

REPORT TO	ON
COUNCIL	25 November 2020



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Fees and Charges Policy	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Deputy Director of Finance

Is this report confidential?	No
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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To create a fees and charges policy (attached as appendix one) for South Ribble Council that creates a framework for revising current fees and charges as well as guide to introducing new charges.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. This report asks council to approve:
 - A fees and charges policy (attached as appendix one) for the council's discretionary fees and charges
3. This report asks council to note the proposed annual process for reviewing fees and charges

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

4. The council requires a policy for reviewing and amending fees and charges so that reviews are conducted frequently and consistently. A new framework will also assist the council when considering the introduction of new charges.
5. The council should endeavour, when it is legal and feasible to do so, to charge users to meet the full cost of providing services.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary Council	✓
Thriving communities	
A fair local economy that works for everyone	
Good homes, green spaces, healthy places	

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

7. The council's constitution outlines that it is the responsibility of each Chief Officer (Directors) to review, at least annually, the fees and charges under their discretion.
8. Fees and charges represent a significant source of income to the council. The 2020/21 budget includes income of £3.2m.
9. The council does not have a fees and charges policy and therefore does not have a framework for reviewing the services it charges for including the possible introduction of new fees and charges.
10. A new fees and charges policy has been created to ensure fees are reviewed frequently and consistently. The finance service will lead on the review every year alongside Service Managers and Directors. A review of fees and charges will be submitted annually to January Executive Cabinet. The final proposal will be included in the budget report taken to council in February/March. The fees and charges policy can be found in appendix one of this report.

FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

11. The new fees and charges policy is attached in appendix one. The aims of the policy are to provide a consistent framework for the review of the council's current fees and charges as well as guidance to introducing new charges.
12. The policy introduces some key principles of which two principles are not always achievable simultaneously:
 - Fees and charges should be set to assist the Council in achieving its **Corporate Priorities**. Services must raise income wherever there is a duty to do so, and should raise income wherever there is a power to do so, unless the introduction of a charge would prohibit the achievement of specific corporate and service objectives.
 - In line with **legislation**, fees and charges should be set to **recover full costs including overheads**.
13. All charges within the council's control should be reviewed on an annual basis where it permissible and efficient to do so. The council's finance team will lead on the review in consultation with Service Managers and Directors.
14. It is proposed that a review of fees and charges will be taken annually to Executive Cabinet in January alongside the draft budget report. This will be after the approval of the council's Corporate Strategy therefore ensuring that fees and charges are consistent with the strategy.

15. If the review includes the introduction of new charges the report must be approved by Full Council. This does not apply to the introduction of statutory charges.
16. A full list of all fees and charges will be published annually on the council's website

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

17. The option to not have an agreed policy was rejected due to the requirements of the constitution and best practise in setting fees and charges at the council.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

18. None

RISK MANAGEMENT

19. None

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

20. There is no impact from the setting of the policy however impact assessments will be carried out as part of the annual review of fees and charges.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

21. The fees and charges policy will enable officers to develop proposals to ensure proposed fees and charges are delivered in line with the council's corporate priorities and constitution.
22. The report outlines that it is the finance service's responsibility to coordinate an annual report to provide members with the opportunity to set fees and charges.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

23. The Local Government Act of 2003 gave councils the general power to charge for discretionary services that are not covered by other legislation. The proposed policy is in line with the requirements of the council's constitution. In certain specific areas there may be separate rules and guidance that we may need to have regard to.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

24. There are no background papers to this report.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Fees and Charges Policy

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