

Subject:	Fees and Charges 2017/18		
Date of Meeting:	17 January 2017		
Report of:	Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture Executive Director Neighbourhoods, Community & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Steven Bedford	Tel: 29-3047
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the proposed 2017/18 fees and charges for the service areas covered by the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee in accordance with corporate regulations and policy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Committee:
- a) approves the proposed fees and charges for 2017/18 as set out within the report and its appendices.
 - b) delegates authority to the Executive Director of Economy, Environment & Culture to increase any charges for fees as notified and set by central Government during the year.
 - c) approves the introduction of a 50% discount on the cost of parking suspensions for charities and local community events with an estimated attendance of less than 15,000 and not already covered by an exemption such as Pride and Armed Forces Day.

Note: If the above recommendations are not agreed, or if the committee wishes to amend the recommendations, then the item will need to be referred to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee meeting on 9th February 2017 to be considered as part of the overall budget. This is because the budget is being developed on the assumption that the fees and charges are agreed as recommended and any failure to agree, or a proposal to agree different fees and charges, will have an impact on the overall budget, which means it needs to be dealt with by the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee as per the requirements of the constitution. This will not stop the committee from making recommendations to Policy, Resources & Growth Committee.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Fees and Charges Policy requires that all fees and charges are reviewed at least annually and should normally be increased by either: the standard rate of inflation, statutory increases, or actual increases in the costs of providing the service.
- 3.2 The 4 Year Resources and Integrated Service & Financial Planning Update report approved at Policy and Resources Committee in July 2016 specified the assumption of a standard inflation increase to fees and charges of 2.0% with the exception of parking Penalty Charge Notices. The council's Standard Financial Procedures states that service committees shall receive a report from Executive Directors on fees and charges variations above or below the corporately applied rate of inflation.
- 3.3 It is not always possible when amending fees and charges to increase by the exact inflation figure due to rounding. Therefore some fees and charges are rounded for ease of payment and administration.

City Environmental Management (Appendix 1)

3.4 Allotments, Parks and Sports Bookings

The department Integrated Service and Financial Plan identified a strategy to adopt a commercial approach to promoting self managed sports and recreation facilities by users and full cost recovery. It is therefore likely that there will be proposals for potential fee changes (increases and decreases), simplifying of charges and changing how fees are paid as groups take over facilities. For the purpose of this report, it is proposed that fees and charges relating to Allotments and Sports Bookings will be kept at current rates whilst discussions and consultations with relevant groups continue in advance of proposed changes being reported to this Committee.

Fees relating to tree and bench donation are outside of the scope above. It is proposed to increase these fees by the standard rate of inflation.

3.5 Flyering Licenses

Flyering licences fees are set at a rate that is reasonably considered to allow appropriate regulation and minimisation of flyering activity, and to partly recover the cost of work required to clear litter generated from flyering activity. It is proposed to increase the charges by the standard inflation rate.

3.6 Commercial Waste Collection Service

A report to Policy and Resources Committee in July 2015 approved the introduction of a chargeable commercial waste collection service. It is proposed to maintain the current rates.

3.7 Green Waste Collection

A report to Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee in October 2015 approved a trial for a chargeable garden waste collection service for an annual charge of £52 per household. It is proposed to maintain the current fee

level as it is considered to be appropriate to recover the costs of providing the service following a review of the trial outcomes and approved extension.

3.8 Preston Park and East Brighton Park Parking

Car parking charges at Preston Park and East Brighton Park were introduced to manage the level of parking activity. Any surplus generated from parking income is ring fenced to fund improvement works at the parks. It is proposed to maintain fees at current levels as it is forecasted that a 2% increase would not have any significant impact on activity and would create a net cost to implement.

Regulatory Services (Appendix 2)

3.9 Environmental Health

The majority of fees and charges will increase in line with the corporate rate of inflation with the following exceptions.

- The Pest Control service proposed a strategy in the Integrated Service and Financial Plan to diversify into different markets and charging market rates for services with the aim to be self financing within the medium term. It is therefore proposed to introduce a new charge for False Widow Spider treatment in response to customer enquires, and increase several of the current charges by more than the corporate rate of inflation to more accurately reflect the cost of providing the service. Animal licensing charges have been held at existing rates as they now reflect cost recovery following a detailed review in the previous financial year. Charges have been benchmarked against public and private sector comparators and set at rates that are reasonably expected to optimise total income to support the integrated service and financial plans to make the service more financially viable.
- Increase the charge for a Food Safety Level 2 retake of exam from £23 to £30 (30.4%) to cover the associated costs to the exam board and of officer time.
- Powers available to local authorities in England under the Localism Act 2011 allow for the recovery of costs for re-inspection requested by businesses to re-assess scores awarded under the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS). A report was presented to this Committee in November 2016 approving a proposal to introduce a charge of £145 to cover officer time to administer and undertake the visit.

