



## Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Garry Payne Chief Executive, Mark Billington, Service Director People and Places, Mark Broadhurst, Service Director Health and Wellbeing, Marianne Hesketh, Service Director Performance and Innovation, Clare James, Head of Finance	Cllr Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Murphy, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder, Cllr Lynne Bowen, Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder, Cllr David Henderson, Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder	30 November 2017

### Review of Fees and Charges 2018/19

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To confirm the proposed fees and charges for the 2018/19 financial year and those being implemented with immediate effect thereby impacting on 2017/18.

#### 2. Outcomes

- 2.1 Increase in income generation to support the Council's Budget.
- 2.2 Improve the return from our assets and develop and deliver a commercial strategy.

#### 3. Recommendation/s

- 3.1 That the proposed fees and charges, as set out in Appendix 1, for the financial year 2018/19 be approved.

## **4. Background**

- 4.1** The Cabinet last formally considered its charging policy, as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan, at its meeting on 18 October 2017.
- 4.2** Charging for local services makes a significant contribution to council finances, and can be used to influence individuals' choices and to bring benefits to local communities. Charges can be set to encourage or discourage people to use services and through concessions to pursue local objectives.
- 4.3** A briefing entitled 'Income from Charging' was issued by the Audit Commission in September 2013 which used data from the value for money profiles and presented a high level analysis of councils' income from charging and the contribution it makes to service spending and allowed comparisons to other councils of the same type and changes over time. The data was the subject of a value for money review undertaken as part of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme and was considered at the meeting 15 December 2014.
- 4.4** The level of income generated by fees and charges and in particular projected increases which the council can influence, form a key part of the council's financial planning and is therefore reflected in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 4.5** As a result of the long period of austerity and reduced levels of central government funding there is an increased emphasis on income generation and working towards sustainable services. All staff have been invited to attend staff briefings and commercialisation training to raise awareness and build on the 'can do' attitude of the workforce. As a consequence, cross-directorate working groups have been and are in the process of being established to look deeper into fees and charges in certain areas and some of this work is referred to within the key issues and proposals section of the report.

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

### **5.1 Health and Community Engagement Portfolio**

The Health and Community Engagement Portfolio includes income from Pest Control, Food Safety Services, Private Water Supplies and Licencing.

#### **5.1.1 Pest Control**

An increase equivalent to September 2017 Consumer Price Index (CPI) 3% is proposed for all pest control services including pest control products. In the past, the pest control service has been subsidised. However in 2015/16 (£2,633) and 2016/17 (£6,346) small surpluses have been achieved after excluding support service costs.

### **5.1.2 Food Safety Services**

The introduction of a new fee is proposed for Food Premises Hygiene Re-Rating Inspection applications of £190.52 (or £177.15 if made online). No change is proposed to any other fees in this category.

### **5.1.3 Contaminated Land**

No change is proposed in 2018/19 as fees are on a par with other Local Authorities' fees for this service.

### **5.1.4 Licensing**

Amendments to fees and charges for licensing are the responsibility of the Licensing Committee and will be considered later in the financial year.

## **5.2 Leisure and Culture Portfolio**

The main venues within the Leisure and Culture portfolio that generate substantial levels of fee income are the Marine Hall, Thornton Little Theatre and Cemeteries. This portfolio also includes fee income from countryside general, Wyre Estuary Country Park, Rossall Point and outdoor amenities.

### **5.2.1 Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre**

The newly employed Commercial Manager has reviewed the fees and charges in place at these two venues and proposed to increase the commercial and non-commercial fees at Thornton Little Theatre as indicated in Appendix 1 to reflect the appropriate level of staffing. Minimal increases have been applied to non-commercial/community rates although some fees have increased. Wedding packages have been looked at in detail and a simpler charging structure is proposed. However these may be subject to change after finalisation by the relevant cross-directorate working team. New packages for parties and other events are being developed but charges have not been finalised at the time of writing this report. A further report may therefore be necessary to capture any revisions or additions following review by the Commercial Manager and the cross directorate working group. An increase of £10 to the fee for advertising banners is proposed to reflect the staff time involved. The replacement of the fee for postage and Credit Cards/Handling Charge of £2 is proposed to be replaced with two separate charges, postage for tickets at £1 and telephone and website booking fees at £1.50 with immediate effect. An increase from £50 to a minimum of £100 letting fee for funeral receptions at the Waterfront or Wyre Bar is proposed. No changes are proposed to the charges introduced last year for stalls at the Marine Hall Food Festival, Christmas Market and car boot sales. An increase of £30 to £150 is proposed to the online Media Package for events at Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre to reflect the increase in online activity. An increase of £80 to £200 is proposed to the Print Package for events at Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre as distribution of brochures has increased from 5,000 to 30,000. The Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre continue to be subsidised and the subsidy for prior years for both venues (excluding capital charges) can be seen in the following table.

