

Review of Fees and Charges

Report by John Blair, Director Resources

1 Purpose of Report

To advise Council of the proposed revisions to Fees and Charges for 2014/15.

2 Background

2.1 Reports

As part of the Councils transformation programme, it was agreed to undertake a corporate review of Fees and Charges.

The Council has to date considered the following reports:

Date	Report	Agreed
25 Sep 2012	Review of Fees and Charges. Report by Director Corporate Resources	The Council agreed to combine the items and meantime to remit the matter for consideration at a seminar of the Council to which all members be invited
4 Dec 2012	Seminar of Midlothian Council	Minute of seminar submitted to Council on 18 December 2012 and that a detailed report be submitted to the Council meeting on 5 February 2013
18 Dec 2012	Review of Fees and Charges for Adult Services. Report by Director Communities and Wellbeing	To note the consultation. To introduce the proposed changes with effect from 1 April 2013 in respect of Community Alarm Service Telecare Care at Home Services
5 Feb 2013	Review of Fees and Charges. Report by Director Corporate Resources	To note the revised fees and charges and changes to timescales outlined.
5 Feb 2013	Commercial Waste Collection; Trade Waste Charges 2013/14. Report by Director Corporate Resources	To approve the revised Trade Waste Charging arrangements and the revised arrangements with effect from 1 April 2013.
17 Dec 2013	Review of Fees and Charges Report by Director Resources	To refer the report to a Cross Party Working Group to examine proposals in detail and to report back in early course

2.2 Working Group

The Cross Party Working Group comprises of the following membership

Councillor Derek Rosie – Chair

Councillor Bob Constable (with Councillor Owen Thompson as substitute)

Councillor Derek Milligan

Councillor Jim Murihead

Councillor Ian Baxter

The inaugural meeting of the Working Group was held on 21 January 2014 and agreed the following actions:

- The Councils current Corporate Charging Strategy and Charing Framework should be updated to reflect best practice as detailed in the Accounts Commission report '*How councils work: an improvement series for councillors and officers*' Charging for services: are you getting it right?
- Fees and Charges considered as being commercial in nature, be progressed via February 2014 Council report, with remaining the non commercial fees and charges, largely community facilities being subject to a separate report in March 2014.
- Officers to come forward with proposals on concessionary charges and a consistent approach to the application of concessions, along with harmonisation of charges proposals to the next Cross Party Working group meeting arranged for 3 February 2014.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The following table summarises the anticipated full year additional income for 2014/15 together with the budgetary impact to the Council based on the proposed increases as set out in the Appendix.

Directorate	Service	Budget Impact for 2014/15	Additional Anticipated Annual Income
Resources	Commercial Operations		
	Burials	£10,000	£10,000
	Garden Maintenance	£0	£4,000
	Events/Allotments	£0	£200
	Travel & Fleet Services	£0	£100
	Waste Management	£15,000	£15,000
	Customer Services		
	Registrars	£5,000	£7,500
	Civic Government	£1,500	£3,700
	Total for Directorate	£31,500	£40,500
Health and Social Care	Adults and Community Care		
	Resources and Adult Care	£27,000	£27,000
	Housing & Community Safety		
	Environmental Health	£1,500	£1,500
	Total for Directorate	£28,500	£28,500
	Grand Total	£60,000	£69,000

3.2 Risk

For non commercial fees and charges there is a risk that some individuals and groups may be impacted by the proposed increase in fees. Work will be undertaken, in the form of consultation and linking in with other work programmes, e.g. review of grant funding, to ensure that these risks are minimised. This will be reflected in the report to Council in March 2014.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☒ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian

- ☒ Sustainable growth
☒ Business transformation and Best Value
☐ None of the above

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, councils have a duty to provide Best Value in the service they deliver to their customers, within this duty, council are required to demonstrate sound management of their resources and to use review and option appraisal to deliver best value services.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The proposals set out in this paper have been developed in conjunction with representatives of all Council Directorates and via the members working group. It is anticipated that a further report on the findings and recommendations from the Accounts Commission report will be forthcoming. Service Directors will consult with relevant groups and organisations on the impact to the proposed charges as set out in the Appendix where applicable.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

As stated above work requires to be undertaken to ensure that effected groups are consulted in relation to any proposed increases.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The development of a consistent approach to the consideration of charges ensures that the viability of services can be maintained.

3.9 IT Issues

IT issues in this report relate to the maintenance of the corporate database of charges. The updating and maintenance is reflected in the Resources Directorate work programme.

4 Recommendations

Council is requested to:

- a) Approve in principle the proposed revisions to fees and charges as detailed in the Appendix;
- b) Note the plans to consult with relevant service users;
- c) Note that a further report will be presented to Council in March 2014.

Date 24 January 2014

Report Contact:

Name: Lynne Barclay

Tel No: 0131 561 5405

lynne.barclay@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 – Proposed fee increases

Declaration Box

Instructions: *This box must be completed by the author of the report. The box will be copied and saved by the Council Secretariat who will delete it from the report prior to photocopying the agenda.*

Title of Report: *Review of Fees and Charges*

Meeting Presented to: *BTB/BTSG*

Author of Report: *Lynne Barclay*

I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat (Check boxes to confirm):-

- ☒ *All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Human Resources.*
- ☒ *All risk implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *All other report implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.*

For Cabinet reports, please advise the Council Secretariat if the report has an education interest. This will allow the report to be located on the Cabinet agenda among the items in which the Religious Representatives are entitled to participate.

Likewise, please advise the Council Secretariat if any report for Midlothian Council has an education interest. The Religious Representatives are currently entitled to attend meetings of the Council in a non-voting observer capacity, but with the right to speak (but not vote) on any education matter under consideration, subject always to observing the authority of the Chair.

