



Midlothian Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of Review of Fees & Charges

2016

Name of Fee/Charge being reviewed	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Customer and Housing Services – Library Service and Miscellaneous charges; Registrar charges.2. Adult and Social Care – Resources and Adult Care3. Education – Arts and Creativity; Lasswade High School evening classes; Beeslack High School classes; Evening classes various locations; Lifelong learning and Employability evening classes; Beeslack High School Leisure facilities; Newbattle Community High School – Leisure facilities.4. Communities and Economy – Planning and Building Control; Landlord fees; Environmental Health; Trading Standards.5. Property and Facilities Management – Healthy Living Services – Harmonised charges pitches, rooms and Halls; Tonezone Membership (PFM 1); Casual Leisure centre facilities (PFM 2); Snowsports centre, School meals (PFM 5), Bonnyrigg District Heating Scheme.6. Commercial – Road services; Travel and Fleet Services.7. Finance and Integrated Service Support – Civic Government.
Department and service area	See above
Completion Date	29 February 2016
Lead officer	John Blair

Aims and Objectives

The aim is to increase charges for services detailed and provided by the Council taking into account inflation, statutory pricing, policy, cost of providing the service and benchmarking against other local authorities/providers. Generally fees and charges have not been increased since 2014 and in some cases prior to this date.

1. Does the proposed fee/charge affect people?

Yes

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No

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2. What is/are the reason(s) for your reviewed fee/charge?

To increase charges in line with inflation and statutory charge limit, to contribute to the cost of providing services, and to reflect charges collected by other local authorities.

3. Impact

Which of the protected characteristics* will the reviewed fee/charge have an impact upon?

Equality Target Group*	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Relevant evidence/ information
Age	Concessionary rates are available in most circumstances	Older people and those in poor economic circumstances may be adversely affected	
Disability	Concessionary rates are available	Disabled people in receipt of benefits may be adversely affected	
Gender	No impact	No impact	

Reassignment			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact	No impact	
Pregnancy and maternity	No impact	Single parents in low income households maybe adversely affected	
Race	No impact	No impact	
Religion or Belief	No impact	No impact	
Sex	Concessionary rates are available	Men and women along with disabled men and women in low income households maybe affected.	
Sexual Orientation	No impact	No impact	

4. How will the implementation of the reviewed fee/charge be communicated to those affected by any changes?

Information will be available on the Council's web site and in paper format at each of the Council's outlets where these services are available. If required and requested this information can be made available in different formats and languages by emailing equalities@midlothian.gov.uk or by telephoning the Equality, Diversity and HR Officer on 0131 271 3658.

5. How will you monitor the impact of the changes proposed? When is the fee/charge due to be reviewed?

The impact will be determined by the actual uptake of these services and the income received in comparison to the previous uptake/income levels. This data/information will be taken into consideration at the next annual review of fees and charges.

6. Please use the space below to detail any other matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process.

Customer and Housing Services

Library Service and Misc

Increased charges for Library Services and Miscellaneous take into account inflation and statutory pricing. Generally this amounts to 5% per function. These charges have not been increased since August 2014 and in some cases prior to that date.

It should be noted that:

- Printing (black, white and colour); Photocopies (black, white, colour, A4 and A3 single & multiple sheets); and Laminating (A3 and A4 per sheet) charges are harmonised across all Council services/outlets in line with pricing policy.
- Fax sending (per sheet, UK & Europe) will be held to a maximum of £3.00;
- Fax sending (International per sheet) will be held to a maximum of £4.00 and
- USB Flash drives will be determined by cost of purchase

Registrars

Charges for Registrar Services take into account inflation and the introduction of new charges to ensure the cost of the service is met. This amounts to a 5% inflation increase per function with the exception of Citizenship Ceremonies where a 9% increase will be applied. There will be no increases for Statutory charges. Generally these charges have not been increased since April 2014.

It should be noted that

- Risk Assessment undertaken by Registrar will be a newly introduced charge at £50.00 to cover the cost of the service.
- Baby naming ceremony and the renewal of vows will be a newly introduced charge at £250.00 based on existing ceremony fees minus statutory fees due to legal requirements for this ceremony.
- A £1.00 postage charge will be newly introduced to cover the costs of this service and bring costs in line with other local authorities.

Adult and Social Care

Resources and Adult Care

Charges for Resources and Adult care take into account inflation and statutory pricing. This amounts to a 5% increase per function with the exception of Care home charges where there will be no increase. Generally these charges have not been increased since April 2014.

It should be noted that:

- Homecare charges and Housing support charges have been increased by 4.9% as the price needs to be divisible by 4 to allow charging for 15 minute slots when required.
- Homecare charges, Housing support charges, Day centre meals and Care home charges are determined by a financial assessment with a maximum charge.

