

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Corporate Management Team

to
Cabinet
on
11 February 2016

Report prepared by: Ian Ambrose
Group Manager, Financial Management

Fees & Charges 2016/17
All Scrutiny Committees
Executive Councillor: Councillor Ron Woodley
A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1 Purpose of Report

To consider the detailed fees and charges for services in 2016/17 included in the budget proposals for 2016/17.

2 Recommendation

That the Cabinet recommend that the proposed fees & charges for each Department as contained within the body of this report and the appendices be approved by Council.

3 Background

- 3.1 Income from fees and charges are an important part of the Council's overall financial strategy and assist in the overall balancing of the budget. Clearly the scope to increase fees or charges is determined by a number of factors, of which the most important are: strategic desirability, government direction, elasticity of demand for services, and impact on service users. There is no prescribed increase in individual fees and charges, although the medium term financial strategy assumes a 2% increase in net income collected (yield) from general price increases. Some proposed savings are also predicated on discreet increases over and above the assumed 2% increase in yield or new charges, and have been included within the schedules.
- 3.2 Where fees are subject to VAT, the rate of 20% has been incorporated into these proposals.

3.3 In addition some charges made by the Council are set by statute and therefore they are not at the discretion of the Council; these are clearly marked in the attached charges.

4 Proposals for 2016/17

4.1 Proposals for fees and charges for 2016/17 are set out in the Appendices to this report.

Appendix 1 – Department for People

Appendix 2 – Department for Place

Appendix 3 – Department for Corporate Services

4.2 The proposed charges presented to Cabinet in January have been updated in light of the consultation with the Scrutiny Committees and the Business Sector. In addition there are revised proposals for Bowls and Licensing of external tables and chairs.

5 Other Options

No other options were considered. This report merely brings together the proposals for fees and charges, be they statutory or discretionary.

6 Reasons for Recommendations

Part of the process of maintaining a balanced budget includes a requirement to consider the contribution that fees and charges make towards that aim. This report is in fulfilment of that requirement.

7 Corporate Implications

7.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Critical Priorities

The budget strategy is an integral part of the Council's Corporate Service and Resources Planning Framework.

7.2 Financial Implications

As set out in the body of the report. In addition the additional income yield has been factored into the proposed 2016/17 budget

7.3 Legal Implications

None at this stage

7.4 People Implications

None at this stage

7.5 Property Implications

None at this stage

7.6 Consultation

The proposals contained in this report have been considered by the Scrutiny Committees and the Business Sector consultation meeting.

- Place Scrutiny Committee made observations about the proposed increases in car parking charges and requested the inclusion of the Waste Collection charges set by the Council's contractor, but otherwise offered no comments on the draft fees and charges for 2016/17 in respect of their areas of responsibility;
- People Scrutiny Committee sought clarification about charges for Meals on Wheels and Adult Social Care Transport, but otherwise offered no comments on the draft fees and charges for 2016/17 in respect of their areas of responsibility;
- Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee sought clarification about the proposed bereavement charges but otherwise offered no comments on the draft fees and charges for 2016/17 in respect of their areas of responsibility;
- The Business Sector Consultation meeting offered no comments on the draft fees and charges for 2016/17.

Wherever required public consultation will commence in time to ensure that the new fee structures can be in place for the start of the new financial year.

7.7 Equalities Impact Assessment

None at this stage

7.8 Risk Assessment

The key risks are:

Elasticity of demand for some services may mean that increases in fees & charges lead to a fall in income collected.

Some residents/service users may not be able to afford increases, so that the impact may fall disproportionately on those on low incomes.

Assumptions about increases for those items that are not set by the Council may not be correct.

7.9 Value for Money

In order to deliver value for money it is essential that the Council gets the right balance between charging for services and funding services from Council Tax.

7.10 Community Safety Implications

None at this stage

7.11 Environmental Impact

None at this stage

8 Background Papers

None

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Department for People

Appendix 2 – Department for Place

Appendix 3 – Department for Corporate Services