

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2018</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>FEES AND CHARGES 2018/19</b>		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>CLLR JACKIE JAMES - CORPORATE RESOURCES AND FINANCE</b>		
<b>Ward/s:</b>			
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>YES</b>		
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>YES</b>		

### **Purpose of the Report**

The Council is seeking to achieve £1m in savings in 2018/19 with a further £2.78m in savings to be achieved until the end of 2021/22. In addition to reducing costs through efficiency reviews the Council has assessed the level of fees and charges for the services it delivers to ascertain the scope of further income generation.

In addition to this Income Review, the Council has adopted a Commercial Enterprise Strategy for Ashfield, of which one of the aims is to 'develop and grow business initiatives and maximise the return from our trading services.' This is to support the Council as it continues to face funding pressures.

Provisional Fees & Charges proposals have been included in the Budget exercise for 2018/19. There are services which are still reviewing their charges, and this may increase income further.

All fees and charges discussed in the report are contained within the Council's Fees and Charges booklet. This has been updated to reflect the recommendations made and is attached to this report.

### **Recommendation(s)**

Agree the revised Fees & Charges booklet for 2018/19 with all applicable increases taking effect as soon as practically possible after 1 April 2018.

## **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

Additional income generated will contribute towards the Council's saving targets and continue to support the financing of a range of services. In addition, an annual review of fees and charges is part of sound financial management practise and a requirement of the Council's Financial Regulations.

## **Alternative Options Considered (With Reasons Why Not Adopted)**

Where applicable, alternative options are presented for consideration.

## **Detailed Information**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with sound financial practice, it is already a requirement to undertake an annual review of fees and charges. This exercise is carried out as part of the budget process each year.

### **APPROACH**

Managers have been asked to consider and propose revised fees and charges taking in account the following factors.

- i) Market conditions;
- ii) Increases in costs incurred by the Council in delivering the service;
- iii) Charges levied by other local authorities in the immediate area and those in the private sector where applicable;
- iv) Restrictions due to any contractual arrangement.

Some fees and charges are set by the Government. As the Council is unable to amend these charges they are excluded from the review.

### **PROPOSALS BY DIRECTORATE**

Proposed fee revisions are shown in the remainder of the report by Directorate. These are summarised in the draft 2018/19 fees and charges booklet attached to this report.

### **PLACES AND COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE**

#### **Planning**

Planning fees are set by legislation. From 17 January 2018, Planning Fees will increase by 20%. The Government have passed legislation to enable this increase and local authorities have to commit to invest the additional fee income in their planning department. This is to enable local authority planning departments to improve their resourcing leading to better services, improvement performance and greater capacity to deliver growth.

#### **Building Control**

The overarching principles of the new local authority building control charging system under the Charges Regulations 2010 are that full cost recovery is achieved and users only pay for the service they receive.

Income from charges levied should as far as possible equate to the costs incurred, i.e. a 'break-even' position should be aimed for. Charges must be reviewed at the end of each financial year

for the purpose of achieving this overall objective. When setting charges, surpluses and deficits made in earlier years must be taken into account and offset against projected future costs/income so that over a reasonable period income matches costs. Good practice suggests 'break-even' over a rolling period of three years should be aimed for.

So, whilst the Council has independence over setting charges there is little scope for additional income generation from chargeable building regulations activity whilst adhering to the Charges Regulations 2010.

The review conducted at the end of 2016 identified a need to change the charge for certain types of work to maintain a 'break-even' position. Revised fees were implemented in April 2017. The fees for 2018/19 are still to be determined. There are therefore no changes proposed at this point in time.

### Land Charges

These charges are discretionary but have to remain competitive with the market as a similar (but generally satisfactory for most needs) service can be obtained from personal search companies.

HMRC has introduced VAT for local authority searches (excluding the LLC1) from 1st April 2017.

Following the previous review when the Council revised commercial fees in line with the residential product, fees are now split into two categories:

- 1) Full search – which comprises an LLC1 and CON29R.
- 2) Individual enquiries – The price for these has been individually set to take into account the work required to prepare the response.

No changes are proposed for 2018/19.

### Commercial Rents

There are individual agreements for all commercial premises and these agreements dictate when a rent review is due. The rent proposed for each unit is dependent upon the current market values for comparable premises in similar areas and there is only scope for an increase if at the point of rent review or lease renewal, market values are higher than those currently being paid.

### Street naming and Numbering

Charges were introduced in November 2006 for street naming/numbering. Charging is at the discretion of the Council and whilst it is common in the south of the Country, fewer authorities in the northern half of the Country charge for this service. Current fees are comparable to those charged by neighbouring Authorities.

