

**ENVIRONMENT TRANSPORT &
SUSTAINABILITY CABINET
MEMBER MEETING**

Agenda Item 71

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Fees and Charges 2012/13
Date of Meeting: 24 January 2012
Report of: Strategic Director, Place
Contact Officer: Name: Karen Brookshaw Tel: 29-3047
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Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for 2012/13.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the Cabinet Member agrees the proposed fees and charges for 2012/13 as set out in the report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 The Budget Process Report 2010/11 agreed at Cabinet in July 2009, specified that Fees and Charges are assumed to increase by a standard inflation rate each year, which is 2% for 2012/13.

3.2 It is not always possible when amending a fee to increase it by exactly 2% each year, therefore there may be some rounding to the nearest whole number.

3.3 There are some fees and charges which are quoted inclusive of VAT, for example cricket pavilion charges. Tariffs which are inclusive of VAT are marked in the appendices.

Parking Fees

3.4 Parking Tariffs were approved by Environment Transport & Sustainability Cabinet on 29th November 2011. Parking tariffs will be presented in a separate report in February to tie in with deadlines for advertising Traffic Regulation Orders.

Highways

3.5 Traffic Regulation orders (Emergency Temporary Notices) – It is proposed to increase the charges from £197 to £300 in recognition of the officer time taken in this process.

- 3.6 Licence charges - it is proposed to increase some licence charges (skips, scaffolding, tables and chairs, A boards etc) to bring them in line with comparator authorities.
- 3.61 Scaffolds. A review of other local authorities found that the average fee for a 28 day licence at £44.86 was much higher than Brighton & Hove's current charge of £31.00. Since these fees were last reviewed, the procedure has changed requiring more officer time on site. The new rate will cover the increased cost of issuing the licence and bring the charge in line with those of other authorities.
- 3.62 Skips. A review of fees found that the average charge for other local authorities for a 28 day skip licence at £35.32 was higher than Brighton and Hove's current charge of £33.00. The current pricing structure does not allow for the extra work required when placing large skips on the public highway, nor does the normal fee cover the potential damage caused to the surface of the highway by large skips. The proposal is to increase the standard fee for normal skips to bring us in line or slightly above other local authorities and introduce a different set of charges for large skips. This will cover the cost of administering the skip licences and the officer's time required to inspect the proposed sites.
- 3.63 Hoardings. For areas smaller than 10 square meters, the proposal is to bring the fee inline with the charge for scaffolding. Each site requires at least one visit, normally more and the fees have been reviewed to reflect officer time.
- 3.64 Materials. The current fee of £12 per week does not cover the administration or enforcement costs. The current fee should be increased to £20 per 7 days.
- 3.65 Objects on the Public Highway: Tables and Chairs, Shop Displays. The current application fee for areas under 5 sqm is £91.00 but this does not reflect the work required to issue the licence. The area fee increase of £20 per square meter not only brings us in line with other local authorities but will also cover the increasing costs of enforcement.
- 3.66 A-boards. The recent high profile of advertising boards has led to an increase in enforcement costs that are not covered by the current fees. The proposed increase for the new application fee to £85.00 and the renewal fee to £60.00 will better reflect the costs involved in issuing and monitoring the licence.
- 3.67 Other Fees. We do not currently charge for changes to details of issued licences. This can be a costly process; a fee of £25 will help cover these costs.
- 3.68 One-off Promotions. We licence one off promotions in the centre where no formal road closure is in place. The current fee was only set last year. The increase is in line with other highway licences and reflects the costs incurred in licensing prime town centre promotional space which includes co-ordination with other events and activities. There is a minimum fee of £50 which we charge to charities.
- 3.7 Increases above the corporate level of inflation are proposed for lining, as the cost of providing lining work has increased considerably recently, and in order to recover council costs.

- 3.71 Disabled Bays – It is proposed to charge a £10 administration fee for any new disabled bay applications. This charge compares favourably to other local authorities and still equates to less than half the cost to the council.

City Parks

- 3.8 Allotment rents - It is proposed to remove the historic subsidy for allotment holders, meaning an increase from £33.00 to £55.40; the 25% concessions for those on low incomes and the elderly would be retained.

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE TO PARAGRAPH 3.8 AS SET OUT BELOW:

3.8 Allotment rents - it is proposed to reduce the historic subsidy for allotment holders by 50%, meaning an increase from £33,00 to £44.20; the 25% concessions for those on low incomes and the elderly would be retained. The remaining subsidy will be removed in 2013/14 meaning an increase to £55.40 to which figure inflation will be applied. Again the 25% concessions for those on low incomes and the elderly would be retained

- 3.8.1 Donated trees – It is proposed to remove the subsidy for donated trees, so that the full cost to the council can be recovered.
- 3.8.2 Dedicated benches - It is proposed to remove the subsidy for dedicated benches, so that the full cost to the council can be recovered.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 No specific consultation was undertaken in relation to this report.

5 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The financial implications are covered in the main body of the report. Any additional income is included in the budget setting process for 2012-13.

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The council needs to establish for each of the charges imposed both the power to levy charges of that type and, where applicable, the power to set the charge at a particular level. In some cases the amount of the charges is

set by Government. In other cases where a figure is not prescribed, the amount that can be charged is restricted to costs recovery. In all cases the council must act reasonably and ensure that any statutory formalities which govern the particular charge are complied with.

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 06/01/12

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Highways: An objective of the changes has been to move towards a more consistent and fair citywide approach. The majority of the above inflation proposals relate to charges that are rounded up by one pound. In terms of lining across crossovers this is to cover the cost of administration, site work and implementation. In respect of the charge for disabled bays, this has been kept as low as possible to ensure that the cost is reasonable.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct risk or opportunity management implications arising from this report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The Council's financial position impacts on levels of Council tax and service levels and therefore has citywide implications.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Not applicable.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Proposed Fees & Charges 2012/13

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None