

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: HEAD OF FINANCE

REPORT NO: HOF258

DATE: 2ND December 2013

TITLE:	FEES AND CHARGES PROPOSALS 2014/15	
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	None	
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Cllr Mike Taylor Assets and Resources Portfolio Holder	
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INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:	Carried out and Referred to in paragraph (7) below:	Full impact assessment Required:
Equality and Diversity		No
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:	This report is publicly available via the Your Council and Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
BACKGROUND PAPERS		

1. RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is asked to approve the following fees and charges for their inclusion into the budget framework proposals for 2014/15:

- Car Parking – maintain current parking tariffs
- Bus stations – inflationary increase only
- Grantham cycle centre – inflationary increase only
- Building Control – increase in hourly to achieve service breakeven
- Markets – inflationary increase to Stamford and Bourne market charges
- Arts centres – inflationary increase only
- Corn Exchange – maintain current charges
- Green waste collection – maintain current charges
- Bulky waste collection – increase by £1 for first item collected
- Licensing – increase in line with achieving service breakeven
- Outdoor recreation – inflationary increase only

- Grantham cemetery – inflationary increase only
- Land Charges – inflationary increase
- Pre-planning advice – inflationary increase but maintain current charge for householder advice

All to be effective from 1st April 2014.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 The fees and charges proposals for 2014/15 have been compiled by the Resources PDG and need to be taken into consideration as part of the budget compilation for the 2014/15 budget framework.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The Resources PDG have been reviewing fees and charges as a key element of their 2013/14 work plan and have previously developed a corporate fees and charges framework which was approved by Cabinet in October 2012. To further support the work the PDG has fully utilised the fees and charges benchmarking report that was compiled by Deloitte which assisted in identifying variances in charges and opportunities to review pricing strategies.

Service managers have been utilising the framework and the benchmarking toolkit to undertake a fundamental review of the current published fees. The proposed fees for 2014/15 were considered by the PDG at a member workshop on 1 November 2013 and the outcomes of the workshop are provided in the report. The combined income being generated from the proposals, based on current activity levels, is £20,000 which will contribute to the increase in the operational costs.

3.2 Car parking

Members considered the proposals in detail at their meeting on 3 October 2013 and recommended that car parking charges remain at the current level for 2014/15 in order to allow time for a comprehensive review of all car parking (on-street, off-street and private sector provision) specifically to understand the behaviour changes that have occurred following the introduction of civilian parking enforcement in South Kesteven.

3.3 Bus stations

Members noted the last increase was in April 2011 and to ensure service costs are recouped it is recommended to apply an inflationary increase to departure charges from April 2014.

3.4 Cycle centres

It is recommended to increase the charges by 50p on small locker charge and £1 on big locker charge. This increase reflects the projected increase in the operational costs of the facility.

3.5 Building control

Given the difficult trading environment the service operates in, it is necessary to review the hourly rate charge in order to achieve a break-even trading position. It is also recommended to publish only indicative rates but to allow the service to negotiate rates (where permitted) based on the nature of the works to be undertaken.

3.6 Markets

Members considered the market pitch rates and were reminded that Grantham market was implementing a recovery plan following the improvements works in the Market Plan and Wide Westgate which caused disruption to the service for a temporary period. Therefore it is recommended to maintain rates at the current level for 2014/15 but apply inflationary increases to Stamford and Bourne charges.

3.7 Cultural/Arts Centres/Bourne Corn Exchange

It is proposed to apply inflationary increases at both arts centres but maintain current charges at Bourne Corn Exchange as the service is in the process of attracting back customers following the temporary closure of the facility for the Access Point works.

3.8 Street scene

Members were supportive of maintaining existing fees for the Green Waste service but recommended a modest increase of £1 to bulky waste collection (first item only) reflecting that the charge had not been increased since 2003 and service costs had increased since the last review.

3.9 Environmental Health fees

It is recommended to apply inflationary increases in order to maintain a cost recovery position but to introduce a new charge in respect of the first night kennelling charge – this is to be set at a level that will recover the administration and associated kennelling costs.

3.10 Licences – General

The charges are based on a cost-recovery model and it is proposed inflationary increases are applied to maintain a cost recovery position. However some charges proposed are slightly higher than inflation (knowledge test, admin charge and animal licence) to ensure the costs incurred in providing these services are recovered.

3.11 Licences – gambling

It is recommended to apply inflationary increases to gambling licences specifically bingo, adult gaming, family entertainment centres, betting premises and miscellaneous licences to achieve a cost recovery position.

3.12 Outdoor recreation

It is recommended to increase charges in line with inflation for the 2014/15 financial year in order to reflect the increase in operational costs of providing the service, specifically grounds maintenance.

3.13 Grantham Cemetery – Special Expense Area

It is recommended to increase charges in line with inflation for the 2014/15 financial year in order to reflect the increase in operational costs of providing the service, specifically grounds maintenance.

3.14 Land charges

It is recommended to increase charges in line with inflation for the 2014/15 financial year in order to maintain a full cost recovery position.

3.15 Planning – pre-planning charges

These charges were introduced in April 2013 and have been successfully implemented in the year. It is proposed to apply an inflationary increase to the published charges but to maintain the householder charge at the current level.

Charges that are proposed to increase in line with inflation are based on the September 2013 RPI figure of 3.1%.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The fees and charges are compiled as part of the budget setting process.

6. RISK AND MITIGATION (INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY AND DATA QUALITY)

N/A

7. ISSUES ARISING FROM EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This will be considered as part of the introduction of the changes in fees and charges.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None

9. COMMENTS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial considerations are included in the report.

10. COMMENTS OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The Council has the power to charge for the delivery of discretionary services in accordance with s.93 of the Local Government Act 2003. The power to charge is available provided the income received does not exceed the cost of the provision of the service.

11. APPENDICES:

Proposed fees and Charges 2014/15