Harrogate
BOROUGH COUNCIL

NOT FOR PUBLICATION: **Appendix B** to this report contains information considered to be exempt under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended

Agenda Item No. 3

REPORT TO:	Cabinet Member (Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling) & Cabinet Member (Sustainable Transport)
DATE:	13 December 2017 18 December 2017
SERVICE AREA:	Parks and Environmental Services
REPORTING OFFICER:	Commercial and Development Manager *(Jon Clubb)*
SUBJECT:	**Parks and Environmental Services Fees and Charges for 2018-19**
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL DISTRICT
FORWARD PLAN REF:	N/A

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report reviews all fees and charges which fall under the terms of reference of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling and the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport.

1.2 As introduced last year, all relevant fees and charges for Parks and Environmental Services are dealt with in a single, integrated report covering a diverse range of service areas including; Motor Transport, Waste Collection, Street Cleansing, Pest Control, Bereavement Services, Games in Parks, Recreation, Markets, Parks and Gardens and Events.

1.3 The decision on charges is the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling or the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport, except where they are at variance with the guidelines in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The purpose of this report is to recommend for decision increases in charges of 2.5% or more (some charges have been rounded) and to recommend to Cabinet those charges where no increase or less than 2.5% is proposed, for the purposes of supporting the finalisation of the 2018/19 General Fund Revenue Budget.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

PART A – Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction & Recycling

2.1 That the changes to fees and charges in line with the 2.5% or more increase recommended in the Medium Term Financial Strategy are approved as set out in the report and in Appendices A and B.

2.2 That those changes where there is discretion and where an increase of less than 2.5% has been recommended, as set in paragraphs 7-16 of the report and in Appendices A and B, are referred to Cabinet for decision.

PART B – Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport

2.3 That the changes to fees and charges in line with the 2.5% or more increase recommended in the Medium Term Financial Strategy are approved as set out in paragraph 6 of this report and in Appendix A.

2.4 That statutory charges that are periodically reviewed by the government where an increase of less than 2.5% has been recommended, as set in paragraph 6 of this report and in Appendix A, are referred to Cabinet for decision.

3.0 RECOMMENDED REASON FOR DECISION

3.1 In order to align fees and charges to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Where market conditions indicate that it would not be desirable, variations have been made and will be kept under review.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION

4.1 Not to align charges to market conditions. This is recommended for rejection as this could adversely affect income.

5.0 INTRODUCTION

5.1 This report should be read in conjunction with the draft revenue budget report for the Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling portfolio and Sustainable Transport portfolio at the relevant Cabinet Member meetings on 13 December 2017 and 18 December 2017 respectively.

5.2 The recommended charges detailed in Appendices A and B for 2018/19 in general follow the decision of the Cabinet on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, whereby charges and prices are to be increased by 2.5%. Where appropriate some charges have been rounded off to simplify payment. The rationale for any exceptions is set out below.

6.0 MOTOR TRANSPORT

6.1 The removal, storage and disposal of abandoned vehicles and MOTs are subject to statutory charges and as such are periodically reviewed by the government. These are therefore recommended to be held at the same level as in 2017/18. The fee for vehicle inspections (for internal staff customers only) is recommended to follow the 2.5% increase as set out in the MTFS.

7.0 WASTE COLLECTION

7.1 No charge is made by the Council in respect of domestic premises or for certain premises set out in Appendix A - Waste. If charitable status is evidenced, then the same service offered to domestic customers is offered free of charge – any excess waste is subject to charges being applied as laid out in the Controlled Waste Regulations (England & Wales) 2012 and as agreed with the York & North Yorkshire Waste Management partnership. Appendix A – Waste, summarises these arrangements, which will remain in place unless legislation requires changes to be made.

7.2 As part of a programme to make garden waste collections fair and equitable the Council introduced the first phase of a district wide Garden Waste Collection Service in June 2017. This optional subscription service will continue to be rolled out to all available households in 2018. During the introduction of this service prices have been held for 2018/19, although applied pro-rata to reflect a full season of collections commencing from early March 2018. Rolls of garden waste sacks that were previously available to customers not on garden waste collection rounds have been discontinued.

7.3 Sales of Offensive (formerly Clinical) Waste Sacks have been discontinued as this service has been withdrawn.

8.0 STREET CLEANSING

8.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 - and the associated Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse – lays down regulations and standards for street cleansing. Charges for 2018/19 will follow the recommended 2.5% increase. Outside of normal working hours services will attract a higher hourly rate to cover direct costs.

9.0 PEST CONTROL

9.1 A small charge for Pest Control services was introduced in 2015/16 to those domestic occupants in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or who were registered as disabled. As part of this package of measures it is proposed to increase this charge by approximately one quarter of the current fee (from £19 to £24) to help contribute to the cost of running this discretionary service.

9.2 Prior to a full service review of Pest Control in 2018/19 it is recommended to levy a modest increase above inflation for both ad-hoc and contract

commercial customers to better reflect the true cost this service.

9.3 Treatment of wasp nests is a popular service over the summer months. On occasion, several nests are found and treated. It is proposed that the standard fee of £40 covers treatment of up to two nests and additional nests are charged at £15 each.

10.0 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

10.1 Examination of other local authorities showed that Harrogate Borough Council was not more expensive for burials and cremated remains and could sustain an increase in fees, whilst remaining comparable. Therefore it is recommended for 2018/19 to increase those specific fees and charges by 3% for burials and 4% for cremations.

10.2 Bereavement Services offer a wide range of memorialisation options ranging from commemorative plaques to entries in the Book of Remembrance. A small number of product lines under the memorialisation and miscellaneous categories that have had limited sales, such as bronze, wooden and birdbath plaques, are recommended to be held at 2017/18 prices to encourage growth of sales.

