



Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Garry Payne, Chief Executive, Mark Billington, Service Director People and Places, Mark Broadhurst, Service Director Health and Wellbeing, Marianne Hesketh, Service Director Performance and Innovation, Clare James, Head of Finance	Cllr Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder, Cllr Michael Vincent, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder, Cllr Lynne Bowen, Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder, Cllr Simon Bridge, Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder	October 2018

Review of Fees and Charges 2019/20

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To confirm the proposed fees and charges for the 2019/20 financial year.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 Increase in income generation to support the Council's Budget.
- 2.2 Improve the return from our assets and deliver a programme of commercial initiatives as part of the council's Commercial Strategy.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That the proposed fees and charges, as set out in Appendix 1, for the financial year 2019/20 be approved.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Cabinet last formally considered its charging policy, as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan, at its meeting on 17 October 2018.

- 4.2** Charging for local services makes a significant contribution to council finances, and can be used to influence individuals' choices and to bring benefits to local communities. Charges can be set to encourage or discourage people to use services and through concessions to pursue local objectives.
- 4.3** A briefing entitled 'Income from Charging' was issued by the Audit Commission in September 2013 which used data from the value for money profiles and presented a high level analysis of councils' income from charging and the contribution it makes to service spending and allowed comparisons to other councils of the same type and changes over time. The data was the subject of a value for money review undertaken as part of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme and was considered at the meeting 15 December 2014.
- 4.4** The level of income generated by fees and charges and in particular projected increases which the council can influence, form a key part of the council's financial planning and is therefore reflected in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 4.5** As a result of the long period of austerity and reduced levels of central government funding there is an increased emphasis on income generation and working towards sustainable services. All staff have received commercialisation training to improve their skills and build on the 'work smart' Financial discipline and Commercial Awareness goal within the Council's Narrative Statement. This broadening of the traditional mindset in local authorities is essential to improve our financial sustainability and continue to provide value for money services.

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio

The main venues within the Leisure, Health and Community Engagement portfolio that generate substantial levels of fee income are the Marine Hall, Thornton Little Theatre and Cemeteries. Fee income is also included from Pest Control, Food Safety Services, Private Water Supplies and Licensing, countryside general, Wyre Estuary Country Park, Rossall Point and outdoor amenities (including bowling at King Georges Playing Field).

5.1.1 Pest Control

In the past, the pest control service has been subsidised. However since 2015/16 small surpluses have been achieved after excluding support service costs 2017/18 (£1,681). It is proposed to maintain all fees at current levels. The Pest Control Service have been unable to source one of the elements used to produce Mouse Packs and therefore it is proposed to remove the Mouse Packs product from the list of items for sale.

5.1.2 Food Safety Services

It is proposed to round to the nearest pound the fees for Food Premises Hygiene Re-Rating Inspection Applications introduced last year. Following

comparison with two other local councils it is proposed to increase a Food Export Certificate from £45 to £55 and additional copies from £1 to £5.

Health and Safety Posters and all booklets except the Food Hygiene booklet are no longer provided and it is proposed to delete the relevant fees. It is proposed to add two further tonnage classes, up to 1,000 and between 1,001- 3,000 and increase the fees for Ship Sanitation Certificates by tonnage in line with Association of Port Health Authority guidance. The current fee for the council to provide a Health and Safety Statement of Fact is £101.20 which does not reflect the amount of time that is spent on specific cases. Some cases may involve appearance in court and costs may exceed the current fee. Therefore it is proposed to reduce the one off charge to £100 for the first hour spent on the case, but introduce an additional hourly rate charge of £38 to more accurately reflect the actual cost of the specific case to the council. The initial charge of £100 is to reflect the fact that whilst our officer is working on the client's case, they are not working on their enforcement duties.

5.1.3 Contaminated Land

It is proposed to increase Contaminated Land enquiries from £60 to £100 following a benchmarking exercise.

5.1.4 Licensing

Amendments to fees and charges for licensing are the responsibility of the Licensing Committee and will be considered later in the financial year.

5.1.5 Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre

A thorough review of the fees and charges at both venues was conducted last year and it is proposed to maintain the majority of fees and charges at the same level with the following exceptions:

- An increase of £50 to the non-commercial hire evening and full day and evening hires at Marine Hall
- An increase of £50 to the commercial hire full day and evening hires at Marine Hall
- An increase of £5 to the hourly rate for hire of, Marine Café/ Waterfront Room/ Wyre Bar
- An increase of £5 to the car boot charges
- An increase to the fee for funeral gatherings at Thornton Little Theatre from £100 to £150.

