



Report to:	Environment and Neighbourhood Committee	Date:	26 November 2015
Report title:	Review of Environment, Housing and Regeneration Fees and Charges for 2016/17		
Report from:	Mary Morrissey, Strategic Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration		
Ward/Areas affected:	Borough-wide		
Chair of Committee	Councillor Jill Whitehead		
Author /Contact Number(s):	Matt Clubb, Executive Head of Environment Commissioning 0208 770 6116		
Corporate Plan Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Green Council • A Fair Council • A Smart Council 		
Open/Exempt:	Open		
Signed:		Date:	16 November 2015

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks to gain approval following a review of fees and charges for various Environment, Housing and Regeneration services. The report provides details of the existing charges and proposed increases for these services.

2. Recommendations

That the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee:

- 2.1 Agrees the proposal to increase the charges for Commercial (Trade) Waste, Bulky Waste, Parks (including Biodiversity), Cemeteries, Highways and Transport, Regulatory Services, Sports and Leisure Management, Registration Service and Libraries.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Environment, Housing and Regeneration Directorate review the charges applied to its services on an annual basis. New charges are implemented in April of the following year. The services covered within this annual review are Commercial (Trade) Waste, Bulky Waste, Parks, (including Biodiversity), Cemeteries, Highways and Transport, Regulatory Services, Sports and Leisure Management, Registration Service and Libraries.



3.2 Councils have had significant reductions in their funding from government grants. At the same time the Council has faced increasing demand for services due to demographic pressures and the consequences of other national government policies such as welfare reform. The London Borough of Sutton is no different from other Councils. The Council faces further funding and grant reductions from national government over the medium term with a funding gap of £31m projected by 2018/19.

4. Issues

- 4.1 Given these financial challenges, a review of all Environment, Housing and Regeneration fees and charges has been conducted. The main aim of this review was to:
1. Ensure that all costs associated with the provision of services are fully recovered
 2. Ensure any known increases in contract costs, inflation and other costs are recovered from service users
 3. Address the base income budget position for individual services.
- 4.2 The following services have inflated their fees and charges by an average of 2% which is in line with the predicted levels of inflation.
- o Regulatory services
 - o Highways & Transport
 - o Parks and Cemeteries

The following services are proposing charges either below or above inflation; the rationale for changes is listed in the sections below.

4.3 Bulky Waste including fridges (Appendix 1)

The charges in this area have not been increased for a number of years. It is therefore proposed to increase these charges from £25 to £30 for the first three items and from £5 to £6 for any subsequent items. This increase will allow The Vine Project to cover the costs associated with collecting these items.

4.4 Commercial (Trade) Waste (Appendix 2)

An increase in charges for this service is not proposed. These charges are currently above market rate. Any further increases are likely to result in the cancellation of contracts and will restrict the ability of the service to meet income targets for 2016/17.

Registration Services (Appendix 3)

4.5 The fees and charges in this area have been increased between 4% and 8%. It is anticipated that the additional income from these changes will equate to between an additional £8,000 based on current demand and support the achievement of current income targets.

Sports & Leisure Management (Appendix 4)

4.6 Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) operate and manage Westcroft, Cheam, David Weir and Phoenix Leisure Centres on behalf of the council and are able to increase core prices in line with CPI. While there are some variations to this the overall average increase in prices is 1.89%.



Biodiversity (Appendix 5)

- 4.7 A review of the biodiversity charges has been conducted in order to achieve cost recovery of the service. This review has resulted in changes to holiday activities with sessions for 4-7 year olds increasing from £3.70 to £6.00 as well as the removal of services due no bookings being made in the past 2 years and therefore no longer required. There is no capacity within the current service to increase the number of bookings therefore an increase in the charge is the only way to increase revenue. The estimated income generation from undertaking these increases in price and estimating for a drop in bookings, is in the region of £10,000 above that estimated for 15/16. This will enable the service recover its costs.

Life Centre (Appendix 6)

- 4.8 The fees and charges in this area have been amended to reflect competitor and market rates. This has resulted in a decrease on pricing for room bookings of between 20-30% as well as an increase of up to 4% for other activities. It is anticipated that the additional income from these changes will equate to between an additional £4k and £6k increase and support the achievement of current income targets.

Library Service (Appendix 7)

- 4.9 An increase in charges for this service is not proposed. Many are already above market rate, such as public photocopying, and further increases will restrict the ability of the service to meet income targets for 2016/17.

5 Options Considered

- 5.1 An annual review was carried out across all services and has resulted in proposed increases of varying amounts to individual services. In reviewing these charges the options considered was to 1) not increase charges 2) increase by inflation only and 3) increase above inflation.

6 Impacts and Implications

Financial

- 6.1 The above inflationary increases arising from this proposal (which assumes no drop-off in service uptake) will contribute just over £22k. This will ensure the 2016/17 fees income budget recovers some of the unachieved 2015/16 budgeted income.

Legal

- 6.2 The Environment, Housing and Regeneration Directorate have reviewed its charges against relevant legislation to ensure that any fees and charges remain compliant with the relevant statutes governing Local Authority activities.



7 Appendices and Background Documents

Appendix	Title
1	Bulky Waste – Proposed 2016/17
2	Commercial Waste – Proposed 2016/17
3	Registration Services – Proposed 2016/17
4	Sports & Leisure Management – Proposed 2016/17
5	Bio-Diversity – Proposed 2016/17
6	Life Centre – Proposed 2016/17
7	Library Service – Proposed 2016/17

Background Documents

None.

Audit Trail

Version	Final	Date: 16 November 2015
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Consultation with other officers

Officer	Comments Sought	Comments checked by
Finance	Yes	Akin Akintola
Legal	Yes	Claire Williams