10.3 It is recommended that there continues to be no charge for the burial and cremation of persons under the age of 18.

11.0 GAMES IN PARKS

11.1 As in previous years, the hire of woods for crown green bowls are recommended to remain free of charge to encourage users to try this activity.

11.2 Low cost charges for replacement items e.g. lost golf clubs / tennis rackets etc. are recommended to be held at current rates to reflect their low cost of replacement.

12.0 RECREATION – FOOTBALL PITCH RENTS

12.1 Fees and charges for football pitch hire is proposed to go up by just over 4% for adults (an increase of £10 per pitch per season) and 3% for juniors (an increase of £4 per pitch per season) to try to redress the shortfall in income.

13.0 PARKS AND GARDENS

13.1 There is a legal requirement to notify allotment holders of changes to fees and charges 12 months in advance. This report therefore makes recommendations for fees and charges for the period 2019/20, at the standard increase of 2.5%.

13.2 Following the service review of our horticultural nursery and the decision to discontinue the unprofitable floral decoration hire service, these items are recommended for removal from the list of fees and charges.

14.0 MARKETS

14.1 A report 'The Future of Harrogate Borough Council's Markets' was considered by Cabinet on 15 November 2017. It was agreed to develop a 'lettings strategy' for Ripon and Knaresborough markets so that businesses can be targeted to try and increase the number of traders at each market and the 'trader mix'.

14.2 In support of this aim a revised pricing structure is proposed for 2018-19 that will offer lower pitch rentals for regular traders starting at just £16 per day during a 12 week period in the winter and £20 per day for the remaining 40 weeks of the year. This would represent a 31% and 14% discount respectively, at today's prices, recognising a key proposal in the review where traders will in future provide and erect their own stalls. In future, there would be no stalls to hire out on a casual basis so these items are recommended to be removed from the fees schedule.

14.3 The principle of attracting new traders with a time limited introductory rate is recommended to be retained, but will be focussed on traders that meet the criteria of the proposed lettings strategy. Discounts off the standard regular trader rates over a three week period are suggested as 50%, 35% and 20% respectively.

15.0 EVENTS

15.1 Harrogate Borough Council has established an enviable reputation for hosting high quality events ranging from local community celebrations to major sporting events with a global profile.

15.2 All events in the district must meet a minimum standard in terms health and safety. Increasingly, a greater level of risk management is required to reduce vulnerability to low-sophistication, high-impact, terrorism or other threats. Officer time invested in assessing event management plans, liaising with event organisers and emergency services has increased and subsequently valued through the approved Activity Based Cost model.

15.3 It is proposed to pass on those costs to *all* event organisers through a non-refundable event application fee that will be levied according the scale of the event on a banding ranging from £100 to £300. This would replace the current Administrative Fee, set at a flat rate of £38.45, which is not representative of the costs incurred.

15.4 Community and charity events are recommended to continue to benefit from no charge for land hire, including during set up and take down. Additionally, to assist all event organisers with preparing accurate event management plans a new on-line portal and guidance is in development that will standardise the application process across the Council from January 2018.

15.5 In addition to the application fee and bond, all commercial events will attract a hire charge. These start from £315 per day, depending on the event location, size, duration and complexity. Prices will in future be subject to

negotiation on a case by case basis.

16.0 TRADE WASTE

16.1 A full commercial review of the Trade Waste service was completed in April 2017 and followed by the publication of the Trade Waste Development Strategy (TWDS), providing a business plan for the next five years. The TWDS will be considered by Cabinet on 6 December 2017 and details an innovative pricing strategy which is transposed into Appendix B of this report.

16.2 In addition to supporting the pricing strategy, to ensure excellent customer service that can react to market opportunities, it is recommended that the Business Development Team be given authority to negotiate on price with trade waste customers by a margin of up to 10% on the proposed prices – so long as this remains within the normal financial scheme of delegation.

16.3 Details of the fees (set out in Appendix 2) are not for publication in the report as the information is considered to be exempt under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

17.0 REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

17.1 The following were considered: Financial Implications; Legal Implications; Risk Assessment; Equality and Diversity (the Public Sector Equality Duty and impact upon people with protected characteristics). If applicable, the outcomes of any consultations, assessments, considerations and implications considered necessary during preparation of this report are detailed in the body of this report or below.

17.2 Finance has been consulted during the preparation of this report and the proposed increases in fees and charges have been incorporated in the base budget for 2018/19.

17.3 Legal and Governance have been consulted during the preparation of this report and their comments are detailed in the body of this report.

17.4 The Equalities Impact Assessment highlighted the significantly discounted rates available for Pest Control for those in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or who were registered as disabled. It is recommended to keep monitoring demand against cost in 2018-19 as well as customer feedback for this discretionary service.

18.0 CONCLUSIONS

18.1 The recommended charges are in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy guidelines with the exception of those items set out in the report.

Background Papers –

- Parks and Environmental Services Fees and Charges for 2018-19, HBC (Part exempt)

- Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 to 2020-21, HBC
- The Future of Harrogate Borough Council's Markets, November 2017, HBC (Exempt)
- Trade Waste Development Strategy, November 2017, HBC (Exempt)

OFFICER CONTACT: Please contact Jon Clubb, Commercial & Development Manager, if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted at *(Commercial & Development Team, Parks and Environmental Services, PO Bo 787, Harrogate, HG1 9RW)* or by phone 01423 500600 or by e-mail – jonathan.clubb@harrogate.gov.uk