
Subject:	FEES AND CHARGES 2016/17
Meeting and Date:	Licensing Committee – 25 November 2015 Regulatory Committee – 1 December 2015 Cabinet (for information) – 11 January 2016 (part of larger report)
Report of:	Diane Croucher, Head of Regulatory Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor N Collor, Portfolio Holder for Access and Property Management
Decision Type:	Non- Executive
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 2016/17. These revised F&Cs will be included in the budget estimates for 2016/17.

- Recommendation:**
1. The Licensing Committee approve the Fees and Charges for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix 3
 2. The Regulatory Committee approve the Fess and Charges for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix 4.
 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 approve the general principle that, unless the fee is set by statute, licensing fees will be set on a cost recovery basis.
 5. That the Head of Regulatory Services is authorised to adopt fees at, or close to government directed levels without the need for further reporting, in cases where the Council is awaiting Government guidance and it has not been possible to set a fee level at this stage.
 6. That the Head of Regulatory Services be authorised in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Director of Finance, Housing and Community to make minor adjustments to the fees and charges as necessary
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council's constitution specifies that F&Cs shall be reviewed annually. In order to meet this requirement all Directors / Heads of Service have been asked to review the F&Cs within their areas of responsibility and to produce recommended levels for 2016/17.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Council's constitution specifies that F&Cs shall be reviewed annually.
- 2.2 The level of Member approval required is dependent upon the types of F&Cs raised and therefore reports have to be submitted to:
- Licensing Committee
 - Regulatory Committee
 - Planning Committee (for information only)
 - Cabinet
- 2.3 In order to meet this requirement it is proposed to submit the following reports:
- Licensing Committee - Report to meeting on 25 November 2015 of all F&Cs to be set by the Licensing Committee.
 - Regulatory Committee – Report to meeting on 1 December 2015 of all F&Cs to be set by the Regulatory Committee.
 - Planning Committee – Report (for information) to the meeting on 19 November 2015 of all F&Cs relevant to the Planning Committee.
 - Cabinet – Report to the meeting on 11 January 2016 of all F&Cs, but seeking specific approval of those F&Cs set by Cabinet.
- 2.4 Members are reminded that in 2004/05 a Member and Officer Review group developed a framework of broad guidelines to be considered in formulating proposals for F&Cs.
- 2.5 A copy of the checklist produced at that time and since updated to maintain currency, 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.
- 2.6 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 3 and 4.

Detail and Narrative (Columns A & B)

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

Set by Government (Column C)

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.

2015/16 Charge Inc VAT (Column D)

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.

2015/16 Total Expected Income ex VAT (Column G)

This gives a broad indication as to how much income DDC is expecting to receive and has been included to provide Members with a sense of the relative importance of individual charges.

2016/17 Proposed Charge Inc VAT (Column H)

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

2016/17 Total Expected Income ex VAT (Column J)

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.

Reason for the Change in Charges (Column L)

This provides Members with a brief explanation for the change. A full review, including detailed breakdown, of all the Licensing fees, charges and accounts is currently being undertaken. Unfortunately this work is not yet complete and so cannot be used in the fees and charges setting process for 2016-17. However, consideration has been given to any deficit or surplus associated with the relevant accounts for the last three years with a view to adjusting the fees and charges accordingly. All accounts have shown a deficit and so the proposal at this stage is to maintain the majority of fees and charges at the current level until such a time as the detailed review of the accounts and the fees and charges has been completed. Some changes are proposed however due to amendments to legislation / guidance etc and these are summarised in Appendix 2.

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. Identification of Options

- 3.1 The recommended figures for consideration by Members are included in the Appendices. Members may approve these proposed figures.
- 3.2 Members may propose and approve alternative figures with reasons recorded for their decisions.

4. **Evaluation of Options**

- 4.1 The recommended fees and charges take into account the actual cost of providing the service and seek to ensure full cost recovery. This is the recommended approach due to the need to maximise income at a time of grant cuts and council tax freezes.
- 4.2 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.

5. **Resource Implications**

See Appendices.

6. **Corporate Implications**

- 6.1 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 make. VB
- 6.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Head of Legal Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make.
- 6.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equalities implications however, in discharging their responsibilities members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>.
- 6.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

7. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges checklist

Appendices 3 & 4 – Schedule of recommended F&Cs

Appendix 6 – Summary of proposed key changes to the licensing fees and charges

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