Education

Evening classes

Increased charges for Evening classes across all locations including Schools and Adult learning locations take into account inflation. This amounts to 5% per function with the exception of Higher evening classes where 1% increase will be added to ensure no loss of business. Generally these charges have not been increased since August 2014.

It should be noted that:

- There is currently no concessionary rates at Beeslack High school
- A 1% increase only for code A classes (Highers) to ensure no loss of business.

Education leisure services (Beeslack and Newbattle Community High)

Increased charges for Education leisure services take into account inflation. This amounts to 5% per function with the exception of Swimming pool hire/single use, Tennis court hire, Fitness suite hire or use of O Zone where there will be no increase. Generally these charges have not been increased since August 2014.

It should be noted that:

- A 7% increase for the NPLQ course will be introduced to bring the cost in line with Healthy Living Services.
- No increases will be introduced for Tennis Court hire or use of the Fitness Suite due to the current standards of both facilities at Beeslack High School.
- No increases will be introduced for the use of the swimming pool at Beeslack High school as no

concessionary rates are offered to the public as is and limited opening times.

- No increases will be introduced for use of the swimming pool or O Zone due to the current standards of both facilities at Newbattle Community High School.

Communities and Economy

Planning and Building Control

Charges across Planning and Building Control services take into account statutory pricing, ensuring service costs are met and are in line with other local Authorities, Generally charges for building standards have not been increased since April 14 and planning charges since November 2014.

It should be noted that:

- Planning Application Fees are variable according to development size, Minimum charge being £202.00 and a maximum charge of £20,055. No increase due to statutory charging provisions.
- No increases will be introduced to Permissions to display an advertisement or Building warrants (variable charges according to cost of works) which are statutory charges.
- A 50% increase will be applied to charges under planning to ensure the costs of the service are met. Generally these charges have not increased since April 2010.
- Benchmarked: 30% increase will be introduced for a letter of comfort where the building warrant is obtained but competition certificate not. Charges now in line after a benchmarking exercise undertaken across all 32 local authorities, charges increased to a fee seen as mid range.
- 130% increase will be introduced for a letter of comfort where no building warrant is obtained. Charges now in line following a benchmarking exercise undertaken with all 32 local authorities, charges increased to a fee seen as mid range.
- No increases will be applied building standards searches, copies of documents and plans from the building standards register. Costs are already in line with other local authorities after a benchmarking exercise undertaken across all 32 local authorities.
- A new charge will be introduced for the Request for written confirmation from Building Standards that a proposal is exempt from the Standards or exempt from requiring Building Warrant. The charge introduced will be £50.00 after a benchmarking exercise carried out.
- A new charge will be introduced for the costs involved in administrating on site works

following issue of a dangerous or defective building notice. (Surveyor/administrative charge). Charges in line with a benchmarking exercise undertaken with all 32 local authorities and Section 1, Buildings (Recovery of Expenses) (Scotland) Act 2014 allowing an authority to charge expenses incurred in progressing works or notice.

Landlord fees

No increases will be introduced to Landlord Registration Fees due to statutory charges.

Environmental Health

Increased charges for Environmental Health take into account inflation. This amounts to 5% per function. Generally these charges have not been increased since June 2014.

It should be noted that:

- The Riding Establishments Fee includes a veterinary inspector's fee which is variable dependent on the number of horses.

Trading Standards

Increase charges for Trading Standards take into account inflation and statutory pricing. This amounts to 5% per function with the exception of all petroleum Licences, Explosion Store Licence and registration and Poisons Registration where there will be no increase due to statutory charging. Generally these charges have not been increased since April 2010.

It should be noted that

- Weights and Measures equipment test fees will increase by 5% due to inflation.

Property and Facilities Management

Harmonised pitches and Hall charges

Increased harmonised charges for the above services at Council-wide outlets take into account inflation. This amounts to 2% (before rounding) per function for the hire of all pitches, rooms and halls across all Midlothian Council facilities. These charges have not been increased since the introduction in August 2014.

It should be noted that

- Concessions will be applied in accordance with the Concession Policy.
- A 2% increase will be introduced for the hire of pitches, rooms and halls across all Midlothian Facilities.

Tonezone membership

Increased charges for Tonezone Memberships are in line with other local Authorities. Generally these charges have not been increased since April 2013.

It should be noted that

- All costs are in line with benchmarking exercise undertaken with other local authorities.
- No increase will be introduced for Platinum Tonezone memberships.
- A 2% increase will be introduced to Gold, Silver, Bronze and Teenzone Memberships and joining fees.
- A 30% increase will be introduced to the Golden years Tonezone membership.

Leisure Centre facilities

Increased charges for Casual Leisure Centre facilities are in line with other local Authorities. Generally these charges have not been increased since April 2014.

