

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 24 FEBRUARY 2021

REVIEW OF CHARGES AND FEES FOR 2021/22

REPORT OF THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2021

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Resources (circulated previously) regarding the review of Charges and Fees for 2021/22.

The Accountancy Services Manager highlighted the following:

- This year the guidance was to increase some fees and charges by 2%, although some fees were set by statute and these would be set nationally.
- It was recommended that Allotments (Appendix A), Cemetery fees (Appendix F), sports pitches (Appendix G), Pannier Market charges (Appendix H) and Bulky Collections (Appendix I) were increased by 2%.
- Other variations to the 2% increase were Building Control (Appendix B), Trade Waste (Appendix C), Land Charges fees (Appendix D), Environmental Health fees (Appendix E), Garden waste charges (Appendix J) and pre-planning application fees (Appendix K).
- Building Control fees were subject to a 2% increase which was rounded to the nearest £1.
- Trade Waste fees and services had been reviewed to provide 'Holiday Home packages' which offered greater flexibility to customers.
- Garden waste green bin services would increase to £40 per annum. It was noted that the fees had not increased since the service was launched in 2017.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Resources advised:

- Many of the Pannier Market stall holders (rather than those occupying premises) could be eligible for financial assistance in the form of the discretionary grant schemes available from the Authority.
- The 2% increase to the Pannier Market fees was in line with the other increases across the Authority. This was a 2% increase on the base figure, rather than on the temporarily reduced fee rate. The Chief Executive had reduced fees during 2020-2021 using Urgent Decision powers and could see to continue this in 2021-2022 if he wished.
- The Future High Street funded project could examine methods of attracting further footfall to the Pannier Market and possibly restructuring of fees to encourage new business traders.
- The Strategy and Resources Committee had approved the funding of a consultant to be employed to work on the Pannier Market project.
- Once the Future High Street (FHS) project had progressed the Authority could explore the possibility of setting up a working group to work with the Pannier Market officers and/or this Committee being provided with regular updates on the FHS project.

- The increased fees on the Garden Waste service would not cover the costs of running the service. To cover the costs fully the fee would be needed to be set at £45-£46pa. NDC's fees for the service were among the lowest in Devon.

RESOLVED that the decisions and recommendations of the Strategy and Resources Committee be endorsed.