5.1.6 Cemeteries

In 2017/18 the cemetery service generated a small deficit (£10,820) and the current approach is to aim to run the service on a break-even basis. Therefore it is proposed to increase the majority of fees by approximately 1%, with several exceptions:

- It is recommended that the fees for public burials remain constant as these are internal costs except for the grant/certificate required for child stillborn or not exceeding 1 month.
- The introduction of a new fee for interment of cremated remains on a Saturday is proposed owing to demand.

- It is recommended to maintain the Columbarium fees including inscriptions at current levels to encourage sales of new units rather than grave space which is of limited supply. It is also recommended that fees for memorial mushroom plaques and sundial and baby garden plaques remain constant to promote sales. The fee for a white urn has been deleted as no longer supplied. The fee of £299 for granite bench plaques has been included.
- The transfer and Grant form are the same document and so have been merged to one line at the price of £27.50.

5.1.7 Marsh Mill

No increases are proposed to the minimal fees currently being levied.

5.1.8 Countryside/Wyre Estuary Country Park/ Rossall Point

It is proposed to maintain fees at the current level to encourage use of the areas, attendance at events and continued participation in walks and talks with the exception of fees for school visits. With immediate effect to comply with HMRC guidance and to remain consistent between countryside and Wyre Estuary Country Park, the fees per head for school visits (led by a Ranger with an educational theme) are to be charged exempt of VAT at £2.50 (half day) and £3.50 (full day).

5.1.9 Outdoor Amenity Charges

New fees for bowling were introduced in February 2016 after consultation with bowling clubs and no increase is proposed this year. It is proposed to increase Junior 9 hole Pitch and Putt fees by 20p to £3.

5.2 Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder

The main service within the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety portfolio that generates a substantial level of fee income is car parking. This portfolio also includes income from Housing Renovation Grants.

5.2.1 Car Parking

It is proposed to redefine Derby Road West Cleveleys as a Long Stay car park and to rationalise the car park charges introducing Up to 1 hour (£1), Up to 3 hours (£2) and All Day (£3.50) charges, with the All Day charge to be transferable between Long Stay Car Parks. Rough Lea Road car park is to remain short stay with a maximum stay of 2 hours because of its high turnover.

A new fee of £2 is proposed for Overnight Parking at all car parks between 6pm and 8am.

It is also recommended that Season Ticket charges are reduced to encourage take up and details are shown in Appendix 1.

5.2.2 Housing

A Portfolio Holder report in May 2018 approved an increase to the administration fees on Disabled Facilities Grants to 15% and therefore no further increases are proposed at this stage.

It is proposed to maintain the charges for the Handyman service at £10.

5.3 Planning and Economic Development Portfolio

The three main service areas within the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio that generate substantial levels of fee income are Planning, Building Control and Fleetwood Market.

The majority of the Building Control Fees are set in accordance with the Building Regulations Act 2010 allowing authorities to fix their own charges based on full cost recovery. The Head of Built Environment has the delegated authority to amend these fees as necessary. Similarly, all tenancy matters up to an annual sum of £25,000, including market rents are delegated to the Head of Built Environment. The fees for submitting planning applications required by Legislation are set nationally and the statutory fees came into force 17 January 2018.

5.3.1 Development Control

The majority of discretionary income relates to pre application discussion fees which need to be high enough to maintain a reasonable level of income and low enough to encourage applicants to come forward and seek such pre application meetings. It also helps that the fee structure is easy to understand and comprises of rounded figures. Lancashire County Council (LCC) highways, a key consultee, no longer provide pre application advice (except under their own scheme) and this means that developers seeking advice on highway matters no longer get that from a meeting with Wyre and instead have to pay a separate fee to LCC. Therefore it is considered that the fee structure for pre application advice should remain unchanged.

5.3.2 Building Control

No increases are proposed to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations Act 2010 which requires recovery of costs.

5.3.3 Markets

Indoor market rents are reviewed every three years and delegated to the Head of Built Environment.

It is recommended to maintain the outdoor market fees at Poulton and Cleveleys at current levels recognising the difficult economic climate. The VAT treatment of fees if the trial market at Cleveleys is made permanent may change depending on its final location, if VAT is payable this will initially be absorbed by the council.

5.3.4 Estates

It is proposed to increase the fee for use of land for a funfair by £50 to £350, additional rides/stalls by £10 to £50 and non-operations day rates by £25 to £75. It is also proposed to increase the fee for use of land by a circus by £25 to £400 and the call out fee by £10 to £50.

It is proposed to introduce a minimum fee of £100 for location filming, additional fees of £50 and £100 for administration of licences and a late notice fee of £150.

