

**Meeting:** Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 8 April 2014  
**Subject:** Fees & Charges Policy  
**Report of:** Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources  
**Summary:** The report accompanies a proposed revised Fees & Charges Policy (Appendix A). This Policy was last updated in 2010/11

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**Advising Officer:** Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

1. Sound financial management contributes to the Council's Value for Money and enables the Council to successfully deliver its priorities. The recommendations will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities.

### **Financial:**

2. The financial implications will be determined by any changes to the Policy.

### **Legal:**

3. None.

### **Risk Management:**

4. None.

### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

5. None.

### **Equalities/Human Rights:**

6. This is covered within the Policy.

### **Public Health:**

7. None.

### **Community Safety:**

8. None.

### **Sustainability:**

9. None.

**Procurement:**

10. None.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Committee is asked to:-**

- 1. Consider and comment on the attached Fees & Charges Policy (Appendix A) and proposed Fees & Charges review.**

**Executive Summary**

11. The Fees & Charges policy was last updated in 2010/11. The Policy should be reviewed at least every three years. A proposed updated Policy is attached at Appendix A along with a proposal to undertake a full review of Fees & Charges.

**12. Fees & Charges (F&C) – Current Position**

13. The Fees & Charges policy was last updated in 2010/11. This Policy has been reviewed within Finance, and is still considered to be fit for purpose with a few amendments to reflect organisational structure changes that have taken place within the Council since the Policy was last revised.
14. The draft report incorporates tracked changes so that the Committee can review the proposed changes made to the 2010/11 Policy paper.
15. The Council charges for c.600 services covering aspects of all Directorates.
16. Prices of services are reviewed annually via the Scrutiny process of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) before being recommended by Executive and finally approved by Council as part of the MTFP approval in February each year.
17. Budgeted Income from Fees & Charges in 2013/14 is £35m and for 2014/15 is £36.4m.
18. Currently the capture of numbers of service transactions accessed by the public (volumes), is problematic as F&C are billed by various departments within the Council, and consistency of approach needs to be tested.
19. Charges to Schools are not currently captured via the MTFP process and are dealt with separately with no Member or committee overview.
20. We do not currently charge for any services provided by Public Health.

**21. Next Steps**

22. A detailed review of F&C is overdue and it is proposed that this review, conducted during April – June 2014, should investigate the following:

- Revenues and volumes for each service provided.
- If volumes are not currently captured, how do we ensure that they are captured in future?
- Confirm which services are statutory / discretionary.
- Determine if discretionary but not commercially viable for the Council to provide, are there other private sector providers that we could signpost?
- Should we propose to cease to provide discretionary services that are not commercially viable (will depend on nature of the service and consequences).
- Test billing arrangements (do we charge for what we should?).
- Are there services that we don't charge for but could (eg. Public Health?).
- What should be the budget monitoring/reporting processes going forward?
- Are services fully cost reflective, and do they contribute to the Council financially?
- Benchmark charges with neighbouring authorities.
- Do we charge a market rate and are there opportunities to increase income from F&C?
- Incorporating Schools charging into the F&C MTFP process?

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Proposed Fees & Charges Policy – 2014/15 – 2016-17