3.10 Trading Standards

It is proposed to increase the non-statutory fees and charges in line with the corporate rate of inflation. Fees relating to store of explosive are set by statute.

City Transport

3.11 Highways (Appendix 3)

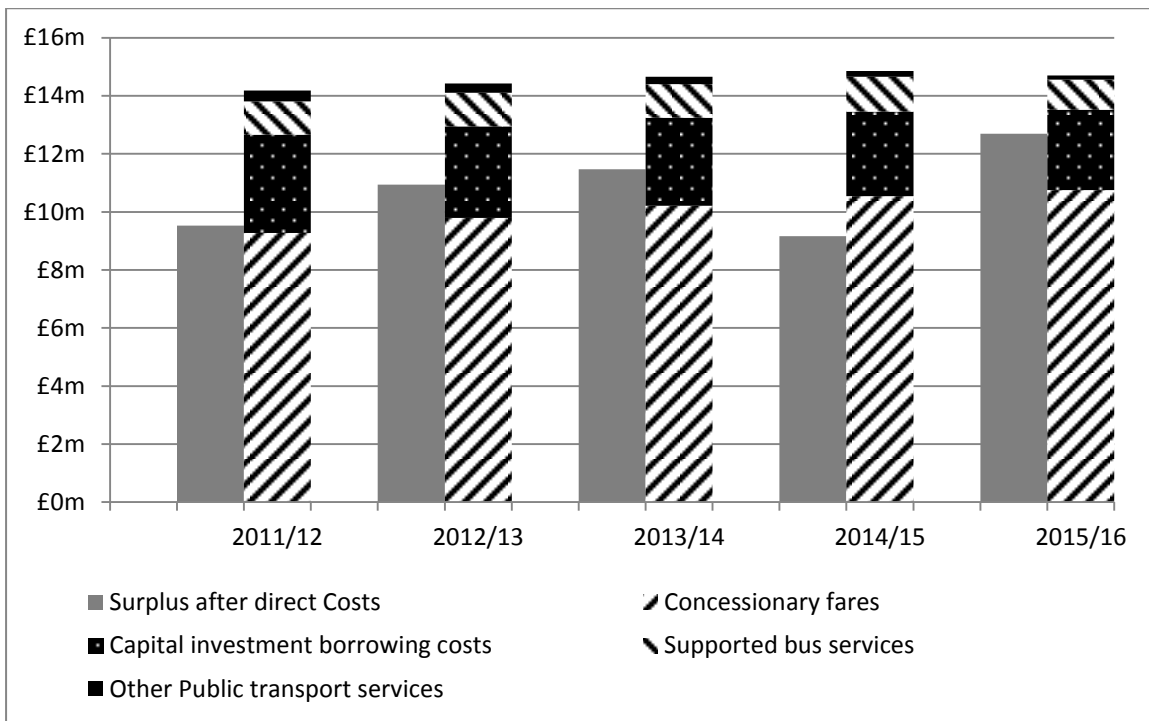
The majority of fees and charges will increase in line with the corporate rate of inflation with the following exceptions.

- Fees relating to Section 50 Opening Charges and Works on the Highway (installation of ramps) have been reviewed and amended to reflect the cost of associated inspections and officer time. The proposed fees have therefore been set to ensure cost recovery.
- It is proposed to introduce a new fee for Temporary Event Advertising Signs. Brighton and Hove is a very popular city for a range of events, for which many organisations wish to advertise on the public highway or need to provide temporary directional signage to the event location. There are specific requirements that must be met with regard to advertising and signing on the highway, which involves an officer assessing the application and sites for signage and authorising each location. The introduction of a new fee will allow the council to recover the costs for providing essential highway approval for these temporary advertisements and signage. It is estimated that an initial fee of £10 per sign for the first 50 reducing to £5 for any further signs will cover the cost of administrating this process. As the process is the same irrespective of type or size of the event, this fee will apply to all type of events, including charity events.

The Brighton and Hove Traffic Management Permit scheme was introduced on 30th March 2015 as a way to manage activities in the public highway and to minimise disruption from street and road works. To meet the additional cost of introducing and operating a permit scheme, the Traffic Management Act 2004 gives permit authorities the power to charge a fee in respect of certain activities. Fees have been set at levels that are expected to reasonably cover the cost of the scheme and are reviewed on an annual basis. It is proposed that fees will be maintained at existing rates in the 2017-18 financial year. A schedule of fees is available on the council website.