These have been reviewed, and it is recommended that the charge for new addresses in excess of 5 plots be increased from £12 to £15 per plot, those for Amendments be raised from £55 to £65, and the charge for renaming a street should increase from £200 administration fee plus £55 per plot to £200 plus £65 per plot.

Income is below budget, as there are few new developments, and it is hoped that the revised charges will help to reduce the shortfall.

	<b>New Address (1-5)</b>	<b>New Address (6+)</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Street Name</b>	<b>House name</b>	<b>Renam Street</b>
<b>Ashfield</b>	£35/plot	£35 + £15/plot after 5	£65	£115	£65	£200 + £65/plo
<b>Mansfield</b>	£42.70 for one plot, then	£106.10 for 6-10 plots	£79.60 + £26/plot	£132.70	£42.70	£132.70 + £26/plo

	£79.60 for 2 to 5 plots					
<b>Newark &amp; Sherwood</b>	£25.50/plot	£25.50/plot	£76.50+ £25.50/plot	-	£25.50	£76.50+ £25.50 / plot
<b>Nottingham City</b>	-	-	£60 + £6/plot	-	-	£300 + £5/plot
<b>Amber Valley</b>	£75 for one plot, then £100 for 2 to 5 plots	£150 for 6-10 plots	£100 + £10/plot	£125	£50	£250

## Markets

Price resistance again continues to be a significant issue for Markets, with occupancy levels fluctuating and traders seeking towns offering the greatest footfall. The refurbishment of the indoor market has recently been completed, and new licences and rental agreements, with fees reflecting the improvements are being offered.

The Authority continues to offer a number of initiatives to improve occupancy at our markets and use our added value events to promote our towns to new traders, and shoppers alike. Nationally Market traders are reducing, and the Council is not immune from this trend.

## Local Indoor Markets Comparison

Indoor Market charges are set on a commercial basis and our current charges have been developed in parallel with the capital investment in the Sutton Indoor Market.

## Local Outdoor Markets Comparison

Market Name	Market Days	Stall Rent Price
<b>Sutton-in-Ashfield</b>	<b>Monday, Wednesday, Friday-Saturday</b>	<b>£11.40</b>
<b>Kirkby-in-Ashfield</b>	<b>Tuesday, Thursday, Friday-Saturday</b>	<b>£11.40</b>
<b>Hucknall</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>£11.40</b>
Bulwell	Tuesday-Wednesday, Friday-Saturday	£21 -£22.50
Chesterfield	Monday, Friday	£9.70 - £20.10
	Saturday	£15.60 - £31.20
	Thursday	£17.10 - £28.20
Clifton	Friday	£25.00
Ilkeston	Thursday-Saturday	£10.00
Long Eaton	Wednesday, Friday	£12.00
Mansfield	Monday-Saturday	£11.00 - £26.00
Newark	Monday, Thursday	£23.00
	Wednesday, Saturday	£23.00
	Friday	£23.00
Retford	Thursday	£14.50
	Saturday	£15.50
Ripley	Friday	£14.00
	Saturday	£15.00

Shirebrook	Tuesday-Wednesday, Friday-Saturday	£12.00
Southwell	Thursday	£15.00
	Saturday	£18.00
St. Ann's	Tuesday	No pitch fees
Staveley	Tuesday	£6.00
	Friday	£10.00
	Saturday	£5.00
Worksop	Wednesday, Friday	£14.50
	Saturday	£13.50

Markets income is lower than budget for 2017/18. The revisions to Markets charges, including Indoor Markets, are anticipated to increase income by £28k, however, as Markets will not achieve the existing budget, this is an attempt to maintain the current level.

### Licences, Registrations, Permits and Consents

A large proportion of the licences, registrations and permits issued are statutory so pricing structures are prescribed. For licences, registrations and permits that are discretionary, fees are set to cover the costs of providing the service. Such licence fees are monitored with the aim of achieving full cost recovery. This includes, reviewing processes to reduce processing time, increasing fees if necessary and looking at charging for activity that is not currently charged for. Income for 2017/18 is above budget. The revised fees are likely to increase income by £49k, compared to the current year's budget.

### Pest Control Fees and Charges

A commercialisation strategy and marketing strategy have been adopted and a new pricing structure was introduced from March 2016. It is intended to keep Domestic prices at current levels, but some increases to Commercial fees are proposed (see the attached booklet for details). Income for 2017/18 is lower than budgeted. The price changes are aimed at maintaining the current year's income for 2018/19.

### Dog Control Fees

Part of the Dog Control fee is statutory, and the rest of the charge is set by the Council. A previous review showed that an increase in fees was likely to result in the loss of fee paying customers. Fees were not increased for 2017/18, and no rise is planned for 2018/19.

