

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2017**

### **COUNCIL FEES AND CHARGES POLICY 2017/18**

#### **REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR A MORGAN**

**Author:** Chris Lee, Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services - 01443 424026

#### **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 2017/18 (all to be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 or as soon as is practicable thereafter).

#### **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 Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Agree to implement a nominal £1 per adult user charge (under 16 users remain free) for the Pontypridd Lido.
- 2.3 If fees and charges proposals are agreed, build the net budgetary impact (£525K for 2017/18) into budget strategy proposals for consideration by Cabinet and Council as appropriate.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To agree the Council's fees and charges for 2017/18, required as part of the annual budget setting process.

#### 4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Council on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014 agreed the Council's budget strategy for 2014/15. Part of the strategy was to increase fees and charges, in total, by an average of 3% above the Retail Prices Index (RPI) per annum for 2014/15 and for each subsequent year to 2017/18.
- 4.2 The latest RPI level as announced in January of this year was 2.5% and if all income was included that would mean an increase of 5.5%.
- 4.3 Agreement of the proposed increases is now required in order to put in place the necessary steps for increases to be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April (or as soon as is practicable thereafter).

#### 5. **REVIEW**

- 5.1 Cabinet have reviewed and proposed a number of changes to the required standard level of increase and these are summarised in the table below.

<b>Area of Charge</b>	<b>Proposed Increase for 2017/18</b>
Parking Charges	Nil
Summer and Winter Playing Fees (Sports Clubs)	Nil
Domiciliary Care (Adults)	Nil
Trade Refuse (Recycling)	Nil
Meals on Wheels	Nil
School Meals	Nil

- 5.2 In order to meet the income target from the Council decision (as per paragraph 4.1) it would then become necessary to increase all other fees and charges by RPI + 6.3%, that is a total increase of 8.8%.
- 5.3 However, in order to protect residents from such a level of increase and having due regard to the more positive settlement from Welsh Government which this Council received, it has been possible to cap the increases for other fees and charges at a flat rate of 2.25%. The financial impact of this (£555k) will be built into the revenue budget strategy for 2017/18.
- 5.4 Members will recall that with regard to Leisure Fees and Charges, as agreed by Cabinet on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015, all committed prices were frozen until January 2017, at which point they were to be increased by RPI + 3%. On the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016, the Group Director Community and Children's Services made a delegated decision to freeze membership charges for a further 12 month period, in order to continue to grow the membership, further bolster the value for money of the product and aligns to the Council's commitment to

invest in its leisure facilities. In line with the same decision, all pay and play prices were increased from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 (by 5%, note RPI as at November 2016 was 2%).

- 5.5 Members will also be aware that a separate consultation process was undertaken with respect to Parking Charges. A report was considered by Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 and changes to the car park charging policy were agreed. This has been built into the revenue budget strategy proposals for 2017/18.
- 5.6 On the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016 Welsh Government initiated a consultation on proposed changes to the level of the maximum charge for non residential care and support, with the proposal being to uplift it from £60 per week to £70 per week from April 2017. The level of the maximum charge for 2018/19 and beyond will be the subject of separate engagement with stakeholders during next year with Welsh Government's expectation that it will reach £100 per week by the end of this Welsh Government's term in 2021/22. The consultation process closed on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017. This will be subject to a separate report once Welsh Government's decision making processes have been concluded.
- 5.7 Finally, it is proposed that a nominal charge is applied to adult users of the Pontypridd Lido (under 16 use remains free). The Lido has been extremely successful in terms of user numbers, promoting healthy activity and delivering wider economic benefits to the area. Over 70,000 people used the facility in 2016 and the online booking system proved very successful in allowing visitors to plan their visit and the service to manage numbers. As per the delegated decision taken in February 2016, the operational arrangements included free general access for the 2016 season. Given no charge was applied, experience from the year showed that there were inevitably some visitors who booked slots who then didn't attend on the day. It is felt that applying a nominal charge will not only contribute further income to the facility but it would also seek to address 'non attendance' by committing users to pay a small charge. The charge proposed is £1 per adult user. Based on a prudent estimate of potential adult users, additional income of £30k is projected for 2017/18 and will be built into the budget strategy proposals for the next financial year.
- 5.8 It is also worthy of note that our strategy of investing in our assets continues to see increasing usage of council owned and run facilities across a number of service areas, as a result of improving the customer experience. This is supplemented by positive efforts being made to increase promotion of facilities and events via social media. Positive impacts are already being seen, for example, in the use of the Rhondda Heritage Park and the use of our theatres.

5.9 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 2017/18.

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

6.1 In developing these proposals, an Equality Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken to ensure that:

- The Council meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties; and
- Due regard has been taken of the likely impact of the decision in terms of equality and discrimination.

## 7. **CONSULTATION**

7.1 A comprehensive budget consultation exercise has been undertaken in relation to the 2017/18 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 The financial implications arising from the report recommendations are set out in the main body of the report.

