



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

### **CABINET**

**15<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2018**

#### **COUNCIL FEES AND CHARGES POLICY 2018/19**

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

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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 2018/19 (all to be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 or as soon as is practicable thereafter); and
- Details of fees and charges decisions approved in 2017/18 that can now be included within the 2018/19 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 Consider and, if appropriate, agree to implement a 12 month pilot scheme in respect of bereavement fees for armed forces veterans (paragraph 5.3.5).
- 2.3 If fees and charges proposals are agreed, build the net budgetary impact (£253K for 2018/19) 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 2018/19, required as part of the annual budget setting process.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 As Members will be aware, the Council's agreed strategy for financial years 2014/15 to 2017/18 was to increase fees and charges, in total, by an average of 3% above the Retail Prices Index (RPI) per annum. For the forthcoming financial year, 2018/19, this strategy no longer applies.
- 4.2 Each year to help inform proposed fees and charges levels, key information is taken into account including the financial impact of the final Local Government Settlement, the implications of decisions already approved, Corporate Plan priority areas and the level of RPI (i.e. 4.1% as at December 2017).
- 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 2018 (or as soon as is practicable thereafter).

#### **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 2.95%<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 2018/19</b>
Parking Charges	Nil increase
Summer and Winter Playing Fees (Sports Clubs)	Nil increase
Cinema (entrance fee)	Nil increase
Meals on Wheels	£0.25 per meal
Day Centre Meals	£0.17 per meal
School Meals (Primary and Secondary Schools)	£0.10 per meal
Pontypridd Lido (entry for adult users)	£1.00
Burial Fees	Revised schedule of charges (as per Table 2)
Heritage Park (Underground Experience entry fee)	Schools: £0.55 Non-schools: £1 individual ticket

<sup>1</sup> Proposed 2.95% standard increase – the Council's 2018/19 initial budget modelling included a proposed 2% increase to all fees and charges. A 2.95% proposed increase would therefore represent net additional income from fees and charges of 0.95%.

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|--|--------------------|
|  | / £2 family ticket |
|--|--------------------|
- 5.3 Further information on the proposals included in Table 1, where appropriate, are set out below.
- 5.3.1 **'Meals on Wheels' and 'Day Centre Meals'** – the 2018/19 meal price for both areas are proposed to be brought into line at £3.70, from the current level of charges of £3.45 and £3.53 respectively. By way of comparison across Wales, the latest price information for the 2017/18 financial year ranges from £3.10 to £5.00.
- 5.3.2 **School Meals (Primary and Secondary Schools)** – proposal to increase by £0.10p per meal. The 2018/19 primary school meal price would be £2.50 and the 2018/19 free school meal value of a secondary school meal would be £2.75. In terms of comparing across Wales, based on 2017/18 information, current prices range between £1.90 and £2.50 for primary schools and £2.10 and £2.85 for secondary schools.
- 5.3.3 **Pontypridd Lido** – to increase the nominal charge introduced in 2017/18 of £1 for adult users to £2 for 2018/19 (use for those aged 'under 16' remains free). During the past year the Lido has continued 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.

### **Burial Fees**

- 5.3.4 Following a review of the Council's bereavement fees and comparison with other burial authorities, it is clear that the burial fees and charges applied by this Council are amongst the lowest in Wales. It is proposed to increase the level of burial fees over the next two years to bring them more into line with other neighbouring authorities. In terms of further contextual information, Members will note that the proposal would position the Council's burial fee levels at the 'lower end' compared with other neighbouring authorities without taking into account price changes these Councils may introduce during this period. Table 2 sets out the proposals for burial fees over the two year period with an additional income of £83k being forecast in relation to 2018/19. With regard to cremation fees, these are currently comparable with other local authorities and it is proposed that the standard increase only is applied (i.e. 2.95%).

