
Subject:	FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 9 January 2017
Report of:	Mike Davis, Director of Finance, Housing and Community
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Mike Conolly, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance
Decision Type:	Executive Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: This report has been prepared in order to obtain formal approval for the levels of fees and charges (F&Cs) for the financial year 2017/18. These F&Cs have been included in the preparatory work on the draft budget for 2017/18 and require approval.

- Recommendation:**
1. Cabinet approve the Fees and Charges (F&Cs) for 2017/18 as set out in Appendices 2 and 5.3
 2. Members agree that any F&Cs will be adjusted by Service Director and Portfolio Holder to comply with any subsequently received government guidelines (when they are received) without being the subject of a further report unless they are materially different from current charges, or have a material impact on the level of income.
 3. Members approve the general principle that fees are set at an appropriate inclusive level, irrespective of VAT status, and that the VAT element within the overall fee level is then determined.
 4. Members note the fees and charges approved by Licensing and Regulatory Committees (which includes the Planning Committee) set out in Appendices 3, 4, 5.1 and 5.2
 5. Members agree that the Director of Governance can authorise variation of the CON29 Land Charges to take account of the prevailing VAT requirements.
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1. **Summary**

The Council's constitution specifies that F&Cs shall be reviewed annually. In order to meet this requirement all Directors have been asked to review the F&Cs within their areas of responsibility (see checklist of issues to consider – Appendix 1) and to produce recommended levels for 2017/18. The fees and charges are tabulated in the further Appendices for consideration and/or approval by Members.

2. **Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 The level of Member approval required is dependent upon the types of F&Cs raised. In order to obtain appropriate approval the following reports have been prepared:

- Licensing Committee
Report to the meeting on 30 November 2016 of all F&Cs to be set by the Licensing Committee.
- Regulatory Committee
Report to the meeting on 1 November 2016 of all F&Cs to be set by the Regulatory Committee.
- Planning Committee
Report (for information) to the meeting on 24 November 2016 of all F&Cs relevant to the Planning Committee.
- Cabinet
Report to the meeting on 9 January 2017 of all F&Cs, but seeking specific approval of those F&Cs set by Cabinet.

2.2 Members are reminded that a framework of broad guidelines to be considered in formulating proposals for F&Cs is in place. This includes a checklist which has been circulated to all Service Directors and to all officers considering F&Cs so that a rigorous and consistent approach is taken. A copy is attached at Appendix 1.

2.3 As in previous years, in order to assist Members, the data on F&Cs has been tabulated into a standard format that has been used for Appendices 2 to 5.

2.4 The main points to note are set out below.

Detail and Narrative

These give a brief summary of the type of service being provided.

Set by Government

This indicates whether a charge is statutory or not. If a charge is statutory then it is effectively set by Government and although formal Member approval is still sought, there is little or no scope to make changes.

2016/17 Charge Inc VAT

The charge has been provided inclusive of VAT for two reasons. First, it shows what the customer will actually pay and is therefore more meaningful.

Second, charges for some services, especially those such as car parking, which are not simply a direct recovery of costs, are set at a level, inclusive of VAT, based on the appropriate market level. The VAT is therefore a deduction from the amount of charge retained by DDC and is not a key factor in determining the appropriate charge. Members are asked to approve this approach.

2017/18 Proposed Charge Inc VAT

This is the recommended charge for 2016/17 and will, subject to Members' approval, be included in the 2016/17 budget.

2017/18 Total Expected Income ex VAT

This gives a broad indication as to how much income DDC is expected to receive and has been included to provide Members with a sense of the relative importance of individual charges or group of similar charges. The more significant income streams (generating over £3k) have been highlighted in **bold** type.

In some cases, the level of use is very low, or infrequent, or the service has only recently been introduced and so no level of income has been included.

Comments

This provides Members with a brief explanation for the change. In some instances guidance is still awaited from Government as to the basis upon which F&Cs should be set. In these cases it has not always been possible to confirm a fee level, Member's approval is sought to enable officers to adopt such fees at or close to government directed levels without a further report.

3. **Other Fees and Charges**

3.1 The following F&Cs are not included in this report.

3.2 Housing Rents and Service Charges

Housing rents are approved by the Director of Finance, Housing and Community under delegated authority. They are largely prescribed by government and the Council has no real scope to determine rent levels.

Service charges (for both tenants and long term lease holders) are determined through statutorily prescribed consultation processes and the recovery of all allowable costs. As a result the Council has no real scope to determine service charges.

3.3 Car Parking

Car parking fees are the subject of specific reports from the Director of Environment and Corporate Assets.

4. **Identification of Options**

4.1 The recommended figures for consideration by Members are included in the Appendices. Members may approve these proposed figures.

4.2 Members may propose and approve alternative figures with reasons recorded for their decisions.

4.3 Those fees already approved by Licensing and Regulatory Committees are for information only.

5. **Evaluation of Options**

5.1 The recommended fees and charges take into account the need to maximise income at a time of challenging budget positions, while taking into account comparable charges at neighbouring authorities and what the market can bear.

5.2 Members should also take into account the checklist of issues to consider (at Appendix 1) when reviewing the fees and charges included in the subsequent Appendices

6. **Resource Implications**

See Appendices

7. **Corporate Implications**

- 7.1 Comment from the Director of Finance, Housing and Community (linked to the MTFP): Finance have been involved in the production of this report and have no further comment to add (VB).
- 7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make.
- 7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: 'The report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their responsibilities members are required to comply with the public sector duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>'
- 7.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

8. **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – F&C checklist
- Appendices 2.1 – 2.5 – F&C for which Cabinet approval is sought
- Appendices 3.1 – 3.2 – F&C to be approved by Licensing Committee
- Appendices 4.1 - 4.2 – F&C to be approved by Regulatory Committee
- Appendices 5.1 – 5.3 – Planning application fees

Contact Officer: Mike Davis, Director of Finance, Housing and Community