



North Devon Council

Report Date: Strategy and Resources Committee: 7th February 2022

Topic: Review of Fees and Charges for services 2022/23

Report by: Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The following report sets out the framework for the review of charges for the Authority's services for the financial year 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Strategy and Resources recommends to Council a 2% increase in fees for 2022/23 financial year, for the following services:

- Allotments – Appendix A
- Trade Waste – Appendix C
- Cemetery fees – Appendix F
- Sports pitches – Appendix G
- Pannier Market Charges – Appendix H
- Pre-application Planning fees – Appendix K

2.2 Strategy and Resources recommends to Council to vary the remaining fees by the elements outlined in section 4.3 to 4.8.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. The change in fees charged for services provided by the Council is in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

3.2. Some fees are set by statute and these will be set nationally.

4. REPORT

4.1. The charges for the provision of services are reviewed annually in the context of policy guidance within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and the recommended levels of increase to produce a target income level.

4.2. This year the guidance was to increase some fees and charges by 2%, although some fees are set by statute and these will be set nationally. Other variations to the 2% increase are set out in 4.3 to 4.8. Even though inflation is currently running much higher than the 2% increase we have tried to be prudent and fair in the fees we charge and the impact this has on our customers.

4.3. Building Control fees have been raised by an average of 3% and rounded to the nearest pound, this is to ensure they are competitive in the sector of the

market and also that the income recoups the cost of providing the service - Appendix B.

4.4. Land Charges fees have been set to recoup the cost of providing the service, without changing the current fees the land charges service is still budgeted to recover all the costs and break even. – Appendix D.

4.5. There is one change to the Environment Health fees, as the majority of these are set by statute or set to recover costs. The only change is the introduction of a £10 fee for taxi and private hire driver safeguarding training. – Appendix E.

4.6. Pannier Market – Although the Pannier Market fees have been increased by 2% we are also proposing to make the charge inclusive of VAT, this enables us to recover the VAT on the planned capital works required for the Pannier Market as part of the Future High Streets Project, which are due to start in 2022-23. Other than the 2% inflationary increase there is no other change to the traders as the loss of income in relation to the VAT change will fall with the Council and we have built this income reduction into the 2022-23 draft budget. – Appendix H

4.7. Bulky Waste – To increase the fees as follows:

- Up to 2 items £18.00 (5.88% increase)
- Up to 3 items £26.00 (4% increase)
- Up to 4 items £33.00 (3.13% increase)

This still keeps our prices much cheaper than our neighbouring authorities.

4.8. It is proposed to increase the Garden Waste charge by £5 to £45. The current cost of providing the service is around £47 per household. With further increased costs envisaged for the following year 2023-24 we are also proposing that in addition to the increase for 2022-23 to £45 that the fees be increased to £50 for 2023-24. - Appendix J.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The net changes in the charges are expected to result in £104,000 of additional income which has been included within the draft 2022/23 budget.

5.2. The 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2021/22 having a 2% increase and 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 having a 3% increase.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. There are no equality implications anticipated as a result of this report. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

7.1 There are not any environmental implications anticipated as a result of this report, the purpose of this report is to set the budgeted fee income increase for 22-23.

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1 The increases in fees included in the report contribute to the on-going financial security of the Council by increasing the revenue budget. Which also contributes to the delivery of the Council's corporate objectives.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Strategy and Resources has power to formulate the budgetary framework.

9.2. Part 3, Annexe 4, delegated and Part 4 Budget Procedure Rules, delegated.

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. None.

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

12.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Author Tony Rumble, Accountancy Manager; Date 21st January 2022.