

Committee: Development Control Committee

Agenda Item

Date: 12 January 2011

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Title: 2011/12 Fees and charges

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Item for decision

Summary

1. This report asks the Committee to set its fees & charges for 2011/12, as set out in Appendix A.
2. The scale of statutory planning fees is unchanged for the period 1 April to 30 September 2011 so is excluded from this report. The Government is developing proposals for a new scheme of locally set fees from 1 October 2011. This will be the subject of a future report to Members.
3. Where the Council has discretion over its fees & charges, a review has been carried out by officers which takes into account economic conditions, service objectives and expected activity levels.
4. The rate of VAT changes to 20% with effect from January 2011 and this has been taken into account as part of the review.
5. Changes in fees & charges are within the context of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and 2011/12 Budget Strategy. Inflation (Consumer Prices Index) is currently (November 2010) 3.3%.
6. The Council has a new pricing & concessions policy which takes effect from 1 April 2011. The key principles of the policy are given below, and any exceptions to the policy are also noted for Members' approval.
7. The draft 2011/12 for the Committee, later on today's agenda, has been prepared assuming that the fees in this report will be approved. In the event of any changes, budget revisions may be required. If necessary, this will be completed prior to final determination of the 2011/12 budget by Full Council in February.

Recommendations

8. The Committee is recommended to approve the 2011/12 fees & charges as set out in Appendix A.

Background Papers

[Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) approved by Full Council 18 February 2010
[MTFS update report](#) to Finance & Administration Committee 16 September 2010

[2011/12 Budget Strategy report](#) to Finance & Administration Committee 16 September 2010

[Pricing & Concessions Policy](#) report to Finance & Administration Committee 16 September 2010

[Statutory Planning Fees](#) currently in force and unchanged for 1 April to 30 September 2011

Impact

Communication/Consultation	No fees or charges are subject to statutory requirements for communication and consultation.
Community Safety	No specific implications.
Equalities	No specific implications.
Finance	The 2011/12 budget has been prepared on the assumption that the fees & charges will be approved. In the event of any variation, the budget may need to be amended.
Human Rights	No specific implications.
Legal implications	The level of charges for some services is subject to statutory provisions.
Sustainability	Some services for which charges are made have an impact on sustainability, and related fees and charges need to be set accordingly.
Ward-specific impacts	No specific implications.
Workforce/Workplace	No specific implications.

New Pricing & Concessions Policy

9. On 16 September 2010 the Finance & Administration Committee approved a new Pricing & Concessions Policy. The objective of the new policy is to ensure greater consistency and fairness in the application of discounts, and greater transparency on the extent to which service costs are covered by the fees.

10. The policy principles are as follows:
 - a) The policy shall apply to all prices and concessions that the Council has discretion to set.
 - b) Car park charges shall be a known exemption to the policy, and will be the subject of separate detailed consideration.
 - c) There shall be consistency in the way charges are calculated and concessions are applied.
 - d) The full cost of the service, including an element for corporate overheads, will be the starting point for calculating charges.
 - e) Where alternative service providers are available, market forces will be taken into account when calculating charges.
 - f) Any subsidy of the full cost of the service, including an element of corporate overheads, will be made clear and be a conscious decision designed to meet service objectives.
 - g) Concessions of 25% will be applied to individuals in receipt of UDC-administered benefits.
 - h) There will be no automatic concessions for elderly or disabled customers.
 - i) Where possible, income shall be collected in advance of the service being provided.
 - j) The responsible Committee may authorise exceptions to the policy where there are sound business reasons to do so, after taking into account advice of the relevant service manager and the Section 151 Officer.

Exceptions to the Policy

11. The Committee's fees, as set out in the attached schedule, are consistent with the new policy, subject to the exceptions as set out below.
12. Pre-Application Advice – estimated income produced by the proposed charges is £31,500, which compares with an estimated cost of the service of £50,500. Therefore, the service is being subsidised from other Council funds by an estimated £19,000. The justification is that take up of pre-application advice is to be encouraged as a means of avoiding abortive costs later in the planning process. In addition this time last year the committee expressed the view that charging should be carried out sensitively rather than to maximise income.
13. Advice from officers is that there are sound business reasons for this exception to policy and Members are recommended to approve the schedule of fees as set out.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Fees & charges do not have the desired effect on service outcomes or budgeted income levels	2 (some risk that variances will occur)	2 (potential impact which could adversely affect service outcomes and/or the council's financial position if not managed)	Budgetary control framework Annual review of fees & charges

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary,

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

APPENDIX A

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FEES & CHARGES

	2010/11 charge excl. VAT £	2010/11 Apr - Dec 2010 charge incl VAT @ 17.5% £	2010/11 Jan - Mar 2011 charge incl VAT @20% £	2010/11 Discounts applied	2011/12 charge excluding VAT £	2011/12 charge incl VAT @20% £	2011/12 Discounts applied	2011/12 Explanatory comments
Planning Application Fees								
Statutory fees are unchanged for the period 1 April to 30 September. The Government is consulting on proposals for locally set fees with effect from 1 October 2011. For the current schedule of fees please visit the Planning section of the Council website.								
Pre-Application Advice								
Major Developments Written advice	189.79	223.00	228.00	Exemptions are operated rather than discounts. These relate to one free meeting post decision; developments on exceptions sites by housing associations; development by town or parish councils and development by community groups.	198.33	238.00	Same as already operating plus concessions of 25% will be applied to individuals in receipt of UDC-administered benefits.	Charges inclusive of VAT have been revised to achieve 'round figures'. Inflationary uplift applied. Estimated income £31,500. Estimated costs of the service £50,500. Full costs of the service are not covered by the charges in order to encourage take up and avoid abortive costs.
Major Developments - Meeting in office	474.89	558.00	570.00		494.17	593.00		
Major Developments - Meeting on site	570.21	670.00	685.00		595.83	715.00		
Major Development - additional officer supplement	47.66	56.00	58.00		50.00	60.00		
Major Development - follow up meeting	86.81	102.00	105.00		91.67	110.00		
Minor Developments - written advice	95.32	112.00	115.00		100.00	120.00		
Minor Developments - Meeting in office	238.3	280.00	285.00		248.33	298.00		
Minor Development - Meeting on site	285.11	335.00	345.00		295.83	355.00		
Minor additional officer supplement	47.66	56.00	58.00		50.00	60.00		
Minor follow up meeting	43.04	51.00	52.00		45.00	54.00		
House extensions & alterations	No charge	n/a	n/a	No charge	n/a			
Other items								
Documents provided under Local Government Access to Information Act 1985	8.51p a sheet plus £21.28	10p a sheet plus £25 per hour if job exceeds 1 hour	10p a sheet plus £25 per hour if job exceeds 1 hour		8.33p a sheet plus £20.83	10p a sheet plus £25 per hour if job exceeds 1 hour		Statutory limitations apply
Documents - TPO, BPN, LB Planning & Building Regulation Decision Notices								
Uttlesford Local Plan Adopted 2005	21.28	25.00	25.00		20.83	25.00		
Weekly list of Planning Application Submissions	273.19	321.00	321.00		267.50	321.00		
Rights of Way - Footpath Diversion	625.00	No VAT	No VAT		625.00	No VAT		