

## North Somerset Council Decision



**Decision Of:** Mike Bell, Executive Member for Public Health and Regulatory Services

**With Advice From:** Matt Lenny, Director of Public Health and Regulatory Services and Melanie Watts, Head of Finance

**Directorate:** Public Health and Regulatory Services

**Decision No:** PHRS052 2022/23

**Subject:** Fees and Charges 2023/24 – Exec Member approval for changes that are between 5% and 10% higher compared to the previous year

**Key Decision:** Yes

**Reason:** All Executive Member decisions are Key Decisions although the financial impact of this decision is less than £500,000 and it does not have a significant impact on communities

### **Background:**

Fees and charges represent an important source of income, providing finance to assist in achieving the council's broad 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.

A general increase of 1.25% has been applied across Public Health and Regulatory Services income budgets as reflected within the medium-term financial planning assumptions, although further adjustments have been made in some service areas where costs and service needs have exceeded these assumptions.

The proposed increases in fees and charges, **where movements are calculated to be between 5% and 10% higher than in the previous year**, are shown in Appendix A and are necessary to either align with statutory levels or to meet increased costs and budgetary pressures to which the council is subject and will ensure that the contribution made by fees and charges to the councils' overall income budget is maintained. Full details of the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 are set out in Appendix A.

### **Decision:**

To agree the 2023/24 fees and charges for the Public Health and Regulatory Services directorate as set out in Appendix A with effect from the 1 April 2023.

**Reasons:**

In order for the council to be able to deliver its services it needs to raise income to supplement its budget and ensure it meets the principles of full cost recovery where relevant. The council is not permitted to generate inappropriate levels of income as increases need to be proportionate and balanced, indeed some are determined by legislation and / or statutory regulation. Most of the fee increases proposed in this decision, are related to external factors such as legislation and inflation and reflect increases associated with the general cost of living.

**Options Considered:**

The proposed fee increases are necessary to ensure that current levels of services are maintained because if income levels fell significantly below costs incurred then the alternative option would be to cut or stop services. Fee increases are undertaken only after due process and deliberations at management and executive levels.

**Financial Implications:**

The proposed revision of fees and charges will potentially generate an additional £10-£30k in 2023/24 and the values are in line with council’s medium term financial planning assumptions.

**Legal Powers and Implications:**

The council’s Constitution includes a section for financial regulations and Part 2 of this details the operational framework associated with ‘financial administration’ decisions and processes. Section 7 includes specific provision regarding decisions linked to income collection, fees and charges and the table below outlines the governance arrangements that need to be considered before changes are approved or implemented.

Decision Maker	Est additional income p.a		Increase / decrease in charge
Director	Up to £100,000	OR	Up to and including 5%
Exec Member	Up to £300,000	OR	Over 5% and up to 10%
Executive	£300,000 or over	OR	Over 10%

**Climate Change and Environmental Implications:**

There are no specific environmental or climate change impacts arising as a result of this decision.

**Consultation:**

A general uplift of 1.25% on the council’s income budgets has been reflected as a savings proposal within the medium-term financial plan since December 2022 and as such has been subject to review, scrutiny and consultation by a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.

**Risk Management:**

Fees and charges are reviewed annually as part of Budget setting (MTFP) cycle. Fees set for 2023/24 will form part of base budget rolled forward into future years. Any adverse gaps in collection will impact on the budgets of future years and vice versa for favourable gaps.

**Equality Implications:**

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? N/A – over-arching EIA included within MTFP budget report

**Corporate Implications:**

N/A – considered within the MTFP

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – schedule of fees and charges

**Background Papers:**

Revenue Budget & Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP) reports - Executive December 2022 and February 2023

**Signatories:**

**Decision Maker(s):**

Signed: .....

Title: Mike Bell, Executive Member for Public Health & Regulatory Services

Date: .....

**With Advice From:**

Signed: .....

Title: Matt Lenny, Director of Public Health & Regulatory Services

Date: .....

Signed: .....

Title: Melanie Watts, Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

Date: .....

## APPENDIX 1

### FEES & CHARGES 2023/24

#### Public Health & Regulatory Services

Dog Warden Services	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Change for 23/24 £	Change for 23/24 %	Service Area	Service Manager
Dog Warden Service – Stray Dogs (VAT exempt) Fixed Charge Per Recovery	54.00	<b>57.00</b>	3.00	5.56%	Environmental Protection	Dee Mawn
Dog Warden Service – Stray Dogs (VAT exempt) daily kennelling fees (maximum seven days)	15.00	<b>17.50</b>	2.50	16.67%	Environmental Protection	Dee Mawn
Dog Warden Service – Stray Dogs (VAT exempt) returned without kennelling	28.00	<b>30.00</b>	2.00	7.14%	Environmental Protection	Dee Mawn

Gypsy & Traveller Site Licences	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Change for 23/24 £	Change for 23/24 %	Service Area	Service Manager
Box Bush (plus sewerage charge)	76.77	<b>82.14</b>	5.37	6.99%	Housing	Howard Evans
Failand	52.22	<b>55.88</b>	3.66	7.01%	Housing	Howard Evans
Moorland	189.23	<b>202.48</b>	13.25	7.00%	Housing	Howard Evans
Willowmead (1-5)	71.67	<b>76.69</b>	5.02	7.00%	Housing	Howard Evans
Willowmead (6-7)	89.42	<b>95.68</b>	6.26	7.00%	Housing	Howard Evans

**Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable:**