For Butts Close the fees for administration for assigning fees and renewal of a lease have been removed with immediate effect as we are not permitted to assign a lease or renew a lease for protected tenancies. Unprotected tenancies are to be charged the new lease fee of £150. It is proposed to increase the administration fee for early termination of lease from £150 to £200.

An increase of £10, from £50 to £60, is proposed for the administration of fees for new licences and assignment of a licence at Skippool Creek.

5.3.5 Wyred Up

It is proposed to remove the fees for Wyred Up while the scheme is refocused. However the price of a ticket for the Wyre Business Awards is proposed to increase from £40 to £50 in order to cover costs and be comparable with the prices charged at similar events elsewhere.

5.4 Resources Portfolio

5.4.1 MOT Test Centre

It is proposed to maintain fees at the current level to embed this new service.

5.4.2 Legal Fees

The authority to determine charges for the recovery of legal costs is delegated to the Head of Finance. It is proposed to increase all fees and round to the nearest whole pound by September CPI (2.4%).

5.4.3 Land Charges

The determination of fees and charges for Local Land charges is delegated to the Head of Finance. The council is required to ensure that over a three year period, the total income from charges does not exceed the total costs of granting access to property records. No changes are proposed at this stage.

5.4.4 Civic Centre Room Hire

It is proposed to maintain fees at the current levels with the aim of increasing the number of bookings.

5.4.5 Street Naming and Numbering

It is proposed to maintain fees at the current level as they continue to be representative of the administration involved.

5.4.6 Data Protection

The Fee for Subject Access Requests has been removed as charging is not permitted in most cases under the newly introduced General Data Protection Regulations. However, where the request is manifestly

unfounded or excessive a “reasonable fee” for the administrative costs of complying with the request may be levied.

If an individual requests further copies of their data following a request then a reasonable fee may be charged. This must be based on the administrative costs of providing further copies.

5.5 Street Scene and Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio

The main services within this portfolio are waste management, public conveniences, the dog warden service, parks and open spaces and playing fields.

5.5.1 Public Conveniences

It is recommended to maintain the current level of charges awaiting any findings from the review by the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group.

5.5.2 Dog Welfare

No change to the fees for stray dogs fees is proposed.

Removal of the fee for Micro-chipping is recommended as there is very little uptake owing to it being competitively available at other outlets and free events. It also removes the on-going training requirement for Officers.

The line for Control of Dog has been removed as this fee is covered in the list of Fixed Penalty Notices and the fee for sale of Muk Sak - dog waste containers has also been removed.

5.5.3 Domestic Refuse – Bulky Items

The service is generally cost neutral with income covering the expenditure (in 2017/18 the service made a small net surplus of £11,100). The contract with Calico and Blackpool Council expires in September 2019. It is recommended that the service remain competitively priced so that people are encouraged to use it (and not fly tip) and as such it is advised to maintain fees at current levels.

5.5.4 Green Waste

No change is proposed to fees. The service is currently in its third year and already proving to be popular with residents.

5.5.5 Provision of Standard Suite of Waste Recycling Containers-New Properties / Replacement Containers

It is proposed to introduce two new fees for a standard suite excluding green bin to homeowners and developers and increase the fees for a standard suite including green bins to homeowners and developers from £56 to £66. This will make a clear distinction when residents do not wish to sign up to the green waste service that a green bin will not be required or provided. It is also proposed to increase the fee to replace individual stolen/missing/damaged bins and boxes to £22.50.

5.5.6 Street Cleansing

It is proposed to introduce new fees for ad hoc private work and grounds maintenance private work on a quote basis with fly tipping cost fees remaining at current levels.

5.5.7 Parks and Open Spaces

It is proposed to maintain the fees for the Memorial Park Pavilion at current levels to encourage use. The £5 fee for additional equipment has been removed.

5.5.8 Leisure Development

It is proposed to increase all playing field fees by 2.4% September CPI, rounded.

5.6 **Overview and Scrutiny**

Initial proposals for amendments or increases to fees and charges have been reviewed and discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 26 November with their recommendations being reported to Portfolio Holders and amendments included within this report.

Delegated functions

- 6.1 The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive function delegated to each Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution): "To determine charges or fees for any relevant services operated within the Portfolio".

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	The financial implications of the fees and charges will be reflected in the Revenue Estimates which will be considered by Cabinet at their meeting 13 February 2019.
Legal	There are no significant legal implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	✓

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x

health and safety	x
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Processing Personal Data

If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in personal data being processed, a primary impact assessment (PIA) will have been completed and signed off by the council's Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken (as required by the General Data Protection Regulations 2018).

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

Appendix 1– Proposed fees and charges for the 2019/20 financial year.