

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**20<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

**COUNCIL FEES AND CHARGES POLICY**

**2020/21**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out:

- Proposed revisions to Council fees and charges levels for the financial year 2020/21 (all to be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 or as soon as is practicable thereafter / unless otherwise stated); and
- Details of fees and charges decisions already approved that can now be included within the 2020/21 proposed Budget Strategy.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider and, if appropriate, approve the proposed revised levels for all areas of the Council's fees and charges as set out at section 5 and detailed at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Subject to fees and charges proposals being agreed, build the net budgetary impact (£2k for 2020/21) into the budget strategy proposals for consideration by Cabinet and Council as appropriate (paragraph 5.4).
- 2.3 Note the fees and charges decisions already approved and included in the 2020/21 proposed Budget Strategy (paragraph 5.5 / Table 2).

**3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To agree the Council's fees and charges for 2020/21, required as part of the annual budget setting process.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Council provides a wide range of services across the County Borough and the ability to apply a charge is an increasingly important funding source, particularly in the context of an on-going challenging public sector financial climate, to support the cost of maintaining service provision.
- 4.2 As part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements, fees and charges are reviewed regularly and, as part of this process, account is taken of funding levels received through the Local Government Settlement, the implications of decisions already approved, Corporate Plan priority areas and the level of inflation (i.e. the Consumer Prices Index rate of 1.5%).
- 4.3 Where appropriate, agreement of the proposed revisions is now required in order to put in place the necessary steps for their implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 (or as soon as is practicable thereafter / unless otherwise stated).

#### **5. REVIEW**

- 5.1 Cabinet have reviewed fees and charges levels having regard to the information set out in Section 4 and with the objective to continue to provide a comprehensive range of quality services at affordable prices.
- 5.2 The outcome of Cabinet's review is a proposed 1.50%<sup>1</sup> standard increase to fees and charges (allowing for rounding adjustments as appropriate) with the exception of a number of areas that are proposed to be subject to specific treatment. A summary of these exceptions are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Summary of proposed fees and charges not subject to the proposed standard increase

| <b>Area of charge</b>                         | <b>Proposed increase for 2020/21</b>                                       |
|---|--|
| Leisure for Life                              | Nil increase   |
| Car Park Charges                              | Nil increase   |
| Summer and Winter Playing Fees (Sports Clubs) | Nil increase   |
| School Meals (Primary and Secondary Schools)  | £0.05 per meal (and then no increase for 2 years i.e. 2021/22 and 2022/23) |
| Meals on Wheels and Day Centre Meals          | £0.10 per meal   |
| Pontypridd Lido (entry for adult users)       | £0.50 per Adult Swim   |
| Rhondda Heritage Park                         | Proposed revisions as per paragraph 5.3.4                                  |

<sup>1</sup> Proposed 1.5% standard increase – the Council's 2020/21 budget modelling already incorporates a proposed 1.5% increase to all fees and charges.

- 5.3 Further information on the proposals included in Table 1, where appropriate, are set out below.

### **School Meals (Primary and Secondary Schools)**

- 5.3.1 The proposal for 2020/21 is an increase of £0.05p per meal and then no increase for the following 2 financial years (i.e. 2021/22 and 2022/23). The 2020/21 primary school meal price would be £2.55 and the 2020/21 free school meal value of a secondary school meal would be £2.80. In terms of comparing across Wales, based on the latest information available, prices will range between £2.00 and £2.60 for primary schools and £2.15 and £3.05 for secondary schools.

### **'Meals on Wheels' and 'Day Centre Meals'**

- 5.3.2 The current meal price for both meals on wheels and day centre meals is £3.85 and the proposal is for the price of both to be increased to £3.95. In terms of comparing across Wales, based on the latest information available, prices range between £3.30 and £5.40.

### **Pontypridd Lido (entry for adult users)**

- 5.3.3 It is proposed to increase the current charge for adult users from £2 to £2.50 per swim (use for those aged 'under 16' remains free). The Lido continues to be successful in terms of user numbers, promoting healthy activity and delivering wider economic benefits to the area, and the proposed charge would remain competitive compared to other tourist attractions.

### **Rhondda Heritage Park**

- 5.3.4 It is proposed to increase the individual adult entry fee and family ticket for the Welsh Mining Experience (underground tour) by £1.00 (to £7.95 and £20 respectively) and to standardise the non-school entry fee for both adults and children for Santa's Toy Mine to £10. A comparison of attractions in neighbouring areas has confirmed the proposals would continue to position the Rhondda Heritage Park as one of the lowest priced attractions.

- 5.4 The impact of the proposals set out in Table 1 would reduce income by £2k in a full year (as compared to all fees and charges being increased by 1.5%).

