

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION

DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR CARITAS CHARLES. THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM



WITH ADVICE FROM: THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT.

DECISION NO: 19/20 DE307

SUBJECT: Development and Environment Fees and Charges 2020/21

KEY DECISION: YES

REASON: The decision affects services across North Somerset.

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 below that are over 5% and up to 10% or are estimated to generate additional annual revenue income of £100,000 to £300,000

Service		2019/20 charge	2020/21 charge	% increase
Community Halls (Castlebatch)	Meeting Room - Community	£8.50	£9.00	5.88%

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
 - Full cost recovery for services provided
 - Affordability

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

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

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

In general terms, the 2020/21 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

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

NA

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

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

APPENDICES

None

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: **Approved by email. Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism**

Date: **11 March 2020**.....

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed: *Lucy Shumali*..... Director of Development and Environment

Date: *10/03/20*.....