3.12 On-Street Parking (Appendix 4)

Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced with the aim of supporting the Council's traffic management objectives, including reducing congestion and improving air quality. Any surplus arising from on street parking is used to defray qualifying expenditure as governed by section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended from October 2004 by section 95 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. The surplus generated from charges after direct costs is used to support transport and highways related projects, including contributing towards the funding of bus subsidies, concessionary bus fares and Local Transport Plan costs. The following graph shows the level of surplus generated after direct costs from on-street parking compared to the cost of qualifying expenditure for the 2011-12 to 2015-16 financial years.



Improving air quality is a key traffic management objective in Brighton & Hove. Nationally, poor air quality reduces average life expectancy in the UK by over 6 months and is responsible for approximately 40,000 premature deaths annually. In some parts of Brighton & Hove, levels of nitrogen oxides exceed legal limits. As part of a range of measures to improve air quality, such as the introduction of a Low Emission Zone, parking charges can help to encourage less polluting travel options and reduce emissions. In Brighton and Hove, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment includes local figures for the impact of local air quality on health.

A further key traffic management objective is to reduce congestion. Fees are set to manage demand for parking and reduce time taken driving around to find a space by increasing turnover of spaces in high demand areas. Overall almost 80% of machines in the city still charge £1 per hour or £5.20 for all day parking. It is only in areas of exceptional demand for parking in the city centre that rates are set higher to increase turnover of spaces.

In addition, congestion in the central area can affect the reliability of journey times and long term parking can reduce accessibility and the turnover of spaces. Parking charges can help to encourage alternative transport choices and higher turnover of spaces. Better accessibility through a high turnover of vehicles being parked helps to support local businesses.

Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are set by central government nationally and cannot be changed independently.

The proposed 2017/18 fees follow a review of parking demand in the city and the traffic management objectives set out in the Council's Local Transport Plan, therefore changes to the tariffs will not reflect the assumed 2% standard budgetary inflation value. Key proposals are summarised below:

- Increase the 2 hour (From £3.00 to £4.20) and 4 hour (from £4.00 to £6.20) rates at Zone M (Brunswick & Adelaide) to make fees the same as the medium term seafront tariff. Brunswick & Adelaide is a high demand area for visitors which has increased following the opening of the i360. Therefore, alongside changes at Regency Square Car Park, increases to the on street charges in this area would allow more parking flexibility for residents with an Area M resident permit. Increasing the Brunswick & Adelaide tariff to an on-street medium term tariff (the same current tariff as parts of the connecting Area Y – Central Brighton North) will make it the same as the medium term tariff and will reduce confusion as there are different tariffs in roads adjoining each other. Area M is a smaller zone than others nearby which has become isolated due to being surrounded by other parking zones and this on street change would provide the only opportunity to allow the Council to extend Area M into the medium tariff seafront section (Between Fourth Avenue and Little Western Street). This would also allow the Council to release more Area M permits and reduce the waiting list (was 272 in September 2016) which would be an added benefit to residents as the Council receives a lot of complaints from residents about this issue. Officers have been undertaking some recent surveys and this section of the seafront (Fourth Avenue to Little Western Street) is underused for most of the day so it is anticipated that by changing this section from exclusive pay & display to shared parking with residents (with an increase of Area M permits) would be cost neutral.
- Increase the 4 hours rate at Rottingdean High Street from £4.00 to £4.20 to bring it in line with the lower seafront tariff band in other areas.
- Increase visitor permits from £3.00 to £3.50 within Zones M, Y and Z (Central Brighton and Brunswick & Adelaide) to ensure that the cost of a visitor permit is more reflective of the higher demand and cost of on-street parking within these areas, and to reduce demand of on-street parking within the city centre. Visitor permits in the low tariff areas will remain at £3.00.
- Various increases to Business and Traders permits at rates between 7.7% and 17.6%. This is in response to the significant increasing demand of these permits which tend to be preferred to £10 one day waivers. These type of permits currently represent good value even at the proposed increase of price compared to a number of other authorities. It is also proposed to continue to offer a 50% discount for low emission vehicles to help meet the traffic management objectives of improved air quality
- Increase various other permits at rates between 4% and 20.2% to ensure demand of parking within controlled parking zones are reduced and ensure residents find it easier to find parking spaces. In addition, congestion in the central area can affect the reliability of journey times and long term parking can reduce accessibility and the turnover of spaces.
- Remove the 50% discount applied to bay suspensions after 8 weeks and that the flat rate of £40 per day per bay is put in place to encourage the bays to be brought back into public use as soon as possible. It is proposed that the additional income generated from this change will be offset by introducing a 50% discounted rate for Community Events. It is proposed that the decision as to whether an event qualifies or not for the discount be delegated to officers rather than requiring a committee paper for every new request to apply the discount.