## 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 THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN**

10.1 Fees and Charges income is a critical component of the funding arrangements for many services. Setting out an appropriate level of fees contributes to securing service sustainability and in many cases helps to manage demand and target resources more effectively. This all supports services contributing effectively to the delivery of Corporate Plan priorities.

## 11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report sets out proposals for the level of Council fees and charges for the 2017/18 financial year.
- 11.2 The recommendations will enable the Council to take account of a more positive settlement from the Welsh Government in its proposed 2017/18 budget strategy through freezing charges for specific areas and capping the increase for other charges to 2.25%.

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## APPENDIX 1

### PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES INCREASES FOR 2017/18

Group	Service Area	Type Of Income	Proposed Increase 2017/18 <sup>1</sup>
Chief Executive	Electoral Registration	Sale Of Publications	2.25%
	Land Charges	Land Charges	2.25%
	Park & Dare & Coliseum Theatres	Bars & Catering	2.25%
		Room/Venue Hire	2.25%
	Communications Team	Ticket Sales (Internally Set)	2.25%
	Roundabout Sponsorship	2.25%	
Community Services	Licensing	Licences	2.25%
	Food Health And Safety Project	Service Charges Recoverable	2.25%
	Food Standards	Course Fees General	2.25%
	Bereavement Services	Cremation Fees	2.25%
		Burial Fees	2.25%
		All supplementary fees & charges	2.25%
	Registrar	Booking Fees	2.25%
		Attendances	2.25%
	Community Safety CCTV	Other Fees Receivable	2.25%
	Leisure Centres	Pay & Play Fees (from 01/01/18)	-
		Membership Fees (from 01/01/18)	-
	Rhondda Heritage Park	Admission Fees - Schools (incl Santa's Grotto)	2.25%
		Admission Fees - External (incl Santa's Grotto)	2.25%
		Miscellaneous Sales / Souvenirs	2.25%
		Sale of Publications	2.25%
	Community Centres	Rental Income	2.25%
		Leisure Sales Income	2.25%
	Allotments	Rental Income	2.25%
	Parks & Recreation Grounds	Rental Income	2.25%
		Income From Outside Bodies	2.25%
		Summer Fees (Sports Clubs)	0.0%
		Winter Fees (Sports Clubs)	0.0%
		Leisure Sales Income	2.25%
		Vending Sales	2.25%
		Countryside Services	Leisure Services Income
	Miscellaneous Income		2.25%
	Day Services	Catering Income	2.25%
		Meals Sales	2.25%
		Hire Of Premises	2.25%
		Produce Sales	2.25%

<sup>1</sup> Proposed increase 2017/18 – not applied to those areas where the charge is set on a statutory basis

Group	Service Area	Type Of Income	Proposed Increase 2017/18 <sup>1</sup>
	In-House Residential Services	Board And Lodge Income	2.25%
		Meals Sales	2.25%
	Domiciliary Care (Adults)	Non Residential Care Charges (means tested, max £60 p/w) *	-
	Nurseries	Day Nursery Fee Income	2.25%
	Four Seasons Centre	Misc Income	2.25%
	Telecare	Lifeline Income	2.25%
	Animal Warden	Service Charges Recoverable	2.25%
	Pest Control	Pest Control Service Charges	2.25%
Corporate & Frontline Services	Porth Plaza	Hire Of Premises	2.25%
	Valley Innovation Centre	Hire Of Premises	2.25%
	Street Cleansing Operations	Contract Income	2.25%
	Commercial Waste	Trade Refuse Charges (Residual)	2.25%
		Trade Refuse Charges (Recycling)	0.0%
		Miscellaneous Income	2.25%
	Waste Collection	Bulky Waste Collection Income	2.25%
		Replacement Bin Charges	2.25%
		Season Ticket Parking Fees **	0.0%
	Parking Services	Parking Fees **	0.0%
		NRSWA	Licences
Home To School	Sale of Surplus Seats	2.25%	
Traffic Management	Fees	2.25%	
Education	School Meals Income	School Meals Sales	0.0%
	Catering Training	Misc Contributions	2.25%
	Meals on Wheels	Clients Meals Sales	0.0%
	Peripatetic Music Service	Misc Claims	2.25%
		Miscellaneous Income	2.25%
		Miscellaneous Contributions	2.25%
		Performances - Ticket Income	2.25%
		Equipment Hire	2.25%
	Music Development	Misc Claims	2.25%
		Performances - Ticket Income	2.25%
	Libraries	Library Fines	2.25%
		Hire Charges	2.25%
		Photocopy & Printing Charges	2.25%
		All other Sales	2.25%
Data Research Team	Miscellaneous Charges to Schools	2.25%	
PFI Lifelong Learning Centre	Miscellaneous Income	2.25%	

\* see para 5.6 of report

\*\* see para 5.5 of report