provision of white 'Access' road markings.
- Analysis and survey works (non –refundable) £121
 - Installation and maintenance (10 yrs) £158
- This is a service previously provided by KCC.

Lifeline

- 2.4 To introduce a GPS Footprint charge £5.10 (net of VAT) and £6.10 (inclusive of VAT).

Cemeteries

- 2.5 As a matter of clarification, an additional charge is proposed for the scattering of ashes under turf £140. The process incurs similar costs to the internment of ashes.

Beach Huts

- 2.6 Beach Huts at Hythe have been added to the fees and charges schedule. There are 11 huts at a fee of £800 per annum.

Planning Services

- 2.7 Additional charges are proposed with regard to pre-application requests for advice for which the council has not raised a charge in the past, and for existing charges to be amended for extended period meetings.

Waste Collection

- 2.8 The proposal is to amend the fees and charges protocol for bin replacement so that residual waste bins (i.e. landfill waste) are now charged for in all circumstances. Currently bins are provided free of charge if they go missing on the collection day.

3.0 REMOVAL OF CHARGES

Lifeline

- 3.1 The charge previously made for the Telecare contract will no longer be applied as the contract with KCC has ceased.

4.0 PROPOSED EXCEPTIONS TO THE NIL INCREASE IN FEES AND CHARGES

Car Parking Charges Update

- 4.1 The majority of parking charges will remain unchanged for 2016/17. A small number of permits relating to residents, visitors and hotel guests will be increased in line with neighbouring authorities.

Proposed increases in car parking charges:

Type of permit	Potential additional income
1. Car Park Residents Permit increase from £43.33 (£52 inc VAT) to £50.00 (£60.00 inc VAT).	£4,712 (increase income budget currently £23k, projected £50k)
2. Residents Permits (on-street) increase from £25 to £30.	£5,425
3. Business Permits (on-street) increase from £52.00 to £60.00	£832
4. Hotel Guests Vouchers (on-street) increase from £1.00 per day to £1.50. (some hoteliers are already charging their customers £2)	£11,950 (increase income budget currently £17k, projected £21k)
5. On Street parking waiver (daily) increase from £6.50 to £8.00	£70.50
6. On street parking waiver (weekly) increase from £21.50 to £24.00	£192.50

Budget amendments:

Off-street parking charges

Due to the increase in income currently being received which is rising year on year (a volume variance), it is recommended to increase the income budget by £50,000 for 2017/18 from £850,000 to £900,000.

On-street parking charges

It is recommended that the income budgets for on-street parking are amended as follows:

- Decrease the budget for parking charges by £25,000 – from £110,000 to £85,000
- Increase the budget for parking fines by £25,000 – from £330,000 to £355,000
- Increase the budget for Visitor Permits by £12,000 – from £17,000 to £29,000 – in line with the proposed increase in the Hotel Voucher charge.

Elections:

- 4.2 Certificate of Residency £10 each

Sale of documents / General photocopying

- 4.3 It is proposed to add a charge for colour copying:

Size	Black & White	Colour
A4	12p	15p
A3	30p	35p
A1	£3.50	£4.00
A2	£3.50	£4.00

It is also proposed to add a charge for providing electronic copies (PDF or equivalent) of original records of £1.00 per page. This is to reflect the time that is required to (i) retrieve, review/redact and save records from our business systems in PDF format or (ii) to create PDF copies of original paper-only records.

Lifeline

- 4.4 It is proposed to increase some of the Lifeline charges to cover the increased purchase and maintenance of equipment, and staffing costs. These are outlined in the attached appendix.

Housing - Immigration Inspection Fee

- 4.5 Increased from £90 to £100 (net of VAT) and from £108 to £120 (incl. of VAT) - in line with the rest of East Kent

Street Trading (Market)

- 4.6 It is proposed to reduce peak time charges for Sandgate Road from £3.50 to £3.00, and Guildhall Street from £2.35 to £2.00 for the period May to December. This reduction will bring the council's charges closer to the County average. The aim of these changes being to attract more stallholders and to stabilise income levels.

Dog Control

- 4.7 It is proposed to increase dog control charges in line with other local authorities:
- Kennelling per night - increase by £1 to £17

- Out of hours Dog Collection - increase by £3 to £50

Hire of Meeting Rooms

4.8 The following changes are proposed to the charges for hiring of meeting rooms:

- To change the description for hiring of rooms to ensure it is clear that we charge for room bookings for all non-SDC meetings/functions (except charitable organisations)
- Room bookings to be charged on an hourly rate
- To charge a higher hourly rate for periods after 9pm on weekday evenings and weekends (as the building would not normally be open incur more lighting and heating costs are incurred)
- To charge an additional hourly Civic warden fee for after 9pm on weekday evenings and Saturdays (to cover the time and half overtime costs)
- To charge an additional hourly Civic warden fee for Sundays and Bank holidays (to cover the double time overtime costs)

These proposals are based on a review of other authorities in Kent (Dartford and Tunbridge Wells)

Waste and Recycling

4.9 There are no proposed changes in individual charges for 2017/18. As mentioned in paragraph 2.1 it is proposed to introduce a new charge for cancelled bulky waste collections. Due to the continued rise in volume it is proposed to increase two of the income budgets for 2017/18 - Bulky Waste by £20,000 and sale of bins by £10,000.

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Charges for Wastewater Treatment Works and Pumping Stations

5.1 The 2016/17 Fees and Charges report highlighted that the HRA subsidises the cost of this service. As in previous years, Cabinet agreed to limit increases on the charge for this service for existing users to annual increases of 8% in 2016/17 where users of the service were already paying the maximum charge of £750 per property. Users whose charge was lower than this would continue to pay the actual cost of the service up to the capped maximum amount. Cabinet has also previously agreed that new purchasers of properties, who buy under the 'Right to Buy' scheme, pay the actual cost of wastewater treatment works and cesspools.

The increase to the capped charge takes it from £750 in 2016/17 to £810 in 2017/18 and will reduce the HRA subsidy to £8,000 from £10,000.

Cesspools

5.2 In 2016/17 the same principle of the council recovering its costs up to a maximum of £750 for each household has previously been approved for the 7 council-owned properties which drain to cesspools. This produces annual income of £5,250. The cost of the service in 2015/16 was £11,460. If the cost is about the same in 2016/17 the HRA would be subsidising the service by approximately £6,210. In line with the above, it is recommended that the cap

remains at the already approved figure of 8% per annum for 2017/18 taking the annual charge to £810.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The changes in fees and charges proposed for 2017/18 together with the volume changes reference in respect of parking fees and waste management should increase income by approximately £92,000. These changes have, in the main, been included in the schedule of changes resulting from the Budget review which took place in April of this year.

7. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

7.1 Legal Officer's Comments (DK)

As a general rule, the Council is under a duty to act fairly in its decision-making, including exercising its discretion to increase relevant fees and charges. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a wide ambit of power to charge for its services and section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 gives the Council capacity to charge for relevant services; on the basis it is doing so without 'trading' (or making a profit).

7.2 Finance Officer's Comments (AK)

The financial implications of this report have been addressed in the main body of the report. Increased charges shown in paragraph 5 are included in the Council's Budget Strategy for 2017/18.

7.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications

There are no Diversity and Equality issues arising directly from this report.

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Budget working papers

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - General Fees and Charges Policy

Appendix 2 – Discretionary Fees and Charges Schedule

Appendix 3 – Car Parking Fees and Charges Schedule

Appendix 4 – Statutory Fees Subject to Discretionary Charges Schedule
Appendix 5 – Statutory Fees Schedule