

TITLE	Fees and Charges
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 26 November 2020
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Maintaining services to the community through ensuring appropriate fees and charges for services

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) approves the schedule of fees and charges, as set out in Appendix A to the report, to be effective from the dates listed on the schedule;
- 2) approves Wokingham's discretionary fees and charges for the Public Protection Partnership, and note the statutory charges, as set out in Appendix B, effective from 1 April 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members are presented with the schedule of proposed fees and charges.

Members are required to agree the fees and charges contained in this report at Appendix A, effectively from the dates shown on the schedule, of which most are enacted from 1 December 2020. Sports, cemeteries, housing, training courses and youth and community charges will alter from 1 January 2021 (sports) and 1 April 2021 respectively.

Members are also requested to agree the fees and charges for the Wokingham element of the Public Protection Partnership Service, Appendix B, altering from 1 April 2021, and note the statutory charges for this area.

BACKGROUND

The Council is currently projecting significant financial pressure both in the current and future financial years. Implementation of the new fees and charges during the financial year will help the Council to offset this challenge and is considered to be responsible. Executive are asked to approve the schedule of fees and charges (Appendix A). The estimated income from the approved level of fees and charges will form part of the overall 2021/22 budget figures to be submitted to Executive in February 2021.

Car parking charges, except for those for the Council's country parks, are not included in this report. Car parking charges are agreed and set through the Traffic Regulation Order making process, which requires that statutory provision for representation and objection are provided and the outcome determined through the Individual Executive Member Decision (IEMD) process. A list of charges for Council car parks can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/parking-and-transport/parking-and-permits/find-a-car-park/>.

Appendix B contains the proposed fees and charges for the Wokingham element of the public protection partnership. The licencing and appeals committee have reviewed the proposed fees and charges and asks the executive to take into account the current financial circumstances caused by the pandemic on all licensable activities.

Appendix C is an extract from Appendix A and outlines significant changes or new charges, along with reasons for the change/introduction of the charge.

BUSINESS CASE

The report contains proposed charges for services as set out in Appendix A.

Annual inflationary increases have in general been increased by an average 1.6% (and rounded where appropriate) in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) as at July 2020. Some fees and charges, largely in Adults Social Services, vary according to the cost of providing the service.

Most changes are enacted from 1 December 2020. However, sports, cemeteries, housing, training courses and youth and community charges will alter from 1 January 2021 (sports) and 1 April 2021 respectively. This is in line with business requirements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£4k	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£20k	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£20k	Yes	Revenue

Other Financial Information
The amount of £20k for next financial year is from the RPI increase alone; income from new bids and above inflation increase will be detailed in the main MTFP report, submitted to Executive in February 2021.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
All relevant services were contacted to review their fees and charges

Public Sector Equality Duty
All services with new or significantly different charges have carried out equality impact assessments before proposing the changes to the fees and charges.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
No impact

List of Background Papers
None

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