Table 2 – Proposed revisions to Burial Fees for 2018/19 and 2019/20

Burial Fees	2017/18 Fee £	2018/19 Proposed Fee £	2019/20 Proposed Fee £
Purchase New Grave for 1/2	519	700	800
Purchase New Grave for 3	557	700	800
Additional Pre-purchase Fee	--	350	400
Burial in a New Grave for 1/2	519	700	800
Burial in a New Grave for 3	--	800	900
Burial in a Re-Opened Grave	519	700	800
Memorial Permits	256	250	250

- 5.3.5 Linked to the above, the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the issue of bereavement fees for armed forces veterans (at the meetings on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017) following a notice of motion to Council in November 2016. At the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017 meeting, the Committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the Council undertake a 12 month pilot whereby all bereavement fees incurred by the families of deceased veterans resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf be subject to a 25% reduction in recognition of the commitment to their country and the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. This will apply to all veterans who have served their minimum period of service/enlistment or seen active duty. For Members information, no budgetary adjustment is proposed for the 2018/19 financial year with the financial implications being assessed as part of the pilot over the next 12 months.
- 5.3.6 With regard to fees charged by local government for the burial and cremation of children, Members will note that this Council already had a policy of not applying a fee for the cremation or interment of a child under 16 years of age. The Key Officer Delegated Decision of [9th January 2018](#) reaffirmed this commitment and added further provisions in respect of no charge being made in such circumstances as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Welsh Ministers, the Welsh Local Government Association and One Voice Wales. It should be noted that the MOU extended this to include all standard burial and cremation fees of a child under 18 years of age. In line with this delegated decision, no budgetary adjustment is proposed for the 2018/19 financial year.
- 5.3.7 **Heritage Park (Underground Experience entry fee)** – proposal to increase the individual entry fee by £0.55 for school visits and for non-school visits by £1 for individual entry and £2 for a family ticket. A comparison of attractions in neighbouring areas has confirmed the proposal would continue to position the Heritage Park as one of the lowest priced attractions, this being alongside a recent programme of investment to further improve the customer experience.
- 5.4 The total estimated additional income that would be generated by the proposals (i.e. paragraphs 5.2 to 5.3.7) is £253k in a full year.

- 5.5 In addition to the proposals set out in Tables 1 and 2, a number of fees and charges decisions have been approved during the 2017/18 financial year and are to be incorporated into the Council's 2018/19 proposed Budget Strategy. For completeness, these are summarised in Table 3:

Table 3 – Summary of decisions approved during 2017/18

Area of charge	Decision approved
Adult Social Care Charges (non-residential care services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase from £60 to £70 per week in line with the revised limit determined by Welsh Government with further increases to be made in line with WG limits (Cabinet 18<sup>th</sup> July 2017)</li> </ul>
Leisure Centres and Swimming Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £2 increase on monthly membership</li> <li>• £20 increase on annual membership</li> <li>• 2.5% increase on all other charges (Cabinet 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017)</li> </ul>
Fixed Penalty Notice (environmental crimes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase from £75 to £100 (Cabinet 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018)</li> </ul>

- 5.6 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 2018/19.

## **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. The screening form can be accessed by contacting the author of the report or the Cabinet Business officer.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 A comprehensive budget consultation exercise has been undertaken in relation to the 2018/19 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 2018/19 would generate £253k additional income in a full year if Cabinet decide to take forward the proposed recommendations.

## **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 reports sets out proposals for the level of Council fees and charges for the 2018/19 financial year.
- 11.2 The recommendations will enable the Council to generate additional income from fees and charges and include this within its 2018/19 proposed Budget Strategy.