It should be noted that

- This amounts to a 0% increase across this service with the exception of charges listed below;
 - 12% increase in Tonezone access;
 - 2% increase for Swimming;
 - 10% increase for Fitness/activity class;
 - 5% increase for Aquafit class;
 - 1% increase for Tonezone induction and
 - 100% increase for over 60's off peak activity £1.00 to £2.00. Costs have been static for five years, some consultations have been carried out. This is a unique service where few local authorities offer a similar service.

Snowsports centre

Charges for all Snowsports centre services have been determined by a charging exercise carried out to analyse sales volumes. Increases and decreases have been applied accordingly with the exception of Meeting room charges where a 40% increase has been applied to bring cost in line with harmonisation model for all council facilities. Generally these charges have

not been increased since August 2015.

It should be noted that

All costs have been determined by a charging exercise carried out to analyse sales volumes. Increases and decreases have been applied accordingly with the exception of Meeting room charges where a 40% increase has been applied to bring cost in line with harmonisation model for all council facilities.

- Under Ski/Snowboarding instruction a 20% increase will be applied open taster 4/5/6 years olds (1 hour). A 25% increase applied to a Family lesson (one extra junior, maximum add on).
- Under Ski/Snowboarding instruction a 50% decrease will be applied for both Adult and Junior BASI courses per day.
- No increases will be applied for Tubing or Practice Skiing and Snowboarding per hour, weekly tickets or season tickets.
- A 33% decrease will be applied to 1 chairlift return journey.
- Under events, a 33% decrease will be applied to Event entry on or off peak.

Catering Services – School meals

It should be noted that:

- Catering Services will increase School meals by 15p per meal. This includes Primary school (from £1.80 to £ 1.95), High school (from £2.00 to £2.15) and Adult meals (from £2.50 to £2.65).
- School meals are free to all primary school children from P1 to P3.
- School meals are free to all ages if in receipt of one of the following benefits; Income Support; Income-based Job Seekers Allowance; Income Related Employment and Support Allowance; Child Tax Credit ONLY (with an annual income of less than £16,105); Child tax Credit AND Working Tax Credit (with an annual income less than £6,420); Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; Universal Credit.

Commercial

Road Services

Charges across road services have been adapted so they are set in line with National legislation or aligned with average prices charged by other local authorities. This amounts to a minimum increase of 4% to a maximum increase of 217% per function with the exception of Statutory charges and Property Enquiries; Property Enquiry adoption plan; Tables and Chairs up to 12 months (New application and Renewal); where there will be no increase as charges are already in line with other authorities. Generally these charges have not been increased since

April 2014.

It should be noted that:

- A benchmarking exercise was carried out to set charges in line with National legislation or align with average prices charged by other local authorities;
- An 11% increase will be introduced for Footway Crossing up to 3 working days; Hoarding; Hoist Access Tower; Materials/Road Occupation; Mobile Crane; Scaffolding and Skip; Temporary Traffic Signals 2 way- non public utility and Cabin/Storage container;
- A 4% increase will be introduced to Crane; Excavations Minor works (Up to 3 working days, 4-10 working days and over 10 working days) and
- Accident Data retrievals will be increased to £25.00 after an 8% increase with an initial charge of £25.00 plus additional £25.00 per km, based on unit cost of staff time.

Travel and fleet services

Charges for Travel and Fleet services take into account inflation and statutory pricing. This amounts to a 5% increase for non entitled Travel School Bus Pass. There will be no increase for Lost school bus passes and Blue badges where there is a Statutory cap. Generally these charges have not been increased since April 2014.

Finance and ISS

Civic government

Charges for Civic Government take into account inflation and statutory pricing. This amounts to a 5% increase per function with the exception of replacement Private Hire Car Plates and Discs, Copies of Licence, Registers and Identification cards where a significant increase has been applied to introduce consistent charging across licensing and to contribute to the cost of providing the service. Generally these charges have not been increased since April 2014.

It should be noted that:

- Where applicants can apply for 1, 2 or 3 year licences, fees for 2 and 3 years are based on 95% and 90% of the cost of 1 year licence respectively.
- No charge is currently levied for Charity Car Boot Sales or Public Charitable Collection Permits.
- A standard charge of £25.00 will be introduced for Replacement Private Hire Car Discs, Plates, Brackets, Licence and Identification card copies to ensure a consistent charge across Licensing. (Currents charges range from £6.00 to £15.00).
- A standard charge of £80.00 will be introduced for Second Hand dealers Register and a register copy to ensure a consistent charge across Licensing.
- A 30% decrease will be applied to Private Hire Car Adjust Licence Change of Vehicle (no

insp/inc plates) to allow for consistent charges between Taxi/Private Hire costs.

Please send an electronic copy of completed forms to lesley.crozier@midlothian.gov.uk