3.13 Off-Street Parking (Appendix 5)

As with on-street parking charges, the proposed fees are considered to be at a level which reflects the Council's traffic management objectives, particularly to reduce congestion the city centre and promote alternative forms of transport. Key proposals are summarised below:

- Increase the 2 hour (from £4.00 to £4.50) and 4 hour (from £8.00 to £9.00) rates at Regency Square car park. As outlined above alongside Area M proposals.
- Increase various rates at Trafalgar Street car park, including Monday to Friday 1 hour rate from £2.00 to £3.00, 2 hour rate from £4.00 to £6.00, 4 hour rate from £8.00 to £9.00, 6 hour rate from £9.00 to £10.00, weekend 6 hour from £9.50 to £10.00 and weekend 24 hours/lost ticket from £17.50 to £18.00. This is to manage the demand for parked spaces at this location which has frequent queues with the car park being full on an almost a daily basis.
- It is proposed that a 7 day per week tariff at London Road car park is introduced which will reduce Saturday tariffs where there is low demand, and increase charges Monday to Friday when the car park operates at capacity. It is also proposed to increase the annual season tickets in this car park due the high demand Monday to Friday.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The proposed fees and charges in this report have been prepared in accordance with the council's fees and charges policy and form part of the proposed budget strategy. They take account of the requirement to increase by the corporate inflation rate of 2.0% (unless otherwise stated) and consideration has been given to other factors such as statutory requirement, cost recovery and prices charged by competitor / comparator organisations. Parking fees and charges are set to meet transport management objectives of managing demand for parking and reduce congestion.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Where Traffic Regulation Orders are required for proposed fee changes, objections received will be reported to this Committee at a future date.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Fees and charges are considered to be an important source of income in enabling services to be sustained and provided. A wide range of services are funded or part funded by fees and charges including those detailed in the report. The overall budget strategy aims to ensure that fees and charges are maintained or increased as a proportion of gross expenditure through identifying income generating opportunities, ensuring that charges for discretionary services and trading accounts cover costs, and ensuring than fees and charges keep pace with price inflation and/or competitor and comparator rates.
- 6.2 Fees and charges budgets for 2017/18 are assumed to increase by a standard inflation rate of 2.0% with the exception of those listed within this report. The

Council's Corporate Fees and Charges Policy requires that all fees and charges are reviewed at least annually and should normally be increased by either; the standard rate of inflation, statutory increase or increases in the costs of providing services.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The fees and charges recommended in this report have been reviewed in line with the Corporate Fees and Charges Policy, and budget assumptions approved by Policy, Resources and Growth Committee. The anticipated recurring financial impact of fee changes will be reflected within service revenue budgets and contribute towards the achievement of budget saving proposals. Income from fees and charges will be reviewed as part of the budget monitoring process.
- 7.2 There will be costs associated to advertising Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for changes to charges within the Transport service which will be met from existing revenue budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford

Date: 01/12/16

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 The council needs to establish for each of the charges imposed both the power to levy charges of that type and, where applicable, the power to set the charge at a particular level. In some cases the amount of the charges is set by Government. In other cases where a figure is not prescribed, the amount that can be charged may be restricted to costs recovery. For discretionary charges such as commercial waste collection, charges can be set at a commercial rate determined by the Council. Special provisions apply in the case of parking charges which are set out below. In all cases, the council must act reasonably and ensure that any statutory formalities which govern the particular charge are complied with.
- 7.4 The Council is entitled to set parking charges at levels that will enable it to meet its traffic management objectives for example, by managing supply and demand for parking. Under section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by the Traffic Management Act 2004, the Council must keep an account of all parking income and expenditure in designated (i.e. on-street) parking spaces which are in a Civil Enforcement Area, and of their income and expenditure related to their functions as an enforcement authority. The use of any surplus income from civil parking enforcement is governed by section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended. This allows any surplus to be used for transport and highways related projects and expenditure such as supported bus services, concessionary fares and Local Transport Plan projects.

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 22/11/16

Equalities Implications:

- 7.5 Management of fees and charges is fundamental to the achievement of Council priorities. The Councils fees and charges policy aims to increase the proportion of costs met by the service user. Charges, where not set externally, are raised by corporate inflation rates unless there are legitimate anti-poverty considerations.
- 7.6 The Corporate Fees and Charge policy states that fees and charges reviews should have an Equalities Impact Assessment where appropriate. Where significant amendments to fees and charges have been proposed, the need for an Equalities Impact Assessment has been assessed and carried out where appropriate as part of the budget setting process. A cumulative impact assessment on fees and charges is included within the budget setting process.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.7 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from the recommendation this report.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.8 There are no other significant implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Proposed City Environmental Management Fees and Charges 2017-18
2. Proposed Regulatory Services Fees and Charges 2017-18
3. Proposed City Transport (Highways) Fees and Charges 2017-18
4. Proposed City Transport (Parking) Fees and Charges 2017-18

Documents in Members' Rooms

There are no documents in Member's Rooms.

Background Documents

There are no background documents.