### **Other Information**

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

**APPENDIX 1**

**PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2018/19**

Group	Service Area	Type Of Income	Proposed Increase 2018/19	
Chief Executive	Electoral Registration	Sale Of Publications	2.95%	
	Land Charges <sup>2</sup>	Land Charges (excluding those set nationally)	2.95%	
	Park & Dare & Coliseum Theatres	Bars & Catering		2.95%
		Room/Venue Hire		2.95%
		Ticket Sales (Internally Set)		2.95%
		Cinema (entrance fee)		0.0%
Community Services	Environmental Health (Pollution) and Licensing (where applicable)	Licences	2.95%	
	Food Health And Safety Project	Service Charges Recoverable	2.95%	
	Food Standards	Course Fees General		2.95%
		Other Fees Receivable		2.95%
	Bereavement Services	Cremation Fees		2.95%
		Burial Fees		Revised Schedule of Charges – as per Table 2
		All supplementary fees & charges		2.95%
	Registrar	Booking Fees		2.95%
		Attendances		2.95%
	Community Safety CCTV	Other Fees Receivable		2.95%
	Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools	Pay & Play Fees (from 01/01/18)		2.5%
		Membership Fees (from 01/01/18 and frozen until January 2020)		£2 increase on monthly membership and £20 on annual membership
	Rhondda Heritage Park	Admission Fees - Schools		£0.55
		Underground Experience		2.95%
		Other (incl Santa's Grotto)		
		Admission Fees - External		£1 individual ticket / £2 family ticket
		Underground Experience		2.95%
	Community Centres	Other (incl Santa's Grotto)		2.95%
		Miscellaneous Sales / Souvenirs		2.95%
		Sale of Publications		2.95%
		Rental Income		2.95%
	Allotments	Leisure Sales Income		2.95%
		Rental Income		2.95%
Parks & Recreation Grounds	Rental Income		2.95%	
	Income From Outside Bodies		2.95%	
	Summer Fees (Sports Clubs)		0.0%	

<sup>2</sup> The realignment of the Land Charges function from the Chief Executive's Division to Corporate and Frontline Services in line with the approved changes to the Council's senior and associated management structure (as agreed by Council on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017) have not been reflected within this analysis

Group	Service Area	Type Of Income	Proposed Increase 2018/19
Community Services		Winter Fees (Sports Clubs)	0.0%
		Leisure Sales Income	2.95%
		Vending Sales	2.95%
	Countryside Services	Miscellaneous Income	2.95%
		Rental Income	2.95%
	Day Services	Catering Income	2.95%
		Meals Sales	£0.17 per meal
		Hire Of Premises	2.95%
		Produce Sales	2.95%
	In-House Residential Services	Board And Lodge Income	2.95%
		Meals Sales	2.95%
	Domiciliary Care (Adults)	Non Residential Care Charges	n/a
	Nurseries	Day Nursery Fee Income	2.95%
Telecare	Lifeline Income	2.95%	
Pest Control	Pest Control Service Charges	2.95%	
Corporate & Frontline Services	Porth Plaza	Hire Of Premises	2.95%
	Valley Innovation Centre	Hire Of Premises	2.95%
	Street Cleansing Operations	Contract Income	2.95%
		Fixed Penalty Notice (environmental crimes)	£25
	Commercial Waste	Trade Refuse Charges (Residual)	2.95%
		Trade Refuse Charges (Recycling)	2.95%
	Waste Collection	Miscellaneous Income	2.95%
		Bulky Waste Collection Income	2.95%
		Replacement Bin Charges	2.95%
	Parking Services	Season Ticket Parking Fees	0.0%
		Parking Fees	0.0%
		Residential Parking Permits	0.0%
	NRSWA	Licences	2.95%
Home To School	Sale of Surplus Seats	2.95%	
Traffic Management	Fees	2.95%	
Education	School Meals Income	School Meals Sales	£0.10 per meal
	Catering Training	Misc Contributions	2.95%
	Meals on Wheels	Clients Meals Sales	£0.25 per meal
	Peripatetic Music Service	Misc Claims	2.95%
		Miscellaneous Income	2.95%
		Miscellaneous Contributions	2.95%
		Performances - Ticket Income	2.95%
		Equipment Hire	2.95%
	Libraries <sup>3</sup>	Library Fines	2.95%
		Hire Charges	2.95%
Photocopy & Printing Charges		2.95%	

<sup>3</sup> The realignment of the Library Service from the Education Directorate to the Community and Children's Services Group in line with the approved changes to the Council's senior and associated management structure (as agreed by Council on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017) have not been reflected within this analysis



Group	Service Area	Type Of Income	Proposed Increase 2018/19
		All other Sales	2.95%

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