Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer (Introduced by Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets))	Cabinet	19th January 2022

Is this report confidential?	No

Is this decision key?	Yes

Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	**Significant impact on 2 or more council wards**

2022/23 Fees and Charges

Purpose of the Report

1. This report sets out the current position around fees and charges and proposals for 2022/23.

Recommendations to Cabinet

2. To note the current levels of budgeted fees and charges and issues specific to these.

3. To agree a freeze in fees and charges for the 22/23 financial year.

4. To approve the full list of fees and charges for upload to the Council website.

Executive summary

5. This report sets out the key fees and charges budgets and the income generated from each.

Reasons for Recommendations

6. To note the levels of budgeted fees and charges and information surrounding these.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

7. None

Corporate priorities

8. 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

9. During the pandemic, central government introduced a fees and charges compensation scheme for local authorities, covering the period from April 2020 to June 2021; this provided partial compensation for the losses that councils had incurred in the level of fees and charges earned. In many areas, the level of fees and charges income received in 20/21 and 21/22 has not been representative of that earned in previous years, and there is still a degree of uncertainty over the level that will be achieved going forward as we continue through the Covid-19 crisis. However, whilst we have seen indications that the majority of fees and charges are beginning to return to 'normal' levels, there remains some uncertainty with the emergence and rapid spread of the Omicron variant of the virus

Fees and Charges Position

10. Appendix 1 details the key fees and charges budgets across a number of categories. It should be noted however, that the tables are not exhaustive or exclusive but give an indication of the core fees involved.

11. Table 1 provides details of those charges over which the Council has no control in setting the amount that can be charged. The largest of these relates to planning application fees. Whilst the fee is not within local control, it is the volume of the applications which can significantly impact upon this budget and the income generated, as it can vary significantly depending on the size and number of applications.

12. Table 2 illustrates the specific fees and charges that generate an income of greater than £50k. The largest of these relate to the Councils investment sites. Outside of these charges the biggest income streams relate to Garden Waste, Trade waste and vehicle maintenance.

13. Table 3 shows the fees and charges that generally have been increased by a given percentage, or through an inflationary uplift, as opposed to being subject to a full, formal review. The proposal is to freeze these fees and charges for 22/23.

14. Table 4 is the key table for where changes in charges can generate more significant amounts of income. An update on some of these charges is below:

    - Other Investment Rentals and Leases are negotiated on a case by case basis to ensure the maximum benefit. Income has remained largely stable across these categories other than that given by way of abatement during Covid.
    - Car Parking fees have been impacted during the Covid period however a review of this was already undertaken in 20/21 for implementation in 21/22
    - Building control fees are regularly reviewed to ensure they are covering relevant costs.

- Market Rents are generally considered separately and have been increased on an ad hoc basis as traders have changed.
- Garden Waste collection – this fee has remained fixed for a number of years. Rising demand has seen an increase in income overall.
- Trade waste has been reviewed and increased in 21/22

Fees and Charges Proposals

15. Having reviewed those categories of fees and charges that have generally been increased by a given percentage, or through an inflationary uplift, (Table 3), it is not proposed to make any changes to these fees and charges at this time given the financial impact of the pandemic on many of our residents and business.

Climate change and air quality

16. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

17. None

Risk

18. Please summarise the key risks identified in any risk assessments.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

19. The financial implications relating to the review of fees and charges for 2022/23 are outlined within the report and the supporting appendices.

20. Based on the published rates for October 2021, RPI was 6.0% and CPI stood at 4.2%; the forecast is for inflation to continue to rise. By freezing the level of fees and charges for those categories detailed in Table 3 of Appendix 1 (i.e. those that have generally been increased by a given percentage or an inflationary uplift in the past), based on the rate of CPI noted above and the forecast level of income for 21/22, the council would forego the potential to generate a further £5k of income in 2022/23.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

21. None

Background documents

22. There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges Tables
Appendix 2 – Detailed Fees and Charges List

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