	Ashfield 2017/18	Mansfield 2017/18	Bassetlaw 2017/18
<b>1 Day</b>	<b>£60.00</b>	<b>£77.00</b>	<b>£63.00</b>
<b>2 Days</b>	<b>£70.00</b>	<b>£77.00</b>	<b>£72.00</b>
<b>3 Days</b>	<b>£85.00</b>	<b>£77.00</b>	<b>£81.00</b>
<b>4 Days</b>	<b>£95.00</b>	<b>£77.00</b>	<b>£90.00</b>
<b>5 Days</b>	<b>£110.00</b>	<b>£77.00</b>	<b>£99.00</b>
<b>6 Days</b>	<b>£120.00</b>	<b>£77.00</b>	<b>£108.00</b>
<b>7 Days</b>	<b>£130.00</b>	<b>£77.00</b>	<b>£117.00</b>

### Penalty Notices

These are fees associated with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Fees are mostly set by the Government although the Council does have some discretion in respect of early fee payment. The fee is in line with that charged by neighbouring

authorities so there are no proposals to change the early payment fee at this point. Details of these charges can be found in the attached booklet.

## Cemeteries

Cemetery fees and charges were reviewed and increased accordingly in 2017/18 to bring them closer in line with neighbouring Authorities. The proposed increases for 2018/19 will see Ashfield maintain this position. The following table shows how Ashfield's fees compare with other Councils in Nottinghamshire.

Ashfield Proposed	Ashfield 2017 Current	Mansfield 2017 Current	Gedling 2017 Current	Broxtowe 2017 Current	Bassetlaw 2017 Current	Notts City 2017 Current
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### INTERMENT FEES

	Ashfield Proposed	Ashfield 2017 Current	Mansfield 2017 Current	Gedling 2017 Current	Broxtowe 2017 Current	Bassetlaw 2017 Current	Notts City 2017 Current
Stillborn and up to 1 month old	F.O.C	F.O.C	Stillborn F.O.C. 50 (up to 2 yrs)	F.O.C.	F.O.C.	F.O.C.	F.O.C.
Child over 1 month to 16 yrs (Childs Sec only)	F.O.C	F.O.C	102 (2-16 yrs)	F.O.C. (1 month- 12 years)	under 15 yrs F.O.C.	up to 12 yrs 145	up to 15 yrs 75
Adult depth for one	<b>600</b>	500	N/A	N/A	675	550	635
Adult depth for two	<b>675</b>	550	565	N/A	735	605	635
Adult depth for three	<b>750</b>	600	N/A	569 (coffin) 828 (casket)	810	655	635
Cremated Remains	<b>185</b>	170	170	179	185	230	151
Cremated Remains - scattering	<b>75</b>	60	60	93	38		116

### PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF BURIAL

	Ashfield Proposed	Ashfield 2017 Current	Mansfield 2017 Current	Gedling 2017 Current	Broxtowe 2017 Current	Bassetlaw 2017 Current	Notts City 2017 Current
Purchase for	<b>75 yrs</b>	75 yrs	50 yrs	50 yrs	99 yrs	99 yrs	99 yrs
Adult grave	<b>800</b>	740	1270	828	655	820	1,474
Child's grave (Childs Section Only)	<b>180</b>	180	F.O.C.	828	655	175 up to - 1 month 200 1 month - 12 yrs	F.O.C.
Cremated Remains Area	<b>450</b>	400	710	684	205	440	1474
Chapel use	<b>150</b>	150	100	109	92	95	265
<b>NON RESIDENTS</b>	<b>100%</b>	100%	N/A	100% + approx	0%	100%	100%

### MEMORIALS

	Ashfield Proposed	Ashfield 2017 Current	Mansfield 2017 Current	Gedling 2017 Current	Broxtowe 2017 Current	Bassetlaw 2017 Current	Notts City 2017 Current
Headstone	<b>180</b>	180	113	323	185	175	320
Addl Inscription	<b>80</b>	70	46	85	38	80	90
8" x 8" Vase	<b>80</b>	80	46	323	60	N/A	N/A
Memorial tree	<b>100</b>	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

It is anticipated that the price changes for 2018/19 will be adopted This is expected to generate a further £9k income.

### **Leisure Centres**

The fees for the Leisure Centres are set by the contractor Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM), as long as they remain within the parameters of the overall contract and the Council is consulted on proposals .

SLM set prices within the parameters of the prevailing Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) % rate (September of the previous year for all CPI %), however, if they wish to exceed CPI, the Authority's consent is required.

Many of the price bands have not been increased for 2018/19. A review of fees and charges relating to the surrounding district authorities and operators leisure centre provision indicates that Ashfield's prices continue to represent value for money. Fee income is retained by the contractor.

