



## **North Devon Council**

Report Date: Strategy and Resources Committee: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### **Topic: Review of Fees and Charges for services 2024/25**

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 2024/25.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 Strategy and Resources recommends to Council a 5% increase in fees for 2024/25 financial year, for the following services: (some rounded)

- Allotments – Appendix A
- Trade Waste – Appendix C
- Cemetery fees – Appendix F
- Sports pitches – Appendix G
- Pannier Market – Appendix H (a)
- Pre-application Planning fees – Appendix K
- Dog Waste – Appendix L

2.2 Strategy and Resources recommends to Council to vary the remaining fees by the elements outlined in section 4.3 to 4.11.

#### **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 fees and charges by 5%, although some fees are set by statute and these will be set nationally. Other variations to the 5% increase are set out in 4.3 to 4.11.

4.3. Building Control fees have been raised by an average of 6.7% and rounded to the nearest pound, this is to ensure the revenue income recoups the actual cost of providing the service and are competitive in the sector. – Appendix B.

- 4.4. Land Charges fees have been set to recoup the cost of providing the service, the recommended fees for the land charges service is estimated to recover all the costs and break even. – Appendix D.
- 4.5. There are two changes to the Environmental Health fees, as the majority of these are set by statute or set to recover costs. The introduction of a fee for “Film Classification Certificate” (3.16) and variation to the “Export Health Certificate” fee (3.11) to ensure the cost of providing the service is fully recovered – Appendix E.
- 4.6. Pannier Market (Venue hire) – Following the recent refurbishment and new facilities within the Pannier Market we are now offering an enhanced look and feel to the market and have varied the prices to reflect the venue offer, the revised prices are now in line with other similar venues. - Appendix H (b) Venue
- 4.7. Bulky Waste Collections – To increase the fees as follows: - Appendix I.
- Up to 2 items £30.00 (30.43% increase)
  - Up to 3 items £38.00 (22.58% increase)
  - Up to 4 items £45.00 (18.42% increase)

The proposed increases above brings our charges in line with our neighbouring authorities.

- 4.8. Garden Waste – Increase in fee of £5, this level of charge is similar to the charges made by other Devon councils and ensures the cost of providing the service is recovered by the income - Appendix J.
- 4.9. Estates Event Licence fee – The licence for both charity and Commercial events on the Council’s land have been set to recover the cost of administering the licence fee. – Appendix M.
- 4.10. Estates Contractors Works licence - This is a new fee for 2024-25 and is set to recover the cost of administering the new licence fee. – Appendix N.
- 4.11. Modification of S106 agreements - This is a new fee for 2024-25 and is set to recover the cost of administering the new licence fee. – Appendix O.

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The net revenue changes from the above charges are estimated to produce £221,000 of additional income, which has been included within the draft 2024/25 revenue budget for consideration also on this agenda.

## 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 2024-25.

## 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. Save as provided in paragraph 9.2 below, the decision in respect of the recommendations in this report can be made by this Committee pursuant to delegated powers provided in paragraph 1 of Annexe 1 to Part 3 of the Constitution.

9.2. As noted in the report, the power to decide on one or more of the recommendations in this report is reserved to Council pursuant to Article 4.5 of the Constitution and as such the recommendation must be referred to Council to ratify.

## 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, Finance Manager; Date 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024.