	Subsidy 2014/15 £	Subsidy 2015/16 £	Subsidy 2016/17 £
Thornton Little Theatre	63,949	106,882	117,957
Marine Hall	255,435	227,960	252,918
Total	319,384	334,842	370,875

### **5.2.2 Cemeteries**

It is proposed to increase the majority of fees by approximately 1%, with fees remaining constant for baby and child interments, including Woodland and Baby Garden of Remembrance. No increase is proposed for small white metal urns. In 2016/17 the cemetery service generated a small deficit (£15,788) and the current approach is to aim to run the service on a break-even basis.

### **5.2.3 Leisure Development**

It is proposed to increase the hire of fields by £10 per day from £130 to £140 and to insert lines for Memorial Park Fleetwood, Preesall Playing Field, Jubilee Gardens and Bourne Way. No increases are proposed for football pitch fees which were increased last year.

### **5.2.4 Marsh Mill**

No increases are proposed to the minimal fees currently being levied. It is proposed to remove the line for free adult entry to the first floor to encourage visitors to pay the minimal entry fees which includes a tour.

### **5.2.5 Visit Wyre**

No increase is proposed to the charge for the use of the I-bus to encourage use.

### **5.2.6 Countryside**

No increases are proposed to encourage continued participation in walks and talks.

### **5.2.7 Wyre Estuary Country Park/Rossall Point**

It is proposed to maintain fees at the current level to encourage use of the areas and attendance at events.

### **5.2.8 Outdoor Amenity Charges**

New fees for bowling were introduced in February 2016 after consultation with bowling clubs and no increase is proposed this year. It is proposed to increase Pitch and Putt Fees by 20p and 30p to remain comparable with others facilities in the area, with the maximum charge now being £5 for an adult (18 hole course).

## **5.3 Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder**

The main service within the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety portfolio that generates a substantial level of fee income is car parking. This portfolio also includes income from Housing Renovation Grants.

### **5.3.1 Car Parking**

Cabinet at their meeting 9 April 2014 agreed the adoption of the Car Parking Strategy 2014-19 and in particular 'that in order to fully assess the impacts of the new arrangements with Booths and to support local businesses, all parking charges be frozen at their current rates until a full assessment of the impact could be made'. Following these reviews a report to Cabinet on 12 July 2017 recommended and approved the discontinuation of Sunday worship permits and the 12 month trial of Motorhome Parking. The Fees and Charges at Appendix 1 have been amended to reflect these changes. No other increases are proposed at this time. Following a review of car parking scheduled for next year, a further report on car parking fees and charges may follow.

### **5.3.2 Housing**

No increase is proposed to fees and the charge for the Handyperson service will also remain at £10 pending the outcome of a cross-directorate working group reviewing the service and potentially proposing ways to generate more income.

## **5.4 Planning and Economic Development Portfolio**

The three main service areas within the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio that generate substantial levels of fee income are Planning, Building Control and Fleetwood Market.

The majority of the Building Control Fees are set in accordance with the Building Regulations Act 2010 allowing authorities to fix their own charges based on full cost recovery. The Head of Built Environment has the delegated authority to amend these fees as necessary. Similarly, all tenancy matters up to an annual sum of £25,000, including market rents are delegated to the Head of Built Environment. The fees for submitting planning applications required by Legislation are set nationally and the statutory fees which came into force 6 April 2014 may change following the Budget Statement in November. If a change is introduced then a further report will follow.

### **5.4.1 Development Control**

The majority of discretionary income relates to pre-application discussion fees and it is proposed to increase the fees for site areas above 0.5 hectares by between 1% and 2% as included at Appendix 2.

### **5.4.2 Building Control**

No increases are proposed to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations Act 2010 which requires recovery of costs.

### **5.4.3 Markets**

Indoor market rents are reviewed every three years and delegated to the Head of Built Environment.