Details of the charges are within the attached Fees & Charges booklet.

### **MOT tests**

The price is currently £40 for a class 4 test, £45 for a class 7 test and £10 for a retest. These prices are comparable with local competition and it is therefore not intended to increase them. The service is being actively publicised and a number of improvements have been made to enhance the customer experience.

### **Trade Waste**

Under the Environmental Protection Act, the Council is obliged to provide a commercial waste collection service if requested by local businesses and can make a 'reasonable' charge for the service. The Council aims to provide a quality and reliable service which is efficient and highly valued by our commercial customers. The Trade Waste prices for 2018/19 have been proposed, including a charge for a recycling service. As Trade Waste charges are commercially sensitive these will be excluded from the report.

### **Special Collections (Bulky /domestic items)**

There are no proposals to change prices for Bulky items.

### **Garden Waste**

The Garden Waste scheme for 2016/17 and 2017/18 was offered free of charge as part of an initiative with Nottinghamshire County Council. Charges will be reintroduced for the 2018/19 season, and these have already been set at £28 per annum if paid by Direct Debit, and £34 per annum otherwise.

### **Parks and Outdoor Recreation charges**

Various rises are proposed, however, there are no significant increases. These are detailed in the attached Appendix. These are not expected to increase income markedly.

## **HOUSING AND ASSETS**

### **Car Parking Fees**

Revised parking charges were implemented on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Users can park free for up to 1 hour, with an increase to tariffs for parking stays of over 2 hours. The aim of this tariff

change is to encourage short stay visitors in support of businesses and shops within the Town Centres. There will be no change in fees for 2018/19.

### **Community Centres**

The facilities provided by Community Centres are well received by the community groups that utilise them but occupancy rates do vary from centre to centre and are low in some cases, therefore affecting income levels. No changes are planned for 2018/19.

### **Private Sector Call Monitoring Service**

This is a non-statutory service, first established by Ashfield Homes, run on a commercial basis.

It is proposed to increase the Call Monitoring Charge from £4.02 to £4.62 per week (£3.35 to £3.85 excluding VAT), and the Telecare Monitoring charge from £1.20 to £2.40 per week (£1.00 to £2.00 excluding VAT). It is also planned to introduce an installation charge of £11.99 (£9.99 excluding VAT).

The increased charges are necessary in order to maintain the viability of the service, and should result in a break even position. The revised charges are anticipated to yield a further £38k. The shortfall initially was met by a reserve which has now been depleted.

### **RESOURCES AND BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION DIRECTORATE**

Council Tax and Business Rates court costs for summons and liability orders. If a charge payer does not pay their Council Tax or Business Rates despite an issue of a final notice, the next stage of recovery is Magistrates' Court action to summons and seek a liability order so that further recovery action can be taken.

Councils are allowed to add their costs to this process which is recoverable from the charge payer. There are no plans to increase these costs in 2018/19.

### **Mansfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee**

The above Joint Committee is owned jointly by Ashfield, Mansfield and Newark & Sherwood District Councils. For the purposes of profit sharing, Ashfield's share stands at around 40%. The Council has budgeted to receive £305k in 2017/18.

The cremation fee for 2018/19 is £704.50 (£653.50 for 2017/18). The equivalent fees charged by the Crematorium's closest neighbours are Sherwood Forest (£923 in 2017/18, £849 in 2016/17), Bramcote (£615 in 2017/18, no change from 2016/17) and Nottingham (Wilford) (£605 in 2017/18, £545 in 2016/17).

The increase has been agreed by the Joint Crematorium Committee, and the purpose is to generate funds for Capital Expenditure.

### **LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE**

There will be no change in 2018/19 for S106 agreement fees. These will remain at the current levels of £750 - £1000 per agreement. The fees relating to providing copies of Electoral Registers are proposed to increase modestly.



**Corporate Plan:**

A full review of Fees and Charges, and an increase in income contribute towards the funding objective of the Corporate Plan.

**Legal:**

All fees need to be set within the constraints of any relevant legislation.

**Finance:**

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	The proposals highlighted in the report are expected to increase income by £124k some of which will help maintain the existing budget. £58k has been determined as additional income and has been added to the 2018/19 budget in anticipation of the charges being approved.
General Fund – Capital Programme	None
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None

**Risk:**

Risk	Mitigation
N/A	

**Human Resources:**

No direct HR implications arising from the report.

**Equalities** *(to be completed by the author):*

No direct Equality implications arising from the report

**Other Implications:**

None

**Reason(s) for Urgency (if applicable):**

N/A

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Report Author and Contact Officer**

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