

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION

DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR ELFAN AP REES. THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING, HIGHWAYS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING.

WITH ADVICE FROM: THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT.



DECISION NO: 18/19 DE 353

SUBJECT: Development and Environment Fees and Charges 2019/2020

KEY DECISION: YES

BACKGROUND:

Fees and charges represent an important source of income, providing funding to assist in achieving the Council's objectives. Some of our fees and charges are effectively set by legislation but many are locally determined.

Income derived from charging will be used to offset the costs of providing the service being charged for, including support service costs. In setting an appropriate level of fees and charges, managers also take into account their client groups and corporate objectives

DECISION:

In accordance with the Council's constitution, this decision seeks approval for the proposed increases to fees and charges detailed in appendix 1 that are over 5% and up to 10% or are estimated to generate additional annual revenue income of £100,000 to £300,000

REASONS:

- Raising revenue from charges for services is an important element in the overall financing of Council services and activities and helps to deliver service and strategic objectives.
- Consideration is therefore given, on a regular basis, to the scope for raising revenue through charges for services and to reviewing the appropriateness and adequacy of the levels of charges being proposed or actually in force.
- Services are generally given an increase in their income targets each year in accordance with agreed budget principles. This will be achieved through a combination of increases to fees and charges, increased use, and through rental and sales income where appropriate. Where information is available, changes to fees and charges will take account of changing circumstances and patterns of service use as well as known and predicted changes to service costs.

- There is a general policy presumption that the levels of fees and charges should rise, each year, in line with the rate of inflation. Accordingly, the charges proposed in each service area should be sufficient to meet the additional fees and charges income reflected in the final draft budget, which is detailed in an annual report to the Executive.
- The following represents the range of factors, which service managers need to take into account when setting fees and charges:-
 - Charges determined by primary or secondary legislation
 - Service costs, including inflation
 - Service supply and demand
 - Market conditions
 - Benchmarking with other authorities and other providers
 - Cost recovery of services provided
 - Affordability

Planning.

Pre- application advice:

A full review of officer time being used to give pre- application advice has been undertaken and found that it has not been recovering its costs. Dependent on the complexity and size of the applications advice is being sought on, an estimate of officer time has been used to assess appropriate fees. The amount of officer time can range from 13 days to over 57 days of work.

A consistent charge out methodology is now being used for officer time to calculate these fees based on the size of the applications. For example, the average time taken to undertake pre-application advice for a site of 400 units or 41-50 hectares is based on 46 working days of officer time.

These costs have been benchmarked to other authorities to ensure that they are not significantly variable.

Other charges:

Charges such as validity checks and presentations have been updated to reflect the actual time taken to undertake the tasks and the costs of the officer's time to ensure full cost recovery.

Network Management

A review of pricing structures in this area has been undertaken, with reference to cost recovery and benchmarking with others, as required under NRSWA and consistent with neighbouring authorities.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

Service Managers considered alternative pricing within the guidance / framework as described above.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

In general terms, the 2019/20 budget setting process added 1.25% to income budgets, although in some areas a specific additional target was included. The fees set out in this decision notice are designed to ensure that these budget targets are achievable.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

Trading and charging for services has been a feature of local government for a considerable time. Specific powers to charge for services are contained in a variety of local government statutes. The Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970, the Local Government Act 2003 and the Localism Act 2011 empower councils to charge for discretionary services on a cost recovery basis

CONSULTATION

The changes are in accordance with the Council's policy guidance and principles and, as such, no consultation has been undertaken. The revised fees and charges will be published on the Council's website.

RISK MANAGEMENT

In some cases, increases in fees and charges can be a disincentive to the take up services. No material risks have been identified in this respect.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No

The changes are in accordance with the Council's policy guidance and principles. No significant negative equality implications have been identified.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

The contribution made by charging for council services supports other strategic objectives of the council.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Executive 12 April 2016 – 2016/17 Fees and Charges Schedule
<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc27320.pdf>

16/17 DE 302 Development and Environment Fees and Charges 2017/2018 – Flexible Pricing Policy

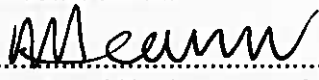
SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed:  Executive Member for Strategic Planning,
Highways, Economic Development and Housing

Date: 8/3/19

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed:  Assistant Director (Placemaking and Growth)
Development and Environment. In accordance with paragraph 1.5 of the Council's
constitution (May 2018), officer authorisations and delegations

Date: 8/3/2019

Appendix 1

*Estimated additional / reduced income (per annum) between £100,000 and £300,000 or
Increase / decrease in charge
over 5% and up to 10%*

Service being charged	2018/19 charge	2019/20 charge	% increase	Is this a new charge? (Y/N)
Development Management				
Pre-application advice - Level 2- Initial advice in principle				
Type 1 minor		£100.00		Y
Type 2 minor		£250.00		Y
Type 3 minor		£500.00		Y
Type 1 major		£1,000.00		Y
Type 2 major		£2,000.00		Y
Type 3 major		£3,000.00		Y
Type 4 major		£4,000.00		Y
Type 5 major		£5,000.00		Y
Type 6 major		£6,000.00		Y
Type 7 major		£7,000.00		Y
Type 8 major		POA		Y
Change of use (non-commercial)		£250.00		Y
Pre-application advice - Level 1 - informal meeting				
Type 1 minor		£100.00		Y
Type 2 minor		£100.00		Y
Type 3 minor		£100.00		Y
Type 1 major		£300.00		Y

Type 2 major		£300.00		Y
Type 3 major		£300.00		Y
Type 4 major		£300.00		Y
Type 5 major		£300.00		Y
Type 6 major		£300.00		Y
Type 7 major		£300.00		Y
Type 8 major		£300.00		Y
Change of use (non-commercial)		£100.00		Y
Planning Performance Agreements (PPA)				
PPA level 1	POA	£1,500.00		N
PPA level 2	POA	£3,000.00		N
PPA level 3	POA	£6,000.00		N
PPA level 4	POA	£12,000.00		N
PPA level 5	POA	POA		N
Planning Enforcment				
Confirmation Enforcement Notice complied with		£300.00		Y
Confirmation planning permission implemented and		£300.00		Y
Help resolving conveyancing issues		£500.00		Y
Confirmation of closure of enforcement case		£100.00		Y
Network Management				
Licence to locate scaffolding or mobile elevated work platform	£70.00	£75.00	7.14%	No
Retrospective licence to locate scaffolding or mobile elevated	£140.00	£150.00	7.14%	No
Licence to locate skips, hoarding, fencing, building	£60.00	£65.00	8.33%	No
Retrospective licence to locate skips, scaffolding, hoarding,	£120.00	£130.00	8.33%	No

Traffic regulation order (VAT Exempt)				
Temporary				
Order (8 weeks + notice)	£1,190.00	£1,250.00	5.04%	No