- 5.5 In addition, a number of fees and charges decisions have previously been approved and accordingly have already been incorporated into the Council's 2020/21 proposed Budget Strategy. These are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 – Summary of decisions already approved

| Area of charge  | Decision approved  |
|---|--|
| Adult Social Care Charges (non-residential care services)               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase from £80 to £90 per week in line with the revised limit determined by Welsh Government with further increases to be made in line with Welsh Government limits (<a href="#">Cabinet 18th July 2017</a>)</li> </ul>                                      |
| Fixed Penalty Notice (for environmental crimes)                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set at £100 with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 (<a href="#">Cabinet 25th January 2018</a>)</li> </ul>   |
| Houses in Multiple Occupation - Licenses                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fees set for the period 2019/2020 to 2023/2024 (<a href="#">Cabinet 14th February 2019</a>)</li> </ul>  |
| Bereavement fees and charges for war veterans and service men and women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25% reduction to all Council bereavement fees incurred by families of deceased war veterans and service men and women resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf (<a href="#">Delegated Decision 8th May 2019</a>)</li> </ul>  |
| Adult Learning Course Fees  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hourly rate increased from £2.50 to £2.90 for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (and thereafter, subject to annual review). (<a href="#">Delegated Decision 22nd October 2019</a>)</li> </ul>                                |
| Leisure Centres and Swimming Pool                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure for Life membership prices frozen until January 2023; and</li> <li>• Leisure non-membership prices (e.g. pay and play) increased by 1.5% effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020. (<a href="#">Delegated Decision 20th December 2019</a>)</li> </ul> |

5.6 As Cabinet will be aware, at its meeting on [21st November 2019](#) a 12 month pilot was approved to apply a reduced cremation fee for funeral directors offering a direct cremation<sup>2</sup> in Rhondda Cynon Taf. As this is currently a pilot, no budgetary impact on fees and charges is being proposed for 2020/2021.

<sup>2</sup> Direct Cremation - A “direct”, “simplicity” cremation or “cremation without ceremony” is where a funeral director arranges a service with no mourners and brings the deceased directly to the crematorium with no religious service or attendees. The fees and charges to the family of the deceased are significantly reduced making the service more affordable, particularly for those on low incomes.

- 5.7 For completeness, a full list of all fees and charges across all Council services can be accessed [here](#), now including the proposed level of charges for 2020/21.

## **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 A comprehensive budget consultation exercise has been undertaken in relation to the 2020/21 budget requirements.

- 7.2 The proposals included in this report do not require any specific additional consultation exercises to be undertaken.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 As outlined in section 5 of the report, the proposed revisions to fees and charges levels for 2020/21 would reduce income by £2k in a full year if Cabinet decide to take forward the proposed recommendations (as compared to all fees and charges being increased by 1.5%).

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

## **10. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 10.1 Fees and charges income is a critical component of the funding arrangements for many services. At a local level, the proposals intend to ensure the continued provision of a comprehensive range of quality services at affordable prices for users to support the Council's work in: delivering its Corporate Plan priorities; improving the provision of essential services; and at the same time 'living within its means'.

- 10.2 The proposals also complement the requirements of the Well Being of Future Generations Act in helping to provide Services with adequate resources to continue their work in shaping provision fit for the future and, in doing so, enable positive contributions to be made toward meeting the seven national wellbeing goals.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 This report sets out proposals for the level of Council fees and charges for the forthcoming year, and, if approved, will be incorporated within the recommended 2020/21 Revenue Budget Strategy to Council on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

### **Other Information**

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee** – Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee

**PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2020/21**

| Group                             | Service Area  | Type Of Income                                      | 2020/21 Proposed Increase / Price                       |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Chief Executive                   | Porth Plaza   | Hire Of Premises                                    | 1.50%   |
|                                   | Land Charges  | Land Charges (excluding those set nationally)       | 1.50%   |
| Community and Children's Services | Environmental Health (Pollution) and Licensing (where applicable) | Licences  | 1.50%   |
|                                   |   | Houses in Multiple Occupation – Licenses            | 0%  |
|                                   | Food Standards  | Course Fees General                                 | 1.50%   |
|                                   | Bereavement Services <sup>3</sup>                                 | Cremation Fees                                      | 1.50%   |
|                                   |   | Burial Fees   | 1.50%   |
|                                   |   | All supplementary fees & charges                    | 1.50%   |
|                                   | Registrar   | Booking Fees  | 1.50%   |
|                                   |   | Attendances   | 1.50%   |
|                                   | Community Safety CCTV   | Other Fees Receivable                               | 1.50%   |
|                                   | Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools                                | Pay & Play Fees (from 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2020) | 1.50%   |
|                                   |   | Membership Fees (frozen until January 2023)         | 0%  |
|                                   | Rhondda Heritage Park   | Admission Fees - Schools                            | 0%  |
|                                   |   | Welsh Mining Experience (underground tour)          | 0%  |
|                                   |   | Other (including Santa's Grotto)                    | 0%  |
|                                   |   | Admission Fees - External Underground Experience    | £1.00 increase for single adult entry and family ticket |
|                                   |   | Santa's Grotto                                      | £10 standard fee for adults and children                |
|                                   |   | Other (including souvenirs)                         | 1.5%  |
|                                   | Lido – Pontypridd   | Miscellaneous Sales / Souvenirs                     | 1.5%  |
|                                   |   | Leisure Sales Income                                | £0.50 (£2.50 per adult swim)                            |
|                                   | Park & Dare & Coliseum Theatres                                   | Bars & Catering                                     | 1.50%   |
|                                   |   | Room/Venue Hire                                     | 1.50%   |
|                                   |   | Ticket Sales  | Internally set based on act / performance               |
|                                   |   | Cinema (entrance fee)                               | 1.50%   |
| Community Centres                 | Rental Income   | 1.50%   |   |
|                                   | Leisure Sales Income  | 1.50%   |   |
| Parks & Recreation Grounds        | Rental / Hire Income  | 1.50%   |   |
|                                   | Income From Outside Bodies  | 1.50%   |   |

<sup>3</sup> Bereavement Fees – 25% reduction for war veterans and service men and women

| Group  | Service Area                           | Type Of Income                              | 2020/21 Proposed Increase / Price                           |
|--|--|---|---|
|  |  | Summer Fees (Sports Clubs)                  | 0%  |
|  |  | Winter Fees (Sports Clubs)                  | 0%  |
|  |  | Leisure Sales Income                        | 1.50%   |
|  | Dare Valley Country Park               | Hire Charges                                | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Rental Income                               | 1.50%   |
|  | Day Services                           | Catering Income                             | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Meals Sales                                 | £0.10 per meal  |
|  |  | Hire Of Premises                            | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Produce Sales                               | 1.50%   |
|  | In-House Residential Services          | Board And Lodge Income                      | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Meals Sales                                 | 1.50%   |
|  | Domiciliary Care (Adults)              | Non Residential Care Charges                | N/A   |
|  | Nurseries                              | Day Nursery Fee Income                      | 1.50%   |
|  | Telecare                               | Lifeline Income                             | 1.50%   |
|  | Pest Control                           | Pest Control Service Charges                | 1.50%   |
|  | Libraries                              | Library Fines                               | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Hire Charges                                | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Photocopy & Printing Charges                | 1.50%   |
|  |  | All Other Sales                             | 1.50%   |
|  | Adult Education                        | General Course Fees                         | £2.50 to £2.90 per hour (from 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2020) |
| Hire Charges                                   |  | 1.50%                                       |   |
| Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services | Street Cleansing Operations            | Contract Income                             | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Fixed Penalty Notice (environmental crimes) | N/A   |
|  | Allotments                             | Rental Income                               | 1.50%   |
|  | Parks Services                         | Rental Income                               | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Income From Outside Bodies                  | 1.50%   |
|  | Commercial Waste                       | Trade Refuse Charges (Residual)             | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Trade Refuse Charges (Recycling)            | 1.50%   |
|  | Waste Collection                       | Bulky Waste Collection Income               | 1.50%   |
|  |  | Replacement Bin Charges                     | 1.50%   |
|  | Parking Services                       | Season Ticket Parking Fees                  | 0%  |
|  |  | Parking Fees                                | 0%  |
|  |  | Residential Parking Permits                 | 0%  |
|  | New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) | Licences                                    | 1.50%   |
|  | Home To School                         | Sale of Surplus Seats                       | 1.50%   |
| Traffic Management                             | Fees                                   | 1.50%                                       |   |



| Group                            | Service Area              | Type Of Income               | 2020/21 Proposed Increase / Price |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Education and Inclusion Services | School Meals Income       | School Meals Sales           | £0.05 per meal                    |
|                                  | Catering Training         | Miscellaneous Contributions  | 1.50%                             |
|                                  | Meals on Wheels           | Clients Meals Sales          | £0.10 per meal                    |
|                                  | Peripatetic Music Service | Course Fees General          | 1.50%                             |
|                                  |                           | Performances - Ticket Income | 1.50%                             |
|                                  |                           | Equipment Hire               | 1.50%                             |
|                                  |                           |                              |                                   |

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