There has been a decrease in the number of stalls on the Tuesday outdoor market at Fleetwood owing to reduced footfall. It is proposed to introduce with immediate effect two new incentives where any trader who opens a

food stall for all four days from June to October will be charged £40 and any trader who opens another non-food stall for all four days from June to October will be charged £50. It is proposed all other fees remain unchanged recognising the difficult economic climate. For similar reasons, it is recommended to maintain the outdoor market fees at Poulton at current levels.

#### **5.4.4 Estates**

It is proposed to maintain the fees at current levels as these were realigned earlier in 2017/18 and include a narrative line stating that council land and properties are available for filming locations for which charges may apply.

#### **5.4.5 MOT Test Centre**

It is proposed to introduce a £20 fee for Taxi testing with immediate effect.

#### **5.4.6 Wyred Up**

It is proposed to delete the fees for the Wyre Expo event as this event is no longer taking place and add a £40 fee for a Wyre Business Award ticket. All other fees to remain at current levels.

### **5.5 Resources Portfolio**

#### **5.5.1 Legal Fees**

The authority to determine charges for the recovery of legal costs is delegated to the Head of Finance. After a benchmarking exercise the fees increased in 2017/18 were still comparable with other Authorities. It is proposed to increase all fees by September CPI.

#### **5.5.2 Land Charges**

The determination of fees and charges for Local Land charges is delegated to the Head of Finance. The council is required to ensure that over a three year period, the total income from charges does not exceed the total costs of granting access to property records. No changes are proposed at this stage.

#### **5.5.3 Civic Centre Room Hire**

It is proposed to maintain fees at the current levels with the aim of increasing the number of bookings. Discretion is to be given to the officer taking bookings to offer discounted rates where appropriate and a new line be inserted stating that rates can vary dependant on use.

#### **5.5.4 Street Naming and Numbering**

It is proposed to maintain fees at the current level as they continue to be representative of the administration involved.

#### **5.5.5 Miscellaneous**

Legislation which comes into force on 13 January 2018 makes the Credit Card surcharge fee illegal and therefore it is proposed to remove this charge, from that date.

## **5.6 Street Scene and Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio**

The main services within the Street Scene portfolio are waste management, public conveniences, the dog warden service, parks and open spaces and playing fields.

### **5.6.1 Public Conveniences**

The council currently charges 20p and it is felt that this is a fair rate for the use of the facilities and comparable with other Local Authorities who apply a fee.

### **5.6.2 Dog Welfare**

It is proposed to maintain the current pricing structure as fees remain higher than neighbouring Local Authorities.

### **5.6.3 Domestic Refuse – Bulky Items**

Fees were increased in 2017/18 and remain competitive. It is proposed to maintain these fees to encourage responsible decisions by customers to not resort to fly-tipping. The service has previously been subsidised by the council but in 2016/17 the service made a small surplus (£6,483).

### **5.6.4 Green Waste**

No change is proposed to the fees as the service becomes established and the main focus is on growing our customer base.

### **5.6.5 Provision of Standard Suite of Waste Recycling Containers-New Properties/ Replacement Containers**

It is proposed to maintain the fees at current levels to remain comparable with other Lancashire authorities.

### **5.6.6 Street Cleansing**

It is proposed to maintain fees at current levels.

### **5.6.7 Parks and Open Spaces**

It is proposed to maintain the fees for the Memorial Park Pavilion at current levels to encourage use.

### **5.6.8 Memorial Plaques and Benches**

New Benches will be charged on a cost recovery basis. Memorial Plaques added to existing benches will be charged on an ad hoc basis and may be linked to the remaining life of the bench.

## **5.7 Overview and Scrutiny**

Initial proposals for amendments or increases to fees and charges have been reviewed and discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 6 November 2017 with their recommendations being reported to Portfolio Holders and amendments included within this report.

## Delegated functions

- 6.1 The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive function delegated to each Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution): "To determine charges or fees for any relevant services operated within the Portfolio".

<b>Financial and legal implications</b>	
Finance	The financial implications of the fees and charges will be reflected in the Revenue Estimates which will be considered by Cabinet at their meeting 14 February 2018.
Legal	There are no significant legal implications arising from the proposals in this report.

### **Other risks/implications: checklist**

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
community safety	<b>x</b>
equality and diversity	<b>x</b>
sustainability	<b>x</b>
health and safety	<b>x</b>

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
asset management	<b>x</b>
climate change	<b>x</b>
data protection	<b>x</b>

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<b>List of background papers:</b>		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

### **List of appendices**

Appendix 1– Proposed fees and charges for the 2018/19 financial year.  
Appendix 2 – Proposed Pre-application Advice charges 2018/19.