

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Panel**  
Date: **19 November 2015**  
Title: **Review of Fees and Charges for 2016/17**  
Portfolio Area: **Support Services – Cllr S Wright**  
Wards Affected: **All**  
Relevant Scrutiny Committee: **Internal**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Author: **Pauline Henstock** Role: **Finance Business Partner**

Contact: **Tel. 01803 861377**  
**E-mail: pauline.henstock@swdevon.gov.uk**

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**Recommendations:**

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel RESOLVES that the Executive RECOMMENDS to Council that it approves the proposed fees and charges set out in this report as part of the Budget Setting Process for 2016/17.**
- 2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel RESOLVES that the Executive RECOMMENDS to Council that delegated authority is given to the Community of Practice Lead for Environmental Health in consultation with the Portfolio holder, to modify the charges of Food Export Certificates, once the outcome of the current review is known.**
- 3) That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel RESOLVES that the Executive RECOMMENDS to Council that delegated authority is given to the Group Manager for Environmental Services in consultation with the Portfolio holder, to set the Commercial Waste charges, once all the price modelling factors are known.**

## **1. Executive summary**

1.1 This report sets out proposals for fees and charges for all services for 2016/17. The estimated additional income that could be generated from the review of fees and charges for 2016/17 totals £5,000.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The Council has the power to levy fees and charges for various services and functions it undertakes. Some of these fees are set by statute while for others the Council can make "reasonable" charges for the services it provides. The undertaking of regular reviews of charges allows, where possible, for the Council to recover the cost of officers' time in providing the service.

## **3. Proposals for Charges 2016/17**

### **3.1 Parks, Open Spaces, Outdoor Sport and Recreation**

Appendix A sets out proposals related to Parks, Open Spaces, Outdoor Sport and Recreation. For pitches, courts and greens the proposal is that charges for 2016/17 be retained at current levels as part of the continued strategy to promote sport and outdoor activities. The aim going forward is to prioritise income through marketing and additional use rather than increasing charges. Officers are continuing to pursue options to transfer management of facilities to local clubs and organisations, with some transfers already completed (Newton and Noss recreational facilities, Totnes Borough Park tennis courts to be transferred to Tennis Club from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016).

It is proposed that dinghy and kayak parking charges will change in 2016/17. Dinghy and kayak parking charges have remained static since 2012/13. The proposed changes reflect a perceived significant underpricing of the parking charges in previous years when compared with similar charges elsewhere in the region. The change in charges at Coronation Park also reflects the proposed investment by SHDC in the winter of 2015/16 to resurface the dinghy parking area, and formalise the parking arrangements to better reflect requirements and aspirations of the users of the Park. This includes creating different sized parking spaces to reflect the variety of dinghies. The introduction of racks will enable a lower charge for some permit holders. The price of a small (up to 4m space) will increase by 25%, with more significant increased charges applying to medium (up to 5m) and large (up to 6m) spaces. It should also be noted that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, the administration of the parking permit scheme at Coronation Park and Warfleet in Dartmouth will be brought back within SHDC management (previously administered by the tenant of the Coronation Park café). It is anticipated that this will reduce inconsistencies with the permit application and payment process, and ensure the best use of the available dinghy parking spaces. These proposed changes to dinghy and kayak parking charges could generate an additional £5,000 of income.

The number of events on Council land increase year on year, and it is proposed that charges for 2016/17 remain the same. Community and charity events take place on Council land free of hire charge. It is proposed that an event administration charge introduced in 2014/15, to help offset the staff costs in facilitating the busy event programme, will continue into 2016/17. The opportunity remains for this event administration charge to be waived at the local Ward Member/s discretion upon request. It is also proposed that all other events, memorials and sponsorship remain the same in 2016/17.

The Council continues to offer a play area inspect and insure service to community groups and town and parish councils. This has been set previously at £100 + VAT, for which the Council annually provides 12 visits by a qualified inspector (Mobile Locality Officers), Allianz insurance inspection visits and Insurance premium. It is proposed that the charge remains the same for 2016/17 with a view to reviewing in the offer next financial year.

### **3.2 Environmental Health Charges**

There are a number of changes proposed to the Environmental Health fees and charges. Please refer to Appendix B for a detailed breakdown of the proposals. No changes are being made to the gambling, taxi and alcohol licensing fees.

The changes to Environmental Health fees are unlikely to be the source of a substantial increase in income. The Community of Practice Lead for Environmental Health is optimistic that in time, the efficiency savings from streamlining the processes across both Councils will reduce operating costs, which may allow us to pass the savings on to the businesses.

The service of Food Export Certificates is currently subject to scrutiny, and the amount of work processing and granting of food export certificates is currently under review. Given the timing of this review, it is requested that the Community of Practice Lead for Environmental Health is given delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio holder, to modify this charge once the outcome of the scrutiny is known.

### **3.3 Lower Ferry, Dartmouth**

It is not intended that we change the fees and charges for the Dartmouth Lower Ferry at this point. The Lower Ferry is currently subject to an operational service review. This will be concluded by the close of 2015 and will offer recommendations on service delivery including current tariffs and their current format. As such it is recommended that a review of fees and charges should take place at this time and will be reported back to Members as part of the overall review findings.

### 3.4 Car Parking

It is recommended that there is no overall increase in car parking charges for the 2016/17 financial year. However, the Council is encouraging community-led parking reviews, allowing communities to work with the Operations Manager (Environment Services) in setting charges which support the community's needs, and which are cost neutral to the District Council.

### 3.5 Commercial Waste Charges

The pricing model for Commercial Waste charges requires consideration of budget performance, disposal charges and market factors, but it is considered too early in the financial year for this review to be undertaken. Given the timing of these factors, it is requested that the Group Manager for Environmental Services is given delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio holder, to set these charges once the outcome of the review is known.

## 4. Proposed Way Forward

1) The level of fees and charges will continue to be monitored during the year.

## 5. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Council has the power to introduce, maintain and increase charges under S.19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 or as set out in specific pieces of relevant information.
Financial	Y	The estimated additional income that could be generated from the review of fees and charges for 2016/17 totals £5,000
Risk	Y	Achieving anticipated income targets in the current financial climate – regular monitoring of corporate income streams and revenue budgets ensures early identification of variances.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	Y	Charging helps to support the provision of a wide range of public facilities available to all ages and all abilities.

Safeguarding	Y	Charging assists in supporting the running and management of a range of facilities in appropriate locations for local communities.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	Y	Charging helps to maintain the range of facilities.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	Charges for pitches, courts and greens have not been increased in line with the continued strategy to promote sport and outdoor activities.
Other implications	N	None directly arising from this report.

### **Supporting Information**

**Appendix A – 2016/17 Proposed Charges for Outdoor Recreation**

**Appendix B – 2016/17 Proposed Charges for Environmental Health**

**Background Papers:**

**Medium Term Financial Strategy – Executive 15 October 2015**

### **Approval and clearance of report**

<b>Process checklist</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Portfolio Holder briefed	<b>Yes</b>
SLT Rep briefed	<b>Yes</b>
Relevant Exec Director sign off (draft)	<b>Yes</b>
Data protection issues considered	<b>Yes</b>
If exempt information, public (part 1) report also drafted. (Committee/Scrutiny)	<b>N/A</b>