

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 6

meeting date: 16 OCTOBER 2014
title: REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: TRUDY HOLDERNESS

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek member approval on proposals to increase this committee's fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2015.
- 1.2 These proposals are the first stage in the review of this committee's budget for the forthcoming 2015/16 financial year.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's fees and charges are reviewed on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process.
- 2.2 This report requests that members consider proposals for the increase in fees and charges for this committee's services. Such charges would be implemented with effect from the 1 April 2015 and would operate for the duration of the 2015/16 financial year.
- 2.3 The council's latest budget forecast allows for a 2% increase in the level of income raised from fees and charges. The review aims to increase budgeted income for 2015/16 by this amount as a minimum.
- 2.4 After applying this percentage increase, proposed charges have generally been rounded up or down to minimise any problems with small change. This inevitably impacts on the individual percentage rise for each separate charge, particularly when the current charge is low.
- 2.5 Planning fees are currently set by the Department for Communities and Local Government. In November 2010 it consulted on proposals to decentralise responsibility for setting fees to Local Authorities. Following the results from the consultation exercise it is continuing to work on revised proposals.

3 ADVICE OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 In September 2014, the Budget Working Group considered the overall three year Budget Forecast. In summary the forecast shows a potential budget deficit for 2015/16 of £513k after taking £200k from general fund balances.
- 3.2 The forecast has already factored in an overall increase in income from fees and charges of 2%. Clearly if this 2% increase is not achieved the budget deficit will be higher. Therefore service committees are requested to consider their fees and charges very carefully to achieve this targeted income.

3.3 The current budgeted income to be received from fees and charges which are set by this committee is £39,090 (as stated above planning application fees are set nationally). A 2% increase on this total would therefore generate £780.

4 REVIEW OF THE FEES AND CHARGES

4.1 The review of the fees and charges is coordinated by financial services, working together with heads of service and budget holders.

4.2 This follows the following process:

- Budget holders are provided with an indication of the fees and charges factoring in the budget working group proposals.
- A discussion meeting is then held between budget holders and financial services to enable the budget holder to propose a set of fees and charges for their services. This may depend on where there is a national requirement or service specific reason for setting a fee or charge at a different level than the budget working group target.

The main Building Control fees and charges will be considered at a later date. This is to comply with the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 which states that the charges should be based on achieving a full cost recovery. Work on the forecasting budgeted costs for 2015/16 for this service is currently being carried out.

4.3 Following the discussions a **proposed** set of fees and charges for implementation from 1 April 2015 has been produced for this committee and is shown at Annex 1. This annex provides details of:

- the current charge for 2014/15
- an estimate of the level of 2014/15 income raised by each charge (Net of VAT)
- the proposed charges for implementation from 1 April 2015
- an indication of the potential income that may be achieved in 2015/16, should the proposals be agreed (Net of VAT)
- the resulting percentage increase from 2014/15 to 2015/16
- Date that each charge was last increased (They are all reviewed annually, but may not necessarily be increased)

4.4 The indication of potential income which is shown throughout Annex 1 is provided for guidance purposes only and is based on past and current activity levels. No account is taken of any change in service use which may be influenced by a change in charge levels.

4.5 Work is still underway on forecasting income budget levels for 2015/16 and such budget proposals will be reported back to this committee in January 2015 for approval.

4.6 If you agree the recommended charges shown in Annex 1, the estimated extra income raised is £875, an overall increase of 2.24%.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Fees and Charges provide a key income source for the Council. Fees and charges also provide a mechanism to target concessions, and also to charge service users directly rather than allowing the financial burden of certain service provision to fall on the council tax.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The Local Government Acts of 2000 and 2003 extended authorities' powers to charge for discretionary services.
- Political – none
- Reputation – Substantial increases to charges can generate adverse publicity.
- Equality and Diversity – One of the aims of the fees and charges mechanism on many services is to pass on service concession in order to increase inclusivity.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 Work has been undertaken by financial services, heads of service and budget holders in reviewing the fees and charges operated by this committee. This review has now been completed as part of the budget process, for implementation from 1 April, should the proposals be approved.

6.2 The Budget Working Group recommends that all service committees seek to increase their fees and charges overall by 2%. If you agree with the recommended charges, this committee will meet the target required.

7 RECOMMENDATION THAT COMMITTEE

7.1 Consider the charges at Annex 1 and approve them for implementation with effect from 1 April 2015.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

PD9-14/TH/AC
30 SEPTEMBER 2014

For further information please ask for Trudy Holderness extension 4433

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR IMPLEMENTATION FROM 1 APRIL 2015

PLANNING - PLANG		Ledger Code	VAT Liability	Date of Last Change	Current Charge 2014/15 £	Budgeted Income Net of VAT for 2014/15 £	Proposed Charges for 2015/16 2% Inflation £	Indication of Potential Income Net of VAT for 2015/16 £	Percentage Increase in Charge % £
Planning Decision Notices		PLANG/8231m	Non Vatable	01 April 2014	18.00	4,360.00	18.40	4,456.90	2.22
Pre- Application Fees	Site History	PLANG/8496n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	41.00	110.00	42.00	112.70	2.44
	Permitted Development Rights (check if removed)	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	41.00	0.00	42.00	0.00	2.44
	Minor Developments	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	190.00	8,160.00	195.00	8,374.70	2.63
	Intermediate Developments	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	380.00	5,620.00	390.00	5,767.90	2.63
	Major Developments - Up to two meetings	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	775.00	16,350.00	790.00	16,666.40	1.94
	Major Developments - Additional Meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	380.00	0.00	380.00	0.00	0.00
	Householders - Without Meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	50.00	1,140.00	51.00	1,162.80	2.00
	Householders - With Meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	90.00	1,640.00	92.00	1,676.40	2.22
	High Hedge or Tree Issues	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	55.00	0.00	56.00	0.00	1.82
	Listed Buildings or work in Conservation Area	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	95.00	750.00	97.00	765.80	2.11
	Advertisement Advice	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	55.00	0.00	56.00	0.00	1.82
	Prior Notification and Telecommunications	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2014	100.00	0.00	102.00	0.00	2.00
	Repair Works				No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR IMPLEMENTATION FROM 1 APRIL 2015

HIGH HEDGES - HIGHH	Ledger Code	VAT Liability	Date of Last Change	Current Charge 2014/15 £	Budgeted Income Net of VAT for 2014/15 £	Proposed Charges for 2015/16 2% Inflation £	Indication of Potential Income Net of VAT for 2015/16 £	Percentage Increase in Charge % £
Submission of High Hedges Complaint	HIGHH/8460u	Non Vatable	01 April 2014	555.00	0	555.00	0	0.00
BUILDING CONTROL – BLDGC	Ledger Code	VAT Liability	Date of Last Change	Current Charge 2014/15 £	Budgeted Income Net of VAT for 2014/15 £	Proposed Charges for 2015/16 2% Inflation £	Indication of Potential Income Net of VAT for 2015/16 £	Percentage Increase in Charge % £
Building Control Decision Notices	BLDGC/8231m	Non Vatable	01 April 2014	18.00	960.00	18.40	981.30	2.22
Total Income from fees and charges set by this committee					39,090.00		39,964.90	2.24
Overall